

Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Report

Spokane Community College
Spokane, Washington
October 14 – 16, 2020

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

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Institutional History Impacting Accreditation Visit.....	1
Assessment of Institution’s Self-Evaluation Report and Supporting Materials.....	1
Response to Student Achievement Data.....	2
NWCCU Eligibility Requirements 2-24.....	3
Section One	4
Standard 1.A—Mission	4
Section Two	7
Standard 2.A—Governance	7
Standard 2.B—Human Resources.....	12
Standard 2.C—Education Resources	13
Standard 2.E—Library and Information Resources.....	20
Standard 2.F—Financial Resources.....	21
Standard 2.G—Physical and Technological Resources Instructional and Support Facilities	24
Section Three.....	26
Standard 3.A.—Institutional Planning.....	26
Section Four.....	28
Standards 3.B., 4.A., and 4.B.—Core Theme Planning, Assessment, and Improvement.....	28
4.A—Assessment	29
4.B—Improvement	31
Section Five.....	32
Standard 5.A—Mission Fulfillment.....	32
Commendations	34
Recommendations	34

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Introduction

Spokane Community College (SCC) is a public, comprehensive community college located in eastern Washington, primarily serving the citizens of the greater Spokane area, as well as four surrounding rural counties. Established in 1963, SCC is one of two comprehensive community colleges within District 17, the Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) District, which includes SCC and Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC). While the two schools are governed by a district-level board of trustees, each is independently accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

SCC offers associate degrees, one-year certificates, short-term certificates, basic education for adults, and community education. In addition, the college offers one 4-year degree, the Bachelor of Applied Science in Respiratory Care.

In 2019-2020, SCC served 19,934 students, roughly two-thirds of which were considered full-time. Approximately 65% of college-level students pursued workforce education while 35% prepared to transfer to a four-year institution. Roughly half of students were female, and 60–70% received financial aid.

Institutional History Impacting Accreditation Visit

As a result of its last Year Seven Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability comprehensive evaluation and site visit in Fall 2013, SCC received five recommendations. All but one, copied below, were addressed in subsequent follow-up visits. NWCCU requested an addendum to the Fall 2020 Year Seven Report to address recommendation two of the 2013 evaluation.

Recommendation # 2: The evaluation committee recommends that the institution develop systematic and college-wide means to assess the student learning outcomes associated with *general education* and demonstrate that these data are used to inform decision-making. It is further recommended that the institution develop systematic and college-wide means to assess the student learning outcomes of *programs* in relation to the institution's mission and demonstrate that these data are used to inform decision making at that level (Standards 2.C.2, 2.C.9, 2.C.10; 4.A.1, and 4.A.2).

The evaluators reviewed evidence supplied in the 2020 Self-Evaluation Report and supporting materials, and interviewed several administrators and faculty members involved in the learning outcomes assessment process at the program and general education levels. The evaluation team has concluded that SCC has successfully integrated assessment at these levels into ongoing continuous improvement processes. Significant revisions have been made to the instructional program review process so that it now includes assessment of general education and program-level learning outcomes.

Assessment of Institution's Self-Evaluation Report and Supporting Materials

An electronic copy of the Self-Evaluation Report was provided to the evaluation committee approximately one month prior to the visit. The 161-page document included sections addressing required components of the Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation Guidelines, with the exception of Standards 2.A.4 through 2.A.6. The 1,338 page appendix was provided electronically, and some reference documents were also available through links embedded in the report, especially in

Standard Two. The evaluation committee found the report to be helpful and informative. At the same time, the committee noted some organizational areas that would have allowed for better understanding of college processes prior to the visit. For example, it would have been helpful to include hyperlinks directly to documents included in the appendix in the body of the report. Team members found appendix references in the report to be inconsistently formatted and difficult to follow. Easier access to the data dashboards would have clarified early questions from team members, especially those assigned to evaluation of the core themes. There were several inaccurate and misleading statements within the report, which led to unnecessary and confusing questions from the evaluation team during the visit. In addition, a list of committees including roles and responsibilities, as well as committee membership, would have been useful to evaluators.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the site visit was conducted virtually using Zoom meetings. The college was very accommodating with providing supplementary materials as requested throughout the virtual visit. The CCS Board of Trustees, faculty, administration, staff, and students of SCC were welcoming, forthright, and accommodating throughout the virtual visit. Many took time to meet with the evaluators and aided the committee greatly in learning about SCC. The committee would like to sincerely thank the college for its hospitality and support before, during, and after the visit.

Response to Student Achievement Data

1. What are the key challenges of the institution related to the institution's graduation rate and other data?

SCC faces several key challenges related to graduation. As is the case with many other community colleges, students often transfer or find jobs prior to completing programs. SCC is aware of the benefits of degree completion for students and has identified this as an area that needs attention. Additionally, the student population of SCC faces significant obstacles. More than 60% of SCC students receive Pell grant funding, and there is a large population of part-time students with outside obligations. SCC has the largest Adult Basic Education program in the state, and the students enrolled therein are especially vulnerable. Transition of these students to college-level coursework and degree completion is a goal of the institution.

2. What is the institution doing to improve graduation rates?

SCC tracks graduation outcomes in a number of ways. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has presented some challenges, the institution is pleased that its retention and completion rates have largely been improving. SCC is in the final year of a Title III grant, and attributes many of the gains to efforts associated with that grant (e.g., implementation of intrusive advising, enhancements to tutoring, dramatic growth in faculty professional development offerings).

3. What initiatives appear to be effective in improving graduation rates?

Currently, the major initiative to improve graduation and completion is Guided Pathways. SCC is confident that, by clarifying paths and ensuring that students stay on them, more students will make it to the finish line. Each of the obstacles identified above is explicitly addressed in those plans. Of particular interest in this connection are the recommendations of the mandatory advising sub-group. By helping students understand from the beginning of their academic careers the long-term benefits of

completing a degree or certificate, SCC can reduce the number of students who “job out” or transfer without an associate degree. Graduation rates are tracked in each of the Core Theme Teams, and graduation is a metric of each of the core themes. Although outcomes for this work have not yet been realized, these efforts are grounded in research that demonstrates their importance and effectiveness in improving graduation outcomes.

Equity is a critical part of all initiatives at SCC. During the last two years, SCC developed an equity dashboard to track equity across key student success metrics for specific populations of interest. There is also a dashboard specific to ABE student outcomes. As a result of learning more about the gaps in services through these data, SCC opted to include equity in every aspect of the Guided Pathways efforts.

Faculty and staff are engaged in several equity-based projects, from culturally responsive teaching workshops to search advocate training to administrator reading groups related to race and culture. Additionally, the Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC) drafted an equity possibility statement to help guide their work this year. It reads, “In alignment with the vision and mission of the college and recent commitment to create an equity culture across campus, we (SLAC) strive to continuously improve our relationships with students as well as ourselves and our teaching and learning practices. We do this in order to support and inform an equity culture that values and embodies the principles of authentic and antiracist assessment across and beyond our campus.”

4. What might accreditors do to assist institutions to improve graduation rates?

Support for high quality and effective use of data in the assessment process would be helpful to institutions. In addition, while not directly tied to graduation rates, transfer partnerships provide opportunities for community colleges to fulfill commitments to students who seek the baccalaureate degree. When done well, transfer partnerships can provide incentives for graduation while supporting the successful transition to a four-year institution. Successful transfer is just as important as graduation rates for many community colleges.

NWCCU Eligibility Requirements 2-24

This summary statement addresses Eligibility Requirements 2 through 24. As evaluators reviewed SCC’s Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation Report and supporting and supplemental materials, conducted interviews, and verified compliance with accreditation standards, they found evidence that SCC substantially meets Eligibility Requirements 2 through 24.

Section One

Standard 1.A—Mission

1.A.1 Mission

The mission of Spokane Community College is to offer “educational opportunities in college readiness, workforce training, and university transfer that meets the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We are committed to student success through active learning, dynamic relationships, and supportive environments.” The mission statement was adopted by the Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees in September 2011. It is widely published, well known at the college, and perceived to be an accurate reflection of the primary work of the college.

1.A.2 Mission Fulfillment

SCC uses a recently developed Mission Fulfillment Scorecard to evaluate mission fulfillment, which it defines using two goals. First, the core themes, individually and collectively, demonstrate an acceptable level of performance. Second, the mission fulfillment reporting system is robust and responsive, ensuring that continuous improvement and assessment processes are well-documented, evaluated, and transparent. During interviews with members of the Executive Cabinet, members emphasized the importance of building a system for self-assessment, and a mechanism for regular check-ins. Culturally, the SCC leadership has worked to build support for such a system. There was recognition that quantification of an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment was in its infancy. While mission fulfillment has been defined as performance at 50% or higher on aggregated data for the four areas common to all core themes, thus far, the team has focused on increasing data literacy and data usage for each of the indicators.

Core theme objectives are evaluated by Core Theme Teams that meet at least twice per quarter. Each core theme has a data dashboard that includes five years of data for each indicator, a visual representation of performance, and a description of how each indicator was defined and calculated. A red, blue, green color scheme is used to allow quick identification of indicators that are below and above threshold performance. The Core Theme Teams develop an Annual Report, which includes indicator trends, concerns, successes, budget requests, action items, and continuous improvement. The report is reviewed by the Executive Cabinet, which responds through an annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. Currently, the college defines mission fulfillment as performance at 50% or higher on aggregated data for the four areas common to all core themes: Access, Progression, Completion, and Outcomes.

In general, the evaluation committee found that formal evaluation of mission fulfillment at SCC was a newer concept, and there was a lack of maturity in the use of such tools as a mission fulfillment scorecard. There was some difficulty in connecting changes or decisions made directly to the scorecard. At the same time, interviews with a variety of SCC employees across campus showed a deep connection to the mission of the college. Many ongoing student success initiatives, organized under Guided Pathways, were informally connected to mission fulfillment. In an interview with the Student Services Leadership at SCC, the relationship between guided pathways work and core themes/mission fulfillment was described as being in its infancy and amorphous at present.

Concern: A well-understood and useful definition of mission fulfillment at SCC was not yet fully developed and implemented.

Concern: A formal connection between ongoing student success initiatives and mission fulfillment was lacking.

Standard 1.B—Core Themes

1.B.1 Core Theme Objectives and Indicators

SCC identifies four core themes that manifest essential elements of its mission: Academic Transfer, College Readiness, Student Success, and Workforce Development. The core themes of Spokane Community College (SCC) represent the overarching values of the college and its close ties to the community. The four core themes all have individual objective statements that were adopted by Core Theme Teams in 2015. Within the objective statements for each team, four common objective areas were defined: (1) Access, (2) Progression, (3) Completion, and (4) Outcomes. Indicators were identified for all objectives under each core theme using the recommendations of Achieving the Dream and the definitions suggested by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP). All indicators and definitions are visible on the dashboards used by the Core Theme Teams to evaluate mission fulfillment.

1.B.2

SCC has established objectives for each core theme. The college has adopted a common framework of objectives that govern assessment across all core themes. Those objective categories are Access, Progression, Completion, and Outcomes. Within each objective category, SCC has developed key performance indicators that provide a measure of achievement within each objective, and establish clear thresholds to indicate if the college is meeting or exceeding the objectives for each core theme.

Core Theme 1- Academic Transfer

The academic transfer core theme has the following objective statement:

*Students have access to relevant, affordable, and high-quality academic transfer programs.
Students enroll in, progress through, and complete academic transfer programs efficiently.
Students successfully transfer to baccalaureate colleges and universities.*

To determine whether the objective is met and the core theme is effectively contributing to mission fulfillment, the Academic Transfer Core Theme Team assesses progress on multiple indicators. The indicators were informed by Achieving the Dream recommendations. These indicators consisted primarily of Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS) data available to the institution, and include metrics such as annualized FTE, retention rates, completion rates, etc. The indicators evaluate the success of academic transfer students. The Academic Core Theme Dashboard demonstrates that SCC has meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the academic transfer core theme.

Core Theme 2- College Readiness

The college readiness core theme has the following objective statement:

Students have access to relevant, affordable, and high-quality pre-college programs. Students enroll in, progress through, and complete pre-college programs efficiently. Students successfully transition to the next level successfully.

The College Readiness Core Theme Team used Achieving the Dream recommendations to determine whether the objectives are met and the core theme is effectively contributing to mission fulfillment. The team assesses progress on Basic Skills FTEs, Developmental Education FTEs, Equity Dashboard Performance, Basic Skills Student Persistence, Developmental Math + English Persistence, Former Developmental Education Students Succeed in College-Level Math + English, Postsecondary Credentials Conferred to Basic Skills Students, Basic Skills Transition, Employment Rate, and Two-Year and Four-Year College Success. The College Readiness Theme Dashboard demonstrates that the metrics, threshold and goals are either exceeding or close to meeting the objectives. Several objectives were not able to be evaluated due to unavailability of data.

Core Theme 3 - Student Success

The student success core theme has the following objective statement:

Institutional efforts to measure and improve student success in the areas of access, progression, completion and outcomes are comprehensive, synchronized, effective, financially viable, and responsive.

The Student Success Core Theme Team looks at an aggregated set of indicators from initiatives across the institution in order to ensure that they align with the institutional priorities and demonstrate mission fulfillment.

For the core theme of student success, the Access, Progression, Completion, and Outcome framework with the affiliated indicators works well. Specific indicators and thresholds on areas such as enrollment, retention, passing college-level math and English, and overall completion rates provides SCC a clear picture of how students are succeeding at the college. The student success core theme clearly manifests the college mission since the mission statement provides a direct commitment to it: "We are committed to student success through active learning, dynamic relationships, and supportive environments."

Core Theme 4 - Workforce Development

The workforce development core theme has the following objective statement:

Students have access to relevant, affordable, and high-quality workforce programs. Students enroll in, progress through, and complete workforce programs efficiently. Students successfully transition into the workforce and/or additional education.

The Workforce Development Core Theme Team used the four objectives, Access, Progression, Completion, and Outcomes, to measure progress toward the overall objective statement using indicators under each. These indicators, while measurable, are general and not specific to SCC or the core theme. For example, in Objective 1, indicators speak to enrollment indicators (FTE and applications) but do not include other elements that might determine if the college is reaching different populations to pursue its programs. Objectives 2 through 4 contain indicators that are more in line with the stated

objectives. For example, in Objective 3 the indicator of “completion rate” is measured by data required by the Washington Adult Basic Education Reporting System (WABERS).

Compliment: Core theme indicators were thoughtfully chosen using the recommendations of *Achieving the Dream* and the definitions suggested by the Institute for Higher Education Policy. In most cases, the indicators allow comparison to external benchmarks.

Concern: The common objective framework (Access, Progression, Completion, and Outcomes) may hinder the college when it comes to crafting more specific and well-developed objectives for each core theme.

Section Two

Standard 2.A—Governance

2.A.1 – 2.A.2 Governance System

Spokane Community College has an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Structures and processes are in place to ensure that the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students are considered as appropriate. Many of these opportunities for input occur through standing councils and committees such as College Cabinet, College Leadership and Planning Council, Council of Chairs, Curriculum Committee, and Fiscal Strategies. The evaluation committee found clear evidence that constituents understand and value these opportunities for inclusion.

Compliment: College decision making is shaped by a commitment to shared governance that is broadly understood and valued by the campus community, including faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Employees and students consistently reported having a voice at SCC.

2.A.3 Compliance with Standards

SCC monitors its compliance with NWCCU standards for accreditation through the work of its Accreditation Liaison Officer, the College Cabinet, and other key committees. SCC considers the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates. The SCC President and Vice Presidents meet monthly with the Association of Higher Education representing faculty. District-level administrators meet monthly with the Washington Federation of State Employees representing classified staff.

2.A.4 – 2.A.5 Governing Board – Role, Delegation, and Authority

Note that sections 2.A.4 through 2.A.6 were missing from the self-evaluation report. Despite verbal and written requests, the evaluation team did not receive written documentation of compliance with these standards. The evaluation team used the brief responses to Eligibility Requirements 7 and 8, as well as follow-up questions with Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees and the Chancellor to verify compliance.

SCC is governed by a five-member Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees. Per Washington Code, members are appointed by the Governor and are representative of the college's service area. The evaluation committee verified that none of the current Board of Trustees members have employment, contractual, or personal financial interests in the college.

Board of Trustees policy dictates that they act as a committee of the whole and interviews with the Board of Trustees confirmed this practice.

2.A.6 Governing Board – Institutional Policies

The Board of Trustees is active in establishing, reviewing, revising, and exercising broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation. Interviews with the Board of Trustees and review of meeting minutes confirmed that these responsibilities are consistently carried out.

Concern: Standards 2.A.4 through 2.A.6 were missing from the self-evaluation report.

2.A.7 Evaluation of CEO

Evaluators found evidence that the Board of Trustees selects and regularly evaluates a Chancellor who is accountable for the operation of the CCS District. The board delegates authority and responsibility to the Chancellor to implement and administer Board of Trustees approved policies related to the operation of the CCS District. Dr. Christine Johnson was appointed Chancellor of the Community Colleges of Spokane by the CCS Board of Trustees in 2010 and was most recently evaluated by the Board of Trustees in Spring 2020. Dr. Johnson reported in an interview with the evaluation committee chair that the board's annual evaluations have been helpful in guiding her leadership of the district.

2.A.8 Performance Review

The Board of Trustees regularly evaluates its own performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner, and the most recent self-evaluation was conducted in 2020. The Board of Trustees reports that the current evaluation process is meaningful, having made revisions to strengthen and improve the process.

2.A. 9–11 Leadership and Management

Visits with the administrative team and review of documents demonstrate that Spokane Community College has an effective system of leadership, staffed with highly qualified administrators with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability. At the district-level, the CCS Cabinet meets twice per month and oversees district-wide compliance with laws, policies, and procedures that govern the state system, as well as centralized services. The SCC College Cabinet meets twice a month and provides executive leadership for the college regarding budget, programming, staffing, student support services, and facilities.

Dr. Kevin Brockbank was appointed as president of Spokane Community College in 2017. Prior to being hired at SCC, President Brockbank served as the Vice Provost of Strategic Initiatives at the district level. He is well qualified and holds appropriate degrees for the position (Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, M.Ed., and B.A.). He has full-time responsibility to the institution.

Spokane Community College employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution as evidenced by a review of qualifications and interviews with faculty, staff, and students. Those interviews also verified that the administrative team works collaboratively to foster fulfillment of SCC's mission and accomplishment of its core themes. While many administrators are relatively new in their positions, their knowledge of and enthusiasm for the mission of SCC was clear throughout the visit.

Compliment: The SCC leadership is committed to shared governance and transparency. Employees report many opportunities to participate in decision-making through service on committees, as well as a sense that they have a voice in the direction of the college.

Compliment: Clear and consistent communication from the president's office has helped shape a climate of respect, built on transparency, open and honest communication, and collaboration that is pervasive across all levels of the college.

Policies and Procedures—Academics

2.A.12 Academics – Communication of academic policies

Academic policies and procedures are found on the Community Colleges of Spokane district website. This site is fairly easy to navigate and contains the academic policies in Chapter Four. Overall information and policy language is provided on the website, while the procedural elements are often linked to a standalone document (PDF). The self-evaluation report states that all policies - both administrative and academic - are reviewed and, if needed, updated every five years. Follow-up with the chancellor's office revealed that the policies and procedures are reviewed throughout the year and not on a five-year cycle, with new policies added annually at the recommendation of the Cabinet members.

2.A.13 Academics – Library policies

Policies on the access and use of library and information resources for faculty, staff, students, and guest users are detailed on a website maintained by library personnel and are enforced consistently by library staff.

2.A.14 Academics – Transfer-of-credit policies

SCC maintains compliance with a statewide transfer policy for Washington institutions adopted by its Higher Education Coordinating Board. Evidence was found online for this information. In discussions with the students, evaluators found that they feel supported by the institution to complete their educational programs.

Policies and Procedures—Students

2.A.15 Students – Rights and responsibilities policies

The evaluation committee found evidence of clearly stated and readily available policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities on the web site, through a student forum, and individual interviews.

2.A.16 Students – Admission and Placement Policies

SCC is an open enrollment institution with admission and placement processes designed to assure ease of access and high probability of student success. Policies including appeals process and readmission are readily available on the website, in the student code of conduct, and in the new student orientation curriculum.

2.A.17 Students – Co-curricular activity policies

The SCC Board has delegated authority over co-curricular activities to the Associated Student Government (ASG). The evaluation committee found evidence on the website and confirmed through interviews that policies are clearly stated. No student publications or student media are currently offered.

Policies and Procedures—Human Resources

2.A.18

The evaluation committee found evidence of district HR policies and procedures readily available online. Individual interviews, employee forums, and review of documents demonstrated that policies and procedures are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to both employees and students.

2.A.19

SCC follows its established policies and procedures for ensuring new and continuing employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination. New full-time employees attend orientation, and Vice Presidents and Human Resources leaders work together to create and deliver relevant training as part of the onboarding process.

2.A.20

SCC ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of HR records. The evaluation team found evidence of this through individual interviews.

Policies and Procedures—Institutional Integrity

2.A.21

A review of publications indicated that SCC represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its print and electronic announcements, statements, and publications. Recently, the district completed a system-wide website revision process that improved the accuracy, consistency, and clarity of the college website. Evidence shows that the college clearly communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic and professional/technical programs can be completed in a timely fashion. There is evidence the college regularly reviews its publications to assure accuracy in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

2.A.22

SCC advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards through policies and procedures designed to hold the college accountable to high ethical standards in communication, management, and operations. Evidence reviewed prior to and during the evaluation committee's visit indicates that the college applies these policies in a fair, equitable, and timely manner. Evidence also indicates that the college adheres to the Washington State Ethics in Public Service Act.

2.A.23

Evaluators found evidence that SCC follows clearly defined policies that prohibit conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Rules governing conflict of interest are set forth by both the CCS District and the State of Washington and are followed by SCC.

2.A.24

SCC adheres to clearly defined board policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property. Copyright and patent policies are covered in the Master Contract with the faculty union, and training on these topics is provided to faculty members.

2.A.25

The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. Evaluators found evidence in college documents and on the college website that SCC accurately uses the term "Accreditation" to reflect its current status.

2.A.26

SCC follows prescribed contracting procedures based on regulations of the Washington State Legislature and in consultation with the Attorney General's Office. The integrity of contracts is monitored by the Public Information Office, Purchasing Manager, Human Resources, and the CCS Director of Grants and Sponsored Research. There is sufficient evidence of a clearly defined internal process that satisfies this standard.

Policies and Procedures—Academic Freedom**2.A.27**

In the self-evaluation report, SCC references Washington State Administrative Code 132F-121-020 that protects student rights and freedoms at the statewide level. The Master Contract, the collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Trustees of Washington Community College District 17 (Community Colleges of Spokane) and the CCS Association for Higher Education (AHE, an affiliate of the Washington Education Association (WEA) and the National Education Association), states in Article 3, Section 1 the AAUP's 1940 definition of academic freedom and provides details of the protections including "Instructors (AEs) are entitled to freedom in the classroom ... in discussing their subject". The information is stated clearly and accessible in the contract. In addition, any "limitations" are to be

“clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.” No issues on this topic were presented by faculty members.

2.A.28

In interviews with faculty members and students, evaluators found evidence that SCC creates and supports an atmosphere conducive to open inquiry and freedom of expression. Several students appeared energized in the student forum when speaking about their learning experience. The college defines policies and procedures (Board Policy 2.30.01, Administrative Procedure 2.30.01-A) that are in place to support these efforts. One of the comments from the faculty forum stated, “the tenure process that is conducted here at SCC is rigorous and in my experience, was extremely valuable and supportive. Instructors get support and ideas from peers in an engaging environment and have the chance to learn from each other as well as from other sources.”

2.A.29

Article 3, Section 20 of the Master Contract (the collective bargaining agreement) provides information about copyright and patent, as well as distribution of materials and ownership. This information is developed from the Board Policy, which is included in Appendix A of the Master Contract and verified on the Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees website under Section 7, Miscellaneous. This information was verified by the evaluation team.

Policies and Procedures—Finance

2.A.30

SCC is under the umbrella of its district for purposes of financial resources including financial planning, operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash and debt management, and transfers and borrowing between funds. The District Office provides operational support and oversight of fiscal operations for SCC.

Standard 2.B—Human Resources

2.B.1 Sufficient Qualified Support and Operations Personnel

SCC follows its district policies regarding hiring and the evaluation committee found evidence of clear and publicly stated criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection on the website. Further, the committee confirmed the accuracy of job descriptions through requested documents and personal interviews.

Compliment: SCC’s Human Resources department facilitates a periodic review of job duties with job descriptions across units to ensure appropriate alignment with an opportunity to make adjustments as needed.

2.B.2 Administrator and Staff Evaluations

The evaluation committee found evidence that administrative and exempt staff are evaluated regularly as outlined in District policy. Classified staff are evaluated annually per the College Bargaining Agreement. Review of documents, personal interviews and staff forums support these findings.

2.B.3 Professional Development.

SCC provides employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development. Faculty and staff spoke of opportunities in their respective forums and indicated satisfaction with availability and appropriateness of offerings. The evaluation committee also confirmed these findings through individual interviews.

Compliment: Human Resources participates in the 509 Consortium, effectively pooling knowledge and resources to provide training and development within the region to employ cost savings and promote a collective of higher education professionals.

2.B.4 Sufficient Qualified Faculty

SCC employs a sufficient number of qualified faculty to achieve its educational objectives per its Master Contract. In alignment with State of Washington law, faculty teaching transfer courses have an earned master's degree or higher. The college participated in a comparative staffing analysis last year and a review of the findings indicate that SCC is well positioned among its peers and aligned with the State of Washington averages.

2.B.5 Faculty Workload

The evaluation team found evidence that SCC faculty have responsibilities and workloads commensurate with the college's mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics. The primary responsibility of the faculty is teaching, and expectations for service, scholarships, research, and/or artistic creation are outlined in Article 4 of the Master Contract.

2.B.6 Faculty Evaluation

The evaluation committee found evidence in the Master Contract of regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial evaluation of faculty at least once every five-years of service. This was confirmed in the faculty forum and in personal interviews. In addition, the expectations for faculty are reviewed upon hiring and at new employee orientation, co-hosted by Human Resources and the Vice President of Instruction.

Standard 2.C—Education Resources

2.C.1 Appropriate Content and Rigor

All SCC programs are evaluated for appropriate content and rigor by the respective department faculty, dean, college curriculum committee, and Vice President of Instruction, in accordance with guidelines provided by The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. SCC's demonstrated use of program

review processes, college-wide abilities assessments, advisory committees, direct transfer agreements, specialized accreditation and statewide councils to verify rigor and content illustrate compliance with this standard.

2.C.2 Course, Program, and Degree Learning Outcomes

Program, course, and degree learning outcomes are published online under “What to Study.” Each program page has a description, learning outcomes, and typical sequencing for that program that is easy to navigate.

2.C.3 Awarding of Credits and Degrees

Credits are awarded based on the successful completion of course outcomes by the student. The courses are proposed by the faculty. The faculty receive assistance from various individuals including the Teaching and Learning Center, their peers, their dean and others prior to the course being vetted by the SCC Curriculum Committee. Once approved by the curriculum committee, the courses are forwarded to the Vice President of Instruction for ultimate approval or disapproval based on CSS Board policies and procedures as well as SBCTC guidelines.

2.C.4 Degree Program Design

Degree and certificate programs demonstrate appropriate breadth and depth through required curriculum mapping that show learning and assessment progress for each. Admission and graduation requirements are found online and in the catalog for each program, as are the grading and academic standards policies.

Students commented that their program of study from start to finish was very smooth and effective at SCC. Each class “was a building block to the next class.” One student noted that faculty are understanding when a course is not available and or when sequencing is off and they are willing to work with students. Course and program sequencing is continuously being improved to make sequencing more intentional.

2.C.5 Faculty Role in Curriculum Development

SCC’s curriculum committee maintains the process for curriculum development and revision and is well defined. The committee was described as “robust” in that it is very active and well attended with diverse representation. Faculty take the lead in curriculum development and revision. Faculty members have access to a curriculum specialist to pull together information and navigate the process. SCC shares a catalog with the other district college, Spokane Falls Community College. The Master Contract outlines the curriculum development responsibilities in Chapter 4, Article 3, Subsection E. In addition, faculty members have an active role in the faculty selection (hiring) process. The full process, including makeup of the screening committee, is documented.

2.C.6 Integration of Library and Information Resources

Faculty work collegially with library staff and faculty librarians to ensure that information literacy, print and electronic collections, open educational resources, and other available library resources are integrated into the learning process. In addition to providing comprehensive support to department

faculty, the faculty librarians create customized Canvas modules that support accessibility of learning resources, academic integrity, and citation help. Library faculty provide research assistance and reference help; they are invited by department faculty to visit classrooms as well as being frequently embedded in online instruction.

2.C.7 Credit for Prior Experiential Learning

Credit for experiential learning by the college is defined in the policy and procedures of the Community Colleges of Spokane District in Chapter 4, CCS Administrative Procedure, number 4.40.01, Prior Learning Assessment. This information is found online and follows the requirements of the state. Related procedures that explain the process for credit for prior learning is found in this policy. In interviews, the student services leadership group stated that they primarily note students using the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process, for which an application form is available online. A portfolio review process exists, but is rarely utilized by students. Students primarily work with faculty members, and then student services staff assist with the transcript elements of the process.

2.C.8 Transfer of Credit

Transfer agreements are governed by a variety of statewide policies and guidelines designed to ensure academic quality and consistent application of transfer credit. SCC demonstrates compliance with these guidelines and the Common Course Numbering initiative established by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Evidence of articulation and transfer agreements were provided. Discussions with academic officials confirmed that these regulations are consistently followed.

2.C.9 General Education and Related Instruction

SCC offers associate transfer degree options with a general education component in accordance with NWCCU standards. SCC's general education (labeled distribution areas in the Washington State system) provides ample breadth and depth to prepare learners for transfer education, life, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. The distribution areas are Communication; Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning; Humanities; Social Sciences; Math and Science; and Health. SCC has crafted learning outcomes for each distribution area that clearly describe what the college hopes students will achieve through its general education program. For example, in taking a Humanities course, SCC hopes students will learn "to use evidence or sound reasoning to justify a position."

SCC also offers Associate of Applied Science degrees with communication, computation, and human relations general education requirements.

2.C.10 General Education Assessment

SCC has identifiable and assessable general education outcomes. These outcomes are embedded in the distribution areas required by Direct Transfer Agreements (DTA) in Washington State. The distribution areas are assessed as part of the regular program review process. During the program review process, faculty members complete a standardized evaluation of the department or program, followed by a second review by the divisional dean. The dean uses a standardized rubric to ensure that the program is meeting all goals, including general education outcomes.

2.C.11 Related Instruction Assessment

Related instruction is offered by the Applied Education department for most professional and technical programs as included in each program of study and courses embedded within. Program outcomes are published on the college's website, including those with related instruction. Assessment of these programs and courses follow the same process as all programs. Faculty take a lead role in the development and oversight of these outcomes based on their specialty areas.

2.C.12 - 2.C.15 Graduate Programs

Not applicable.

2.C.16 Credit and Non-credit Continuing Education

Continuing Education programs are offered by the district through the Center for Workforce and Continuing Education (CWCE). In order to minimize competition between the colleges, these programs were moved to the district office during the closing of the extended learning institute. CWCE is a revenue generating arm of the college and includes contract training for business and industry. The Executive Director of CWCE participates in the instructional dean meetings at SCC.

SCC offers courses that include 22 apprenticeship programs, Adult Basic Education (ABE), and People Accessing Careers and Education (PACE). These programs are compatible with the mission to meet the needs of diverse communities.

2.C.17 Continuing Education and Academic Quality

The district oversees continuing education in coordination with SCC and maintains sole responsibility for the academic quality of all offerings. Faculty have the opportunity to teach both credit or non-credit courses and both will fulfill their workload.

The ABE division is an instructional division of SCC and is overseen by the Vice President of Instruction. Faculty oversee curriculum, assessment of student learning outcomes, and are responsible for the program review process. The PACE program is also accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

2.C.18 Continuing Education Units

The Center for Workforce and Continuing Education (CWCE) is the district office responsible for offering Continuing Education Units (CEUs). CEUs offered by SCC follow the guidelines and standards established by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

2.C.19 Continuing Education Records

SCC follows the same procedures as other instructional divisions at the college regarding the maintenance of records for the ABE Division. The SCC Apprenticeship Center follows the established guidelines for maintaining records.

Standard 2.D—Student Support Resources

2.D.1 Learning Environments

SCC offers a wide array of programs and services to support student learning and to maximize students' opportunities for success. The Student Services division offers a holistic model of services including advising, career planning, child care, and disability supports. The college offers learning support resources and supports aligned with its mission and core themes.

Compliment: An example of the comprehensive nature of support services at SCC is the “Courtesy Services” offered to students who may not meet the definition of “disability” but for whom thoughtful consideration of circumstances and needs often results in improved access and short-term successes. This includes students who are pregnant, have a short-term injury or an acute illness. This approach contributes to inclusivity and equity at the college.

2.D.2 Student Safety and Security

The Office of Campus Safety is responsible for emergency management, safety, and traffic management at SCC. The evaluation committee found evidence in its review of documents, the website, employee forums, and interviews that students, employees, and other stakeholders feel safe and welcome at SCC. In addition, crime statistics and campus safety policies and other required disclosures were verified to be available online in adherence to this standard.

Compliment: SCC has established a safe and secure campus, and effectively plans and prepares for emergencies. Such planning helped ensure continued and safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.D.3 Recruitment, Admission, and Matriculation

SCC recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its offerings among its local high schools and community organizations, as well as Running Start students who are enrolled in college courses while completing high school. The college offers New Student Orientation as part of the onboarding process to ensure students understand their rights, responsibilities, and requirements related to their programs of study. Advising is available and SCC is considering making it mandatory for new students.

Compliment: SCC created an online version of New Student Orientation to meet the needs of its student population, and was able to successfully transition to the online modality during the COVID-19 closure of its campus ensuring student access to critical information and support services.

2.D.4 Program Elimination

SCC provides its program elimination policies in the catalog. In the event of significant changes to requirements in professional degrees and certificates, the appropriate administrator will work with individual students to determine how to complete the program.

2.D.5 Current and Accurate Information

SCC publishes a catalog that is easily accessible on its website. Upon review, the evaluator found current and accurate information including a) institutional mission and core themes; b) entrance requirements and procedures; c) grading policy; d) information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; e) names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; f) rules, regulations for conduct, rights and responsibilities; g) tuition, fees, and other program costs; h) refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; i) opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and j) academic calendar.

2.D.6 Eligibility Information for Licensure and Entry into Professions

SCC provides program outlines for each degree and certificate in its online catalog which include licensure or entry requirements and descriptions of employment and advancement into occupations or professions, where applicable.

2.D.7 Records Retention

SCC follows state and federal regulations on the secure retention of student records. Student records are securely maintained in the college's student management system and the financial aid system. These systems are managed by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and are backed up daily. Duplicate records are stored off-site by SBCTC for disaster recovery purposes. A fire-resistant storage space on campus, houses records that have not been entered into the online management system.

The evaluation team reviewed evidence that the college publishes and follows policies for confidentiality and release of student records as outlined in its catalog.

2.D.8 Financial Aid

SCC provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid to meet student needs. Information about the types of aid available is published on its website and in informational brochures. In addition, staff conduct information sessions and assist students with the process at local high schools and during New Student Orientation. The Financial Aid office is one of the partners supporting the one stop (Bigfoot Central) to ensure that students can access expert help in one convenient location on campus and online.

Compliment: The Financial Aid office has implemented electronic workflows to improve service delivery to students via improved efficiency in its processes. During the COVID-19 closure, staff in Financial Aid continued to process student files while providing service to students via phone call, text message, email, and Zoom.

2.D.9 Financial Assistance

SCC students receiving financial assistance are informed of repayment obligations and directed to resources and supports to help them make good decisions about managing their money and paying for

college. The college has partnered with vendors (iGrad and ECMC) to provide financial literacy training to students and to increase efforts to prevent student loan default. Over the past several years, the 3-year cohort loan default rate has improved from 27% to 18%.

2.D.10 Academic Advising

SCC provides advising to support student development and success. New students are required to attend New Student Orientation to learn about their rights, responsibilities, and requirements to successfully complete a degree or certificate. Faculty counselors use a holistic approach to advise and counsel students. Counselors routinely meet with departments to stay abreast of curriculum changes and to ensure they are able to provide accurate and current information to students.

Concern: The current student-counselor ratio makes it prohibitive for the college to institute mandatory advising even though it has been determined to be a best practice for student success and retention (Guided Pathways).

2.D.11 Co-curricular Activities

SCC offers co-curricular activities that are consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed by the Associate Student Government (ASG). All students are welcome and invited to attend events including lectures, concerts, comedy performances, movies, and family-friendly evening events. ASG is supervised by Student Activities staff under Student Services.

Compliment: ASG has expanded its outreach to students to encourage engagement and participation via its SCC app, "Bigfoot Experience," and its presence on social media.

2.D.12 Auxiliary Services

SCC houses both food service and its bookstore as auxiliary services in the Lair Student Center in support of its mission and to enhance the quality of the learning environment for students. Sodexo routinely surveys the campus community for input on its food selection and service. Barnes and Noble operates the bookstore and maintains a web site that allows students to shop where they choose, save money by renting books for the quarter, and reserve books online prior to financial aid disbursement.

2.D.13 Intercollegiate Athletics and Club Sports

Intercollegiate athletics are available to SCC students through district teams managed by an athletic director. The program is in compliance with college, district, and Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) regulations. Academic achievement is the number one priority of the athletic program, consistent with the mission of the college. The outcomes for student athletes in the areas of retention, academic performance, and completion show that they are among the most successful student cohorts at SCC.

The department budget is approved by the Board of Trustees annually. As an open door institution, admission requirements are the same for all students. Academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid requirements apply to all students at SCC.

2.D.14 Distance Learning Identity Verification

SCC provides each student with a unique ID number, secure login and password. Students must authenticate their identity when accessing student account programs including the Canvas LMS. SCC has contracted with Respondus to ensure the integrity of their online exam proctoring system, including options for photo ID verification and browser lock down. Students are not charged any additional fees for the use of required identity verification or proctoring software.

Standard 2.E—Library and Information Resources

2.E.1 Access to Library and Information Resources

The SCC Library holds and provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered. The library staff and faculty collaborate with department faculty to support a wide range of curriculum at the college.

The library continuously reviews its collection of materials to meet the changing needs of the student population, including the addition of a graded reader's collection to support adult basic education and ESL students as well as a Peace Studies Collection. The library has access to additional resources through cooperative partnerships with the public library as well as interlibrary loan borrowing and lending.

The policies displayed on the library website include borrowing rules, copyright compliance, patron behavior guidelines, printing and copying services, and interlibrary loan. Faculty and staff are encouraged to make requests for books, journals, audiovisual content, and online databases, which are reviewed by library selectors in a liaison model that supports each area of the college curriculum.

Library faculty and staff are proud of their Library of Things that provides a collection of non-traditional tools, equipment, and materials to support both the learning needs and personal enrichment goals of students. Items purchased with ASG and foundation grant funds and available for loan include baking tools, sporting equipment, and a vacuum cleaner.

Compliment: The SCC Library provides educational resources and outreach to college and community partners with a focus on holistic support for student success.

2.E.2 Planning for Library and Information Resources

The library routinely evaluates the effectiveness of their services, programs, and information resources by including feedback from all segments of their user population. They collect quantitative and qualitative data regarding the use of student spaces within the library, library instruction sessions, circulation, collection trends, and programming. The faculty and staff analyze requests and questions asked within the library to inform planning and make changes to services and programs.

Library staff routinely consult with departmental faculty about library resources. Library faculty also use student surveys, feedback from library instruction sessions, and regular peer review to plan,

assess, and modify library services and information resources. Library faculty and staff serve on committees and participate in shared governance in a robust and engaged manner.

2.E.3 Instruction and Support for Use of Library and Information Systems

Librarians support classroom instruction and online instruction, or teach customized face-to-face information literacy sessions at all SCC campuses and rural centers. They have created numerous research guides on individual topics to support student learning. Library faculty teach college success courses customized for new students, business technology students, and healthcare professions students.

Online LibGuides support a variety of research and citation needs. They explain how to find articles, books, and ebooks as well as how to evaluate sources. Faculty can embed tutorials and other resources in their Canvas shells to support information literacy learning.

Students have access to a wide range of supports including laptop and hotspot loans to facilitate online learning, research and homework assistance, 24/7 chat with a librarian, seamlessly integrated public library resources, Saturday hours with tutoring, Library Study Nights, and individualized appointments.

Compliment: Library personnel maintain an inviting and welcoming atmosphere for student study, research, and technology needs. The library has developed an extensive library instruction program, which supports college success for all SCC students.

2.E.4 Evaluation of Library and Information Resources

Library faculty and staff are positive, welcoming, and are deeply committed to the success of SCC students. The library has conducted comprehensive and strategic evaluation of the services provided incorporating the needs of their entire community of users. They have made significant progress in using routine data collection to inform improvements in the library collection and physical space.

The physical library collection is secured with barcodes, electromagnetic tapes, and security gates. Faculty, staff, and students reported feeling safe in the library spaces and buildings. They also expressed a deep appreciation for the thoughtful provision of library services during the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the safety of students and employees the top priority while providing prioritized access to laptops, printing, and WiFi hotspots.

Compliment: The SCC Library faculty and staff have developed an extensive program of information literacy, robust provision of technology support, and consistently promote and maintain an accessible, safe, and welcoming atmosphere for student learning and engagement.

Standard 2.F—Financial Resources

2.F.1 Financial Stability

SCC financial operations are centralized under the district office. Responsibility managed by the district business office includes budgeting, central accounting, student accounting, foundation accounting,

travel, employee reimbursements, grant and contract accounting, purchasing, contracting, cashiering, internal audit, and payroll.

The Chief Financial Officer of the district office prepares reports to the CCS Board on a monthly basis. Budget to actual reports are presented and demonstrate Spokane Community College's fiscal stability and cash flows.

The CCS Board of Trustees has an established reserve policy, Administrative Procedure 5.20.04-A Designated Reserves which provides for purposes of reserves and Administrative Procedure 5-20-04-B for a specific target for reserves in support of financial sustainability. The policy establishes a target of 5% of the base operating budget; however, the district indicates that at the current time a level of 15% is in place.

Risk management is coordinated at the district office. Several processes are in place including a self-insurance liability program administered through the State of Washington and commercial policies through the state for asset protection.

2.F.2 Resource Planning and Development

SCC's budget planning is primarily administered through the general operating budget, which consists of state appropriation, local student tuition, and college operating support. The largest revenue source is derived from the state appropriation, which is allocated by Washington State to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). SBCTC allocates funding to the community and technical colleges. The CSS District Office oversees the allocation, which supports SCC, Spokane Falls Community College and the district office. The state appropriation is 64.3% of the annual operating budget.

The second largest revenue stream is the local student tuition. Local tuition represents approximately 31.4% of the operating budget. Of the total local tuition, approximately 75% is maintained at SCC as part of the operating budget. Remaining allocation of the tuition is utilized in support of the ctcLink computer software upgrade, building fee, financial aid, and student activity fee.

SCC has realized a decline in enrollment and budget expenditures are adjusted to reflect decrease in revenue. The institution and district work closely with the SBCTC and the State of Washington regarding state appropriation shortfall targets and anticipated budget reductions. The reductions are anticipated as a result of the COVID-19 environment and anticipated state revenue shortfalls. Budget planning is consistent with these projected shortfalls and, in addition to state appropriation shortfall, also address changes in enrollment levels that impact tuition receipts.

The SBCTC implemented a phased approach to the computer system upgrade which included a replacement of the enterprise resource system. SCC was one of the institutions that was implemented in the initial deployment. Challenges were realized and specifically the financial system presented limitations. The college has lacked access to timely and reliable financial information. The ability for departments to obtain budget reports has not been accessible. Through appropriate resource allocations and decision making the institution has maintained fiscal stability and effective planning.

2.F.3 Financial Planning Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures

SCC has an established process for financial planning and budget development. Budget development is a comprehensive approach initiated by the District Office Chief Financial Officer in coordination with the Chancellor and institutional presidents. Prior to the deployment of ctcLink, budget policies and processes did not exist. As a result of the challenges noted above on the deployment of the system, challenges were realized in coordinating with stakeholders on financial planning and budget development.

SCC has recently implemented the Fiscal Strategies Committee. This committee includes a diverse set of stakeholders from across the college and is focused on implementing processes that support engagement. Through interviews with faculty and employee groups, the evaluation team noted positive feedback about the new process and engagement with the Fiscal Strategies Committee.

2.F.4 Timely and Accurate Financial Information

In 2015, SCC implemented the ctcLink system. As a result of the challenges noted above, the ability to receive timely and accurate financial information at the institution and department levels was not realized. The Oracle-based system does adhere to generally accepted accounting principles and has appropriate internal controls. However, the system implementation and deployment has not yielded the availability of information for budget managers and users.

The district office and budget staff have made improvements of accessibility of financial data for purposes of generating reports that can be shared with end users. This process is currently being completed by the budget staff and disseminated via spreadsheets to appropriate leadership.

Improvements to the ctcLink software system are in process that will enable functionality of the system for accessibility of financial information and use on campus.

Concern: Financial information has not been systematically disseminated to stakeholders for the purposes of financial planning and resource management.

2.F.5 Capital Budgets

Capital planning at SCC is accomplished consistent with processes outlined by the State of Washington, SBCTC, and the CCS District Office. All capital planning is consistent with the SCC Master Plan which is foundationally aligned with the core themes and instructional and service programs.

Capital funds are received through either an appropriation by the State of Washington for new construction or renovation and allocation of funding for minor repairs and improvements. SCC can incur debt as needed for capital projects and those are achieved through a Certificate of Participation (COP). Issuance of state issued bonds requires approval by the state.

2.F.6 Relationship between General Operations and Auxiliary Enterprises

Auxiliary enterprise operations at SCC are accounted for in separate designated funds. These operations include printing, motor pool, bookstore, parking and other auxiliary activities. The Chancellor or

designee is authorized to approve transfers from unobligated funds if necessary, to address institutional needs.

2.F.7 External Financial Audit

The CCS is subject to annual financial audit procedures and processes which are conducted by the State of Washington. Audits of financial statements and the A-133 are required on an annual basis. SCC has completed the A-133 each year and ensures that adherence to internal controls of federally funded programs and compliance with federal regulations.

As part of the self-evaluation report, SCC noted that annual financial audits have not been completed since 2015. As noted previously, challenges have been realized by SCC associated with the implementation of ctcLink. Due to the limitations of accessibility to financial information, annual financial statements have not been completed for the periods ending June 30, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

During the evaluation visit, the district office confirmed that a plan is currently underway to address the prior year audits. The plan includes securing the services of Moss Adams LLP to complete the preparation of the CCS financial statements for the prior years, which will then be reviewed by the State Auditor's Office.

Concern: Financial audit processes have not been completed in a regular and timely manner.

2.F.8 Fundraising Activities

The CSS District has entered into a Cooperative Agreement with the District 17 Community Colleges Foundation. The foundation is the primary fundraising organization for the college. The agreement specifies the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the foundation on behalf of the district and its colleges. The foundation works with the SCC President to set priorities for philanthropy, which align with the priorities of the college.

Standard 2.G—Physical and Technological Resources Instructional and Support Facilities

2.G.1 Physical Facilities

SCC maintains its physical facilities in a safe, secure, and sufficient manner in support of student learning. Facilities are appropriate in quality and quantity and staff ensure a healthful learning and working environment.

Facility and ground support are maintained by the district office. This includes enhancement of facilities ensuring spaces are sufficient to meet program needs. The Facilities Department recently completed a space utilization review and study to ensure that buildings and spaces are being used in an efficient and effective manner. This study and the data has been instrumental as the college is underway in planning for the loss of part of the campus as a result of a recent settlement with the State of Washington Department of Transportation. As part of the settlement, the College will be required to relocate a building and will lose over 700 parking spaces.

Projects are in place to accommodate for the impact and have been developed in concert with the SCC leadership, programs, and services. These projects include: renovation of spaces to accommodate displaced academic programs; relocation of Campus Safety and Environment, Safety and Health; and construction of new parking.

As a result of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the facilities staff has been instrumental in ensuring that safety processes and protocols are addressed. The priority of maintaining healthy and safe facilities during this unprecedented time has been at the forefront of the custodial team and facilities technical team. As institutions across the state and across the country closed their doors, the facilities employees were maintained and/or the first to return to campus in advance of resumption of operations.

Compliment: The SCC facilities and custodial staff have ensured the implementation of health and safety protocols, allowing campus facilities to remain operational during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.G.2 Hazardous Materials Policies and Procedures

CCS Board Policy 2.3.05 provides for policies regarding the dedication of health and safety for faculty, staff, and students. Safety officers work with faculty and staff on campus to ensure protocols and risk analysis is completed in the areas of public health, air and water quality, worker health and safety, biohazards, and chemical waste disposal and cleanup.

Procedures exist outlining requirements for the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. Employees are provided information and reporting as required by state regulations. All hazardous materials used in the workplace are labeled, used, and stored in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and requirements. Safety Data Sheets are maintained online and in paper format. All materials are stored in appropriate, flammable storage cabinets as required.

2.G.3 Physical Development Master Plan

SCC has in place a comprehensive Master Plan. The Campus Master Plan was last updated in 2016 and 2017; was approved by the Board in Spring 2017, and is inconsistent with the college's mission, core themes, and strategic plan alignment. The plan is regularly updated and reflects the long-term building and planning needs for all locations. The Campus Master Plan is inclusive of the institution's commitment to growth, sustainability, safety, and accessibility.

2.G.4 Campus Equipment

SCC works collaboratively with academic departments on specific equipment for programs. Opportunities for departments to obtain equipment through institutional budget processes are widely available. Equipment upgrades and replacement are primarily funded through a variety of resources including the Technology Fee, operating budgets, and district resources.

2.G.5 Technology Systems and Infrastructure

Technology systems and infrastructure are managed through the CCS for SCC. The institutional network provides support for faculty, staff, and students. Infrastructure support is managed and supported for all operations, academic programs and support services wherever and however delivered. IT provides support for approximately 6,200 desktops and devices for labs, classrooms, faculty and staff.

Technological Infrastructure

2.G.6 Effective Use of Technology

Information technology at SCC is administered through the district office and the office of IT Customer Support. Support for students and college faculty and staff with technology is administered through this unit. Training and development on the utilization of systems, software and technology is accomplished through support from the centralized help desk and training and development. Additional resources are available through the district human resources office via LinkedIn Learning for training purposes.

2.G.7 Technological Infrastructure Planning

SCC has in place a governance council that encompasses faculty, staff, students and IT personnel. The IT Governance Advisory Council (ITGAC) provides a venue for input of requests, needs, and concerns of students, faculty, staff. Administrators have input into the development of strategic priorities. Priorities are communicated regarding academic, student services, administrative systems, and emerging technologies. Opportunities to address ctCLink implementation are included. The work of the ITGAC provides input across the district to establish a shared vision, strategic commonality, standards, and governance.

2.G.8 Technology Update and Replacement

The IT Governance Council develops annually a Districtwide Sustainability Plan that supports the technology needs across SCC, Spokane Falls Community College, and the district office. Lifecycle replacement planning updates are currently in development at this time at SCC. Replacement of equipment has occurred in a timely manner in support of students, academic programs, and services.

As SCC transitioned to a remote environment in March 2020, the IT department engaged comprehensively in support of faculty, staff, and students. Support included procuring laptops, assisting in the transition of pedagogy and deployment of curriculum in the virtual environment, and connectivity (hot spots). This work expanded access for students on campus, utilizing exterior spaces to keep students connected.

The IT office is engaged in project management protocols and practices to support the district. This process includes ensuring evaluation, assessment, and continuous improvement are embedded in operations and customer service.

Section Three

Standard 3.A.—Institutional Planning

3.A.1 Planning and Mission Fulfillment

The evaluation committee found evidence that SCC engages in various layers of planning leading to mission fulfillment. At the district level, a ten-year CCS Strategic Plan (2011-2021) outlines broad initiatives for the district. The CCS Board reviews progress reports from the colleges and district administrative units on a quarterly basis. A Strategic Planning Team consisting of faculty, staff, and

administrators from across the district began meeting in July 2019 to draft the next district-level strategic plan using a comprehensive process. This work has been slowed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the college level, SCC has experienced turnover in the president's position, resulting in faltering efforts to develop and implement a strong strategic vision. Several changes to committee structure and processes were implemented in 2018-2019, and SCC is now in the first year of implementation of a two-year institutional effectiveness plan (2019-2021). This plan is aligned with the CCS Strategic Plan mentioned above, and includes strategic goals, indicators for assessment, an assessment plan, and key tasks. The President's Cabinet oversees the plan. As expressed in the overview of the institutional plan, the purpose is to "explain, document, and track the continuous improvement efforts and strategic goals" of the college.

The evaluation team found that the CCS Strategic Plan, Core Themes, and Institutional Effectiveness Plan were clear and fairly well understood by college employees. However, planning at other levels of the college was less clear. The evaluators were unable to find an example operational plan, unit plan, or budgetary plan, as mentioned in SCC's self-evaluation report. The lack of these planning documents was somewhat related to lost access to budget management information at the district level during ctcLink implementation. This resulted in a lack of real-time information causing unit-level planning and budgeting to wane. Interviews with college leadership revealed that developing unit budgets is a high priority for the college.

Concern: Lack of budgetary information has caused planning and budgeting efforts at some levels of the college to wane. A comprehensive planning process that includes all levels of the college is a priority. Each plan should be clearly integrated with the mission, core themes, and strategic priorities of the college.

3.A.2 Broad-Based, Inclusive Planning Process

Overall planning efforts at SCC include all stakeholder groups, with ample opportunity for input. Draft institution-level plans are widely available and vetted routinely through all-college meetings, various committees, faculty forums, student government, and advisory committees.

Compliment: Consistent communication from SCC leadership has created a culture of transparency and trust. Faculty and staff reported many opportunities to participate in committees and provide input.

3.A.3 Planning Informed by Appropriate Data and Analysis

The college's Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Initiatives supports campus-wide data use and analysis through service on several committees, maintenance of several dashboards on "Data Central" on the staff intranet, and ensuring accessibility of annual reports via a shared drive. The Cabinet assesses progress toward strategic goals using a Mission Fulfillment Scorecard included in an annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. Institutional priorities are set and adjusted based upon these data and the information they provide about the core theme key performance indicators and outcomes of broad-based college initiatives.

Compliment: SCC has invested significant time and energy to campus-wide data sharing and data literacy. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has been instrumental in empowering faculty and staff to understand and use data to inform practices and guide recommendations.

Concern: The newly established structure for college-wide planning and assessment has not been fully implemented and used to evaluate fulfillment of SCC's mission.

3.A.4 Comprehensive Plan and Resource Allocation

Decisions about resource allocation and application of institutional capacity are guided by SCC's institutional plan, which is designed to clearly articulate priorities and goals campus-wide. The President's Cabinet makes final decisions on how to allocate resources, and seeks recommendations and guidance from across the college. The evaluation team found strong evidence of several opportunities for input, but college planning and budgeting documents were immature and/or not yet developed. For example, a recently formed Fiscal Strategies Committee has been helpful with messaging about budget decisions, how to enhance resource allocation, identify needs, but planning to ensure that resources are adequate for mission fulfillment is not yet developed.

Concern: SCC lacks a formal budgeting process that articulates priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity.

3.A.5 Emergency Preparedness and Contingency Planning

A review of the CCS District's Emergency Management Plan and SCC's department-level Continuity of Operations Planning, along with campus interviews, provided evidence that SCC has given significant attention to planning for emergencies. This planning proved especially helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. The college has put clear procedures in place that are well understood by faculty, staff, and students. An emergency alert system provides information during emergencies via SMS message, email, phone, websites, and social media. The SCC president and vice presidents are required to complete National Emergency Management Training, and may recommend changes to emergency preparedness for the Chancellor's approval.

Compliment: The Emergency Management Plan and Continuity of Operations Planning have demonstrated their value in SCC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section Four

Standards 3.B., 4.A., and 4.B.—Core Theme Planning, Assessment, and Improvement

3.B. Core Theme Planning

The Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) district outlines a strategic plan for both institutions within the district. The district is currently updating this document and SCC has involvement in this process. At the SCC campus level, the Institutional Effectiveness Plan that was adopted in 2019 functions as the college strategic planning document. The Institutional Effectiveness Plan crosswalks the CCS district goals to those of SCC. Woven through the Institutional Effectiveness Plan are the four core themes and

their respective objectives. Because each core theme utilizes the same indicator areas (access, progression, completion, and outcomes) there is consistency and alignment in planning for each theme.

Each core theme is defined with an overall objective, four objective areas (access, progression, completion and outcomes), and metrics for each of the indicators within those areas. Core Theme Teams plan and guide each of these components, analyze data, and make recommendations to the President's Cabinet. Each Core Theme Team consists of two co-chairs (a dean and a faculty member), 12 faculty members, and a professional exempt employee. This membership, which utilizes a large number of faculty members, appears to strengthen the connection to academic programs.

SCC has adopted a two-year Institutional Effectiveness Plan (2019-2021). This document appears to be readily known on campus by different stakeholder groups. Core theme improvement cycles are included in the Institutional Plan, including an Assessment of Plan, Improvement Calendar, templates, task outlines, and reports. The Outcomes and Metrics tables (dashboards) show metrics and related data points to assist with recommendations and resources to support the objectives. Each core theme has a report with recommendations. The reports are discussed by the Core Theme Teams, and with the campus. The Mission Fulfillment Funnel shows how the core themes link to each level of planning at the college. In a forum with college staff, it was stated that the Workforce Core Theme Team combs "through data and resources to try to actively understand all the components of the student experience at SCC from access to outcomes."

In interviews with Core Theme Team members, the newly created data dashboard online was noted as a way to easily and visually see the data from all four core themes to assist with planning and guide effective strategy development to achieve the stated goals. The indicators are appropriate to measure the objective.

Each core theme sets a threshold value and an aspirational goal. The aspirational goal strives to go beyond the mission especially in key areas (high priorities). Many of the SCC team members appear to utilize the data dashboards to prepare recommendations and make decisions. In addition, time was taken to define key terms to help with campus discussions regarding the data.

One example from the Workforce Development Core Theme Team was that of adding additional orientations to programs in the Professional Technical programs. This initiative, although not explicitly outlined in the core theme indicators, supports the objective areas of student access and progression.

4.A-Assessment

Core Themes

SCC is collecting a significant amount of data through a variety of methods including the Guided Pathways initiative, core theme indicators, program reviews, and learning outcomes assessment. In the past two years, this data has been collected and used more systematically to evaluate progression to achieving core theme objectives.

For example, in the Workforce Development Core Theme, annualized full-time student equivalent (FTE) and application to enrollment data are used to measure student access to workforce programs.

The College Readiness Core Theme Team looks at indicators such as progression and completion of students, and sets goals based on previously collected data. Examples of the indicators include: the percentage of students who persist after taking developmental math and English courses; the percentage of students who complete college-level English after taking developmental math and English; and the percentage of students who transfer from basic skills into college level each year.

The Student Success Core Theme Team looks at first to second year retention to evaluate the success of the core theme objective of progress. The indicators across the four core themes provide sufficient data for Core Theme Teams to get a clear picture of the core theme objectives.

In the core theme of Academic Transfer, the data dashboard measures a student's progression towards completion using a variety of indicators, including college-level credit accumulation in the first year, and completion of college-level math.

Programs and Services

Evaluation of programs and services is completed in the program review process. Assessments are completed by faculty and staff in the areas using a common form and included into planning by the unit being reviewed. Faculty are the primary reviewers in educational programs.

Programs are reviewed every five years. Program review is not just about programs but is discipline specific. For example, a program review of the English curriculum included three areas: developmental, composition, and literature. This review included assessment at discipline level and each area went through student artifacts and a department discussion on how to improve.

Compliment: Multiple faculty members and deans shared with the evaluation team that since the program review process was updated, program review has moved from an administrative formality to an activity that faculty actively embrace and view as valuable.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

The Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC) regularly reviews and assesses student learning outcomes using a defined rubric. This process has been improved in the past two years. The current system uses rubrics for assessment (Rubric for Evaluating Program Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Artifacts). Feedback from the data used in assessment can be looped back to implement improvements. It was noted by a math faculty member during an interview that in the past, data was collected but not used to close the loop. In addition, an English faculty member stated that through intentional course mapping and revision of outcomes, a course was better designed to fit the distribution areas more effectively.

SCC adopted a Guided Pathways initiative in 2018 with institutional effectiveness at the center of these conversations and development. Self-assessments, data dashboards, and goal-oriented project management tools have been implemented. Guided Pathways initiatives are included in the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Other initiatives include the Core Theme Teams and the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC). SCC has worked to ensure that there is cross-representation in the membership of the Core Theme Teams and the SLAC to promote coordination and avoid duplicating efforts.

Each Core Theme Team identifies thresholds (minimal performance for mission fulfillment) and goals (aspirational performance) for each indicator included in that core theme. These levels are regularly evaluated by each Core Theme Team to look for patterns or significant changes in the indicator. The teams make regular recommendations to the executive administration regarding programs and services based off of the indicators. The executive administration reviews these recommendations and uses the information to inform planning, resource allocation, and strategic activities.

The Assessment Leadership Teams functions as a link between different groups such as the Core Theme Teams and the SLAC to help ensure results are utilized for improvement. Communication between the SLAC, Core Theme Teams, Assessment Leadership Team and the executive administration at regular intervals adds assurance that assessment data is being utilized meaningfully.

4.B–Improvement

Core Themes

Each of the four core themes uses meaningful indicators to measure achievement and information planning, decision making, and allocation of resources. These indicators were derived from the Achieving the Dream initiative. Concerning resource allocation to support initiatives, the evaluation team found through interviews that the process was defined and decisions were made by the Cabinet upon recommendations from the Core Theme Teams. Those recommendations from the Core Theme Teams and responses from Cabinet are represented and disseminated to the college in its annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. Multiple Core Theme Team members commented that the Institutional Effectiveness Report made them feel like their Core Theme Team service had a real audience and that their recommendations would actually influence the direction of SCC.

An example of Academic Transfer Core Theme data being used for process improvement was shared with the team. In this example, the team noted that online student's performance was lower than that of on-ground students. In response to this identified lower performance, SCC began seeking grant funding to help address disparities, and began coordinating activities with the district offices aimed at online student success.

Plans for improvement noted by the Student Success Core Theme Team include connecting all stakeholders to relevant student success programs, resources, and initiatives. Increased understanding of these resources across campus will allow employees to connect students with resources as appropriate.

Learning Outcomes

SCC engages in a regular cycle of data collection (quantitative and qualitative) as part of its ongoing assessment activities. This practice is evident in the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. The college states that the information is shared "at least annually" through a variety of channels. Student learning is evaluated primarily by the faculty and efforts are overseen by the Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC).

The SLAC evaluates student artifacts related to college-wide abilities. They also use data and structural assessments of student learning, for example, reviews of the alignment of program learning outcomes

and college-wide abilities to inform their findings. They publish reports highlighting their findings, share their work at Faculty Forums, and create professional development programming based on insights from this data review.

Section Five

Standard 5.A—Mission Fulfillment

Over the past seven years, Spokane Community College has experienced turnover in executive leadership (three presidents and two vice presidents of instruction) as well as the negative effects of implementing a new ERP, ctcLink. These changes resulted in challenges for business processes, budgeting, data structures, as well as delayed progress on key tasks such as student learning outcomes assessment, institutional and unit planning, and the development of mission fulfillment scorecards. Recently, the college has established a regular process of institution-level assessment. Accomplishments are measured based upon evidence that is gathered in relation to core theme indicators as well as outcomes of broad-based college initiatives. The process includes participation from a wide range of campus constituents and data is used to inform continuous improvement efforts.

Concern: The evaluation team found minimal evidence of regular completion of assessment cycles. Having recently established the use of an institutional effectiveness plan, SCC has not yet documented regular use of assessment data to evaluate accomplishments at all levels of the college, to plan for changes, allocate resources appropriately, implement changes, and then evaluate effectiveness.

SCC uses a Mission Fulfillment Scorecard that is included in the Institutional Effectiveness Report, along with Core Theme Team progress, Guided Pathways progress, and goals/plans for the upcoming year. Core Theme Teams develop requests and recommendations, to which the President's Cabinet commits to specific projects, requests, and resources that support mission fulfillment. Due to the setbacks mentioned above, the process of core theme evaluation and mission fulfillment determination is relatively new, with the scorecard structure implemented in 2018-2019. SCC now has a comprehensive set of core theme dashboards that should facilitate continued improvement efforts.

As SCC continues to implement the Mission Fulfillment Scorecard and the institutional framework described above, a cyclical process whereby assessment results are regularly evaluated to guide operational recommendations in support of mission fulfillment is emerging. This process includes the important components of inclusion and communication with internal stakeholders.

Concern: SCC does not have maturity in using the recently developed assessment tools, such as the mission fulfillment scorecard and institutional effectiveness report, in order to make accurate determinations regarding the level of mission fulfillment.

Standard 5.B—Adaptation and Sustainability

The recent establishment of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan demonstrates a commitment to evaluation of the adequacy of resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations. The process is very new, and its effectiveness has not yet been realized.

The institution has experienced a decline of enrollment in recent years. This reduction in enrollment is coupled with a projected decrease in state appropriations anticipated as a result of a projected decline in state revenues. SCC has an appropriate reserve that exceeds policy threshold.

Revenue decreases, lack of available financial reporting, and an Institutional Effectiveness Plan that has recently entered the implementation phase have resulted in unclear alignment of institutional planning to SCC's mission, core theme objectives, and achievement of goals and planned outcomes of programs and services. Comprehensive planning, assessment, and the ability to allocate resources should demonstrate alignment consistent with continuous improvement in support of programs and services.

Concern: The evaluation team did not find documentation of regular evaluation of resources and capacity with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.

Planning and assessment processes at the institutional level are beginning to be documented and reported to the broader community through the Institutional Effectiveness Report. The college has questioned the adequacy and meaningfulness of its assessment processes. It is in the beginning stages of re-evaluating its core themes and college-wide abilities.

Connection of resource allocation consistent with goals and objectives, core themes, and the mission is a work in progress. SCC has a comprehensive plan to connect planning, objectives, unit plan development, assessment and evaluation, and connection to resource allocation. This structure is in the implementation and deployment phase but has not been fully realized. An additional barrier has been the challenge realized through the implementation of ctcLink and the limitation of available financial planning and budget reporting.

Concern: SCC does not have a fully developed framework that connects planning, assessment, and evaluation to resource allocation in support of continuous improvement.

The institution regularly monitors its internal environment through the data collection processes described throughout this report. The college also monitors its external environment using regular environmental scans, which explore demographics, student characteristics, and workforce trends. It was unclear to evaluators how the results of these data gathering processes are used to define the college's future direction and to revise its planning and assessment processes moving forward.

Data collection within the Institutional Effectiveness framework and Mission Fulfillment Scorecard, taking into account internal and external environments, will assist SCC to guide future strategic planning. Mission, core themes, goals, and objectives can be evaluated and updated as needed to set appropriate future direction for programs and services.

Concern: The evaluation team did not find evidence of a clearly established data-driven framework that guides updates to its mission, core theme objectives, goals, or objectives of programs or services in order to guide planning into the future.

Commendations

The evaluation committee commends Spokane Community College . . .

1. leadership for establishing a climate of respect, open and honest communication, transparency, and collaboration across all levels of the college.
2. on its strong commitment to the mission of the college, focus on equity and holistic student support, and collaborative efforts to advance college-wide initiatives through data-informed practices that support student success.
3. on establishing a safe and secure campus, and effectively planning and preparing for emergencies. Such planning helped ensure continued and safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Library faculty and staff for their extensive program of information literacy, robust provision of technology support, and for consistently promoting and maintaining an accessible, safe, and welcoming atmosphere for student learning and engagement.
5. for its broad support of faculty through the Teaching and Learning Center, and its campus-wide support of data literacy.

Recommendations

The evaluation committee recommends that Spokane Community College . . .

1. complete financial audit processes in a regular and timely manner. (2020 Standards - 2.E.1, Eligibility Requirement 20; 2010 Standards - 2.F.7).
2. disseminate financial information to stakeholders for the purposes of financial planning and resource management. (2020 Standards - 2.E.2; 2010 Standards - 2.F.4).
3. continue to develop the system of continuous improvement and fully implement the use and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data to evaluate objectives and document how the assessment process drives planning and resource allocation. (2020 Standards - 1.B.1, 1.B.3; 2010 Standards - 3.A.1, 3.A.4, 5.A.1, 5.A.2, 5.B.1, 5.B.2)