Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Comprehensive
Peer-Evaluation Report

Big Bend Community College
Moses Lake, Washington

October 1-3, 2012

A confidential report of findings prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
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Introduction
Big Bend Community College, located in Moses Lake, Washington, serves a diverse and isolated rural population of nearly 108,000. The Moses Lake campus is located 75 miles from any other institution of higher education, and the district encompasses a 4,600 square-mile area that includes all of Adams, Grant, and a portion of Lincoln Counties. From this campus services are provided to 15 primary communities. In addition to being rural, the district has low educational attainment, with 28% of adults having less than a high school diploma or equivalent.

Recent Accreditation History
The College has been accredited since 1965:

1974  Full-scale: Accreditation reaffirmed, including PREP Program in Germany
1978  Regular Interim: Accreditation reaffirmed.
1978  Progress: Accepted the evaluation committee’s report of the program on military bases in Germany offered by Big Bend Community College (BBCC) under a contract with the U.S. Army. Approval subject to receipt of the audited financial statement.
1985  Progress: Report accepted.
1987  Regular Interim: Accreditation reaffirmed. Requested a progress report in fall 1988 to address (1) funding for the European program, and (2) status of litigation.
1989  Progress: Report accepted.
1997  Regular Interim: Accreditation reaffirmed.
2001  Substantive Change: Expand scope of the College’s distance delivery program, including participation in WAOL – minor change.
2002  Full-scale: Accreditation reaffirmed.
2008  Accreditation: Accreditation reaffirmed.
2012  Year One: Accreditation reaffirmed.
Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report and support materials.

The evaluation visit of October 1-3, 2012, lasted two-and-a-half days, during which the evaluators conducted interviews, reviewed evidence organized by the College, and toured the facilities. The College had the evidence documents easily accessible in the team room that was made available to the evaluators. The faculty and staff were collegial and hospitable, and the support provided to the evaluators in terms of technology, navigating the campus, food and other clerical needs was extensive. The evaluation team found the Self-Evaluation Report to be very well organized, comprehensive and thorough.

Eligibility Requirements

Big Bend Community College appears to meet the Eligibility Requirements of the NWCCU. It has five decades of operation and graduates a number of students with certificates and degrees each year. It is authorized to provide higher education by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The college has a published mission and has identified core themes appropriate to its role as a community college: “The mission of Big Bend Community College is to serve the educational needs of a diverse population throughout its service district.” The core themes are Access, Partnerships, Student Achievement, and Climate. The mission and core themes were approved by the governing board.

The institution has a five-member governing Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of Washington, which employs the President and delegates responsibility to the President to conduct the business of the college in accordance with the policy guidance set by the Board. The college employs a central administrative staff hired by the College President and a faculty of full-time and part-time membership. The educational programs meet rigorous national standards, and there is both general education and related instruction offered as appropriate to each degree or certificate. There is appropriate library, physical and technological infrastructure in place, and the college operates with academic freedom for employees and students. There are appropriate admissions processes in place to support students, and there is appropriate public information, including a published college catalog. The college has financial resources appropriate to a college of its size and complexity and undergoes an external financial audit by the state of Washington annually.

The college discloses information as appropriate to the Commission and accepts the standards and policies of the Commission. There are published student learning outcomes for degrees and programs, and the College appears to have appropriate processes in place to assure institutional effectiveness. It appears to operate at an appropriate scale to its resources and purpose and is sustainable as a member of public higher education in Washington.
Chapter One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

Big Bend Community College (BBCC) has a mission statement that is well defined, is appropriate for an institution of higher education, and is approved by the Board and widely understood by the campus community (1.A.1). BBCC’s mission identifies five program areas plus student support services (pg. 18):

- college transfer
- occupational and technical programs
- basic skills and developmental education
- community and continuing education
- pre-employment and customized training
- support services for access, success, and retention.

The college conceives mission fulfillment as being defined by both the mission and the Board Ends statements (pg. 18), with the “the primary tool for measuring Mission fulfillment” being the annual and final Academic Master Plan (AMP) “Outcomes Monitoring Report” (pg. 20). This integrated strategic planning approach is consistent with accreditation standard 1.A, which calls for defining mission fulfillment “in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations” and articulating outcomes that “represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment” (1.A.2). The evaluators applaud the thoroughness of this work.

Standard 1.B defines a process for assessing mission fulfillment:

- establishing a set of objectives for each core theme, and for each objective
- defining “meaningful, assessable and verifiable” data indicators
- that together form the basis for evaluating the core theme objectives.

In aggregate, meaningful assessment of the data indicators is used to establish the accomplishment of each core theme objective, and accomplishment of the core theme objectives establishes assessment of the core theme(s) and the mission overall.

However, the college has used Board of Trustee “Ends Statements” (from 2002) to define its core themes. Standard 1.B calls for a direct relationship of the core themes with the mission statement, in that the core themes are to “individually manifest” and “collectively encompass” the mission. The evaluators find that defining the core themes by the Ends Statements does not create the appropriate relationship between the mission and core themes.

The objectives that are defined for the core themes are not in alignment with and are not as robust as the outcomes and associated data of the AMP process. Core theme objective ratings are assigned through deliberation independently by staff and by the Trustees and then compared. The evaluators find that this method for creating ratings is not based solely on the defined core theme
objectives and indicator data, and the ratings are not verifiable because they cannot be replicated empirically based on the source data and/or documented campus deliberations.

The evaluators appreciate the aspirational value of efforts to maintain a parallel definition of mission fulfillment and recognize that this is work that reflects and reinforces the goals and culture of the College. Nonetheless, this work does not flow naturally from the Mission and core themes. The evaluators suggest that BBCC revisit its mission statement and definition of core themes to “individually manifest” and “collectively encompass” the mission and revisit the definition and assessment of indicator data to create an empirically supported threshold of mission fulfillment based on its core themes.
Resources and Capacity

Standard 2.A Governance

The evaluators find that the composition and scope of work of the AMP committee, Cabinet and Instructional Council among others provide for effective consideration of the views of students, faculty, staff and administrators on matters in which they have a “direct and reasonable interest.” The institution monitors compliance with the standards for Accreditation with well-established communication among stakeholders. (2.A.1, 2.A.3)

The evaluators find that the Board of Trustees is appropriately composed. The Board adheres to Carver Policy Governance, a well-established and widely understood system of governance concerning, among other things, actions and authority of the Board, oversight of institutional policy, and delegation of authority to a chief executive officer. At the time of writing, the comprehensive self-evaluation reported that there is no regular review of policies and procedures. However, the institution has recently developed a matrix of responsibilities for reviewing policies and procedures. The policies and procedures are currently being reviewed by the Board of Trustees and Administrators and will be updated every three years. Policies and related procedures are readily available on the college website. (2.A.4, 2.A.5, 2.A.6)

The board selects and regularly evaluates the President, who is accountable for the operation of the institution (2.A.7).

The college has an effective and appropriately staffed system of leadership, including chief executive officer, and these administrators work effectively across institutional functions and units. (2.A.9, 2.A.10, 2.A11)

Academic policies are published in the BBCC College Catalog and posted on the BBCC website. Policies regarding academic standards of progress, academic honesty, and classroom discipline are also addressed in the BBCC Student Handbook, which is updated annually and available in print and online. (2.A.12)

Technology use and printing policies are in place and published on the institution's website and in the Student Handbook. Users must acknowledge the Technology Use Policy before accessing the college network. More extensive information on the Technology Use Policy and Procedures is published in the Employee Handbook. The institution provides prominent links to information about the library from the institutional website and the student portal. Instructions for off-campus access to library databases are also provided through the student portal. A notice regarding appropriate use of proprietary electronic resources is posted on the library website; however, database authentication security is weak. This issue has been raised within the Technology Advisory Committee, and BBCC is encouraged to act on its own recommendation to deploy more rigorous authentication methods. The library maintains a collection development policy which is used to guide resource selection. Information on copyright restrictions is available in the Faculty Negotiated Agreement and in the Student Handbook. Copyright notices are posted at library photocopiers and reserve procedures align with published information. Information about library resources and services, including lending policies, loan periods, fines and penalties, are
published on the library's website and the Student and Faculty Handbooks. The collection development policy is not replicated in standard college publications but is available for review in the library. References to encouraging faculty involvement in maintaining the collection appear in the Faculty Handbook. (2.A.13)

The institution’s Student Handbook, which is updated annually, clearly outlines policies and procedures regarding students’ rights and responsibilities. The Handbook is published in the college catalog, is on the college website and is included in the Student Planner, which is handed out at New Student Orientation. Copies of the Planner are also available at student services offices across campus. (2.A.15)

The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that include evaluation of student knowledge and skill levels. The evaluation is used to facilitate appropriate course assignments to help assure success at BBCC. Special admissions policies for Aviation, Nursing, Running Start and international students are found on the website, in the course catalog, or may be requested from the departments. Student appeals, grievances and policies regarding continuation in, and termination from, programs are outlined in the Student Handbook. (2.A.16)

The Associated Student Body mission statement provides a rationale for co-curricular activities at BBCC. The institution maintains and publishes policies and procedures stating its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities. These policies and procedures, which comply with administrative rules and regulations required by the State of Washington, are found on the college website within Board and Administrative policies. (2.A.17)

The institution’s human resources policies and procedures are published on its website. Board Policies and Administrative Processes are clearly outlined under the Information section. An equal opportunity in education and employment statement is published on the job opportunity section of the website. The Faculty Negotiated Agreement is also available for viewing within the Information section.

Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities within job openings information, contracts and job descriptions. Full-time employees receive information on work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria for evaluation at new employee orientations. The Negotiated Agreement provides this information to faculty, as does a special orientation given to new faculty regarding the Negotiated Agreement.

A brief review of randomly selected faculty files showed inconsistencies in evaluation documentation. Of the five randomly-selected faculty member evaluations to review, all five had appropriately recent student evaluation of teaching effectiveness data. One full-time instructor had no other input, while two others had the full complement of Peer, Self and Administrative input or evaluation. The one part-time instructor had a very brief letter from the supervising division dean stating approval of instructor performance. From this survey of evaluations, it is clear that each and every file is being updated on a regular basis, but there is
some unevenness in evaluation completion. The evaluators support the continuing review of employee evaluations to ensure consistency in the process.

Multiple opportunities exist for faculty and staff professional development throughout the year. New staff orientations, credit coursework, and updates trainings are ongoing. A statewide classified staff conference is held yearly, and BBCC will host the conference in 2013.

Even though BBCC has experienced deep budget cuts, through leveraging of employee talents and funds, the institution has not been required to lay off employees. Termination procedures follow the policies of the Washington State Human Resources rules, the Faculty Negotiated Agreement, and BBCC’s Board of Trustees Policies and administrative processes.

The Human Resource Office retains all personnel/human resource records, which are housed in locked fireproof filing cabinets. Medical Records are kept in a separate locking file cabinet. Only human resource employees have access to these records. Active, separated, and retired employees have the right to review their personnel files but only with the presence of HR staff. Administrators and supervisors have access only to evaluations, application materials, and transcripts. (2.A.18, 2.A.19, 2.A.20)

BBCC represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. The college catalog, which is updated annually, and the BBCC website communicate details pertaining to requirements for degree completion, program descriptions, and graduation information. Community focus groups provide the institution with feedback on how its communities perceive messages and information. The Director of Public Information and department heads review printed media to ensure accuracy of the materials. The Director of Public Information, who is a direct report to the President, is the institution's spokesperson. News releases prepared by appropriate college personnel are approved by the President before released. The President's State of the College address, which is publicized on the website and through local media, is also recorded and archived on website. News and information, course schedules, and the catalog are posted on the website. This process facilitates the quick release of new updates to the information. The college's website contains policies, employment information, and other information of interest to the public and its students and employees. (2.A.21)

BBCC includes its Board of Trustees in reviewing and updating its policies regarding professional conduct, performance evaluation and Trustee responsibilities. Ethics trainings are offered, and ethics violation case studies are examined and discussed within administrative and department meetings. Grievance procedures are described in college publications such as the Negotiated Agreement for faculty and Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Student Handbook. BBCC adheres to all Federal and State employment mandates, and all employees are entitled to due process as outlined in Washington's State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Policy Manual.

The Conflict of Interest Policy and Principles are published in the Employee Policies and Administrative Processes found on the college website. In the case of any potential conflict of interest as listed in the policy, the college administration is notified, at which time legal counsel
is contacted. The Foundation also has a conflict of interest policy. Policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from intellectual property are detailed in the Negotiated Agreement (See also 2.A.13). (2.A.22, 2.A.23, 2.A.24)

BBCC accurately represents its current accreditation status, and information concerning this status can be found on the college website. All agreements adhere to institutional policies and procedures, and comply with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. (2.A.25)

The Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services is responsible for reviewing all contracts for goods and services and other documents concerning financial obligations made on behalf of the College. Signature authority on these documents is limited to the President or his designee. All contracts are governed by written agreements following the comprehensive rules developed, audited, and enforced by the Washington State Attorney General's office and the State Auditor's office. Lease agreements are processed by the State's Department of Enterprise Services (DES) and capital projects are managed by DES's Engineering and Architectural Services. The business office handles all financial transactions, and the Director of Purchasing and Special Projects prepares agreements with vendors for goods and services. (2.A.26)

Board policies articulate the privileges and responsibilities of academic freedom. The board policies are consistent with the college’s mission, core themes, and values of providing an atmosphere of open inquiry and freedom of expression. The Negotiated Agreement with the Faculty Association addresses intellectual property rights as well as the rights and responsibilities of academic freedom and freedom of expression. (2.A.27, 28, 29)

The institution has clearly defined governance policies regarding Board and President expectations in Board Policy 1000. These policies include strict requirements for financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, financial integrity, reducing liability, protecting property, limiting spending, and collecting debts. In addition, the college follows accounting policies and procedures established by the State of Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) and documented in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM).

All of the financial functions of the college are organized under the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services, who reports to the college President. These include financial and business services, technology, bookstore, residence halls, facilities, operations, and services (2.A.30)
Standard 2.B Human Resources

The college employs a sufficient number of qualified staff and faculty to support the mission and daily operations despite having experienced student enrollment growth and significant reductions in state funding. Job duties have expanded, and new efficiencies have been identified as positions have been eliminated due to budget cuts. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated on the website. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position, and are reviewed regularly through the evaluation process and before new job openings are published.

The President has a multi-year contract and is evaluated by the Board of Trustees. Full-time administrative/exempt staff members receive annual contracts and are evaluated by their supervisors. Classified staff members are issued Notices of Employment when initially hired and job duties are clarified in annual work designation notices. Part-time employees are issued quarterly contracts. Faculty are evaluated based on the Negotiated Agreement. (2.B.1, 2.B.2)

Despite limited budgets and economic constraints, the college promotes professional development opportunities from a variety of resources: the Customer Service Task Force, three annual Faculty In-Service days, training sponsored by the Washington SBCTC, and professional organizations and other state agencies. Article IX of the Negotiated Agreement ties continued professional development (Professional Development Units—PDUs) to salary advancement. An Exceptional Faculty Award program is also available to promote faculty engagement in new projects to enhance teaching and learning. (2.B.3)

All faculty and staff are hired in accordance with State of Washington statutes. Transfer faculty members are required to have master’s degrees, and other faculty and staff are hired with the appropriate levels of experience depending upon their responsibilities. At present, faculty numbers are sufficient to achieve the institution’s objectives, participate in establishing policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of programming within the college’s service area and beyond. (2.B.4)

Faculty responsibilities are commensurate with the institution’s expectations. These responsibilities include establishing curriculum, writing learning outcomes, and updating the Master Course Outlines (MCO’s) for the catalog. These responsibilities are performed in collaboration with their department colleagues, Division Chair, and Dean. Instructional Council represents faculty to discuss instructional issues, hear reports for various constituencies outside faculty, and to approve MCO’s. (2.B.5)

Faculty members are evaluated in accordance with the Negotiated Agreement. Probationary, tenured and adjunct faculty members are all evaluated. A number of evaluative processes are used, including student and peer feedback and administrative and self-evaluations. The evaluation process is used to assist faculty to improve the quality of their instruction and to engage in collegial conversations about resources and support for improvement. While the institution has procedures for regular, systematic, and regular evaluations of faculty, as mentioned in 2.A.19, evaluators found some inconsistency among evaluations. (2.B.6)
Standard 2.C Education Resources

Big Bend Community College offers transfer degrees, professional/technical degrees, and occupational certificates. Programs are described on the College web page, catalog, and Self-Evaluation Report. Programs and degrees have appropriate content and rigor and are consistent with the College's Mission, which specifies the types of programs the college will offer (2.C.1).

The College has defined learning outcomes for courses. For programs, certificates, and degrees however, the evaluators found that stated outcomes tend to be performance outcomes rather than learning outcomes (2.C.2).

Expected student learning outcomes for courses are in the process of being clearly delineated in a newly established Master Course Outcomes (MCO) format. MCO’s are used as the authoritative source of course learning outcomes that are to be clearly specified on the course syllabus provided to students. The evaluators commend BBCC on the thoroughness of the MCO format, particularly its treatment of General Education outcomes. Conversion to this format is recognized as a work in progress, and the evaluators encourage the college to make the completion of this work a priority.

Expected outcomes for programs are published on the college website and available internally as a matter of record of the Instructional Council – they are not included in the catalog program description. The evaluators note that program outcomes in general are not learning outcomes and are not always well defined. The evaluators do not see a relationship and alignment between course outcomes and degree or program outcomes that is visible to students. (2.C.2)

Credit degrees are consistent with the credit equivalents of similar programs offered in other institutions (2.C.3) and have a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined in the catalog (2.C.4)

Faculty members work with their departmental chairs to establish curriculum, write learning outcomes, and update the Master Course Outlines (MCOs) for every course. Faculty along with department colleagues, Division Chairs, and Deans update MCOs for degree requirements. The Instructional Council (IC) is responsible for setting policy related to curriculum and instruction. The current faculty has an active role in the selection of new faculty. The faculty that have teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing students achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes. (2.C.5)

BBCC's Self Evaluation Report did not directly address the integration of library resources in the learning process and little data about computer usage or inventory were reported. However, there was evidence elsewhere in the materials provided and during the visit that support BBCC’s compliance with this standard.

Foundational skills instruction in the use of information resources is widely integrated across the curriculum as evidenced by the inclusion of information literacy in the General Education
outcomes. An assessment matrix documents which courses focus on skills related to Outcome #4 "gathering and interpreting information." Informational interviews revealed that library personnel were not actively involved in the creation of the General Education outcomes, including Outcome #4. The English program is the only group who demonstrated the use of a program-level rubric to directly assess information literacy outcomes. This rubric is well-developed and it was clear that within this program, intensive foundational work to define and assess information literacy attainment has occurred. Yet, no quantitative data were presented in support of student attainment of information literacy skills at the program or institutional level. Annual assessment reports for English indicate that this outcome is still under development.

Other evidence suggests that library efforts to support integration of library and information resource use into the learning process are positively impacting success in this area. Attendance in library instruction has been increasing steadily. New content and approaches that focus on evaluation of information were recently added to the library's instructional offerings. 2009 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results indicate that 53% of students report that their coursework emphasized "making judgments about the value or soundness of information" and interviews with students on campus suggested that library research assignments are consistently required within the curriculum.

Library instruction is also directly integrated into developmental English and College Skills classes. Though documentation of library involvement in, and impact on, the learning process was lacking, student survey data indicates that students are generally aware of library services and information resources. The 2010 Survey of Entering Student Engagement found that 70% of students felt that "instructors had explained academic and student support services available at BBCC." Students attending the student forum displayed broad-based awareness of library and other student services across program areas. The importance students place on specific services also indicates how central they are to the learning process. Students surveyed in the spring of 2010 cite the library and the BBCC portal as the most important student services.

Conversations with BBCC personnel revealed that about 300 computers are available for student use on campus and about 145 laptops acquired through grants and the Foundation are available for student checkout from the library and the Student Services Center. CCSSE findings show that 89% of students surveyed report active use of the college portal and 45% use email to communicate with their instructor. The same survey revealed that students' experience with their access to technology is positive (93%). BBCC also offers a range of instructional technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience (e.g. - ANGEL, lecture-capture, online proctoring, and tablets). These findings all point to active integration of technology in the learning process. (2.C.6)

BBCC no longer offers credit for prior experiential learning, but does grant credit by examination according to the college’s policy, which is described in the Course Catalog. Procedures are clearly described and credit is approved by the individual department. Credit by examination is not granted by every department on campus. Those programs and departments allowing credit by examination for certain courses are Business Information Technology, Aviation, and Aviation Maintenance Technology programs, foreign languages, and the English department. Credits granted by examination are so identified on student transcripts and do not
duplicate other credits. During the self-study process, BBCC identified that the policy of granting up to 45 credits by examination was not in compliance with NWCCU standards. Instructional Council adopted a proposal to reduce the maximum number of allowable credits by examination to 22 in April of 2012, and that policy change will take effect in Fall 2012. (2.C.7)

The college adheres to the guidelines in the Inter-College Relations Commission for the granting of associate degrees intended for transfer, including the Direct Transfer Agreement Associate Degree. The institution also participates in the Washington Community and Technical Colleges reciprocity Agreement where in-coming transfer students who have completed courses at a member institution are considered to have met those same requirements at BBCC. (2.C.8)

**Undergraduate Programs**

BBCC clearly and succinctly communicates the general education component required of all students seeking a degree (BBCC Catalog pp. 23-24). The four outcomes are appropriate in developing the breadth and depth of intellect. Criteria are included that further define the intended learning outcomes. Furthermore, the college has correlated the outcomes criteria to courses in a matrix document. The catalog includes an explanation of general education and its importance in life and career. Within the degree program course listings, the college identifies the requirements as Basic and Breadth within which subheadings of course groupings effectively align with the general education outcomes. Certificate programs clearly outline related instruction requirements in written/oral communication, human relations, and computation. (2.C.9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students will be able to write clearly and effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.a. Clarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.b. Logical flow from point to point</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.c. Sound support of assertions</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.d. Creative or divergent thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.e. Adhere to conventions of standard written English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.f. Sources adhere to citation/reference formats</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Students will be able to reason mathematically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.a. Interpret information in graph form</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.b. Understand and use statistical information</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.c. Understand geometrical concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.d. Work with numerical and algebraic relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Students will be able to solve problems combining and applying knowledge from multiple sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.a. Define the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.b. Break it into steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.c. Draw logical conclusions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.d. Generate multiple and diverse perspectives in trying to solve the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.e. Recognize extraneous information</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.f. Follow directions and fulfill the expectations of the assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Students will be able to gather and interpret information.</td>
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<td>4.a. Distinguish between well-supported and unsupported claims</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.b. Make comparisons and draw contrasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.c. Recognize the points of an issue or claim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.d. Access multiple sources of information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the course level, Master Course Outlines (MCOs) have been a required component of course approval processes, and are used to assure control of the curriculum. The college has recently revised the MCO template to better assure the creation of course student learning outcomes. For their work to provide student learning outcomes at the course level, including refining that process, the college is to be commended. The college’s General Education components have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes. The outcomes relate to the stated mission of the college.
All courses wherein criteria from the General Education outcomes are taught have been mapped providing the basis for learning outcomes assessment of the General Education outcomes. The Self Evaluation Report states, however, that the college has done little assessment of the General Education outcomes due to inconsistent methodologies in reporting. The evaluators verified that the college does not have a systematic process of assessing its General Education outcomes and therefore cannot demonstrate improvement based on that assessment. (2.C.10, 4.A.3, 4.B.2)

Related instruction coursework is clearly stated in the BBCC Course Catalog. The evaluators commend the college for clear and straightforward communication of the related instruction in the sections entitled “Breadth” (while General Education courses are listed under “Basic”). Learning outcomes are contained in the MCOs. There is, however, no system in place to assess student learning of those outcomes. While the college has identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are mapped to program courses, the college has not instituted systematic assessment of the related instruction. (4.A.3, 4.B.2)

**Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs**

Continuing Education programs at the college are primarily non-credit offerings and include online leisure learning offerings through the vendor-provided Ed2go as well as business and workforce development offered through the Center for Business and Industry Services (CBIS). CBIS routinely delivers customized training for businesses. Flagger, forklift, and Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARF) training are also part of CBIS and all but flagger trainings are credit-bearing courses, approved through Instructional Council. Continuing Education is also home to the PET (pre-employment testing) program, supported by industry partners.

Continuing Education offerings are compatible with the college’s core theme focus on partnerships and also complement the college’s professional and technical programming. The Continuing Education program is under the direct supervision of the Dean of Professional and Technical Education, which provides a direct conduit to the Instructional Committee for review and approval of credit-bearing continuing education offerings.

Continuing Education students complete an abbreviated registration form and their records are maintained by the registrar. Course content records and instructor profiles are maintained in Continuing Education offices. (2.C.16, 2.C.17, 2.C.18, 2.C.19)
Standard 2.D Student Support Resources

The institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs. Development of programs and services is driven by the institution’s mission, vision, core themes and Academic Master Plan. The institution has received a number of grants to assist students to access programming, persist in their courses, and complete and/or transfer to other institutions. Outcomes from these efforts are reviewed and analyzed on an ongoing basis.

Achieving the Dream outcomes and improvements assisted BBCC in collecting and more clearly analyzing student support outcomes. As a result, the institution has become more intentional in designing its programs to support services, evaluating the results, and revising and improving services. Receiving grant funding has become essential for providing additional outreach to students, enhancing student access, delivering supportive services, and overall, improving student success.

The institution, while relying on a substantial amount of grant funding to support its student services, understands that permanent reliance on grants is not sustainable. The Vice President of Human Resources and Labor reports that a plan for sustaining grant activities after funding resources end is in place. Most services and activities are being gradually incorporated into other existing programs as funding becomes available or programs are being reorganized. (2.D.1)

Big Bend Community College makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. A new position was created and a campus security officer was recently hired. The institution has developed a Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan in coordination with local emergency responders. Training and drills on emergency procedures are held annually.

An annual report on Crime Awareness is disseminated on campus yearly and is in compliance with the Clery Act. An opt-in Campus Alert System alerts students about campus-related incidences through text messages or email. (2.D.2)

The institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. Extensive orientation activities and programs have been developed and offered to meet the needs of the various populations the institution serves. Timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements are communicated to students through the course catalog, class schedules, the online Student Kiosk, program brochures, and the Student Handbook. A newly-developed Degree Audit system allows students to monitor their educational progress. An increase of degree and certificate completions is believed to be a direct result of students using this system. (2.D.3)

The institution follows the procedure for program deletion outlined in the Faculty Negotiated Agreement. The institution makes provisions for students to complete their degrees by teaching out current students, providing them with effective transfer options, or working with them to identify alternate educational paths. (2.D.4)
The college catalog and supplemental materials, such as the Student Handbook, clearly state the college’s mission, core themes, rights and responsibilities for students, and all policies, resources, program expectations and opportunities pertinent to students and student success. Specialized certifications and licensures are published within program information in the college catalog and online. (2.D.5, 2.D.6)

The institution safely secures the retention of student records and student identity, adhering to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Policies for maintaining confidentiality and privacy of student information are published in the college catalog, the Part-time Faculty Handbook, and the Faculty Handbook. Although an online FERPA tutorial is available to faculty and staff, the institution recognizes that “improvement in training of staff and faculty in FERPA is needed” (p. 72). The evaluators support the institution’s desire to improve training on FERPA policies and procedures. (2.D.7)

The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with the college’s mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding categories of financial assistance is published, readily available and is explained to students through outreach efforts at area high schools, and during New Student Orientations. Incoming registering students, who may not have participated in Orientation, have an opportunity to participate in mini-workshops where they receive information on financial aid and services as well. Students have immediate access to their own financial aid information through the Financial Aid Portal on the college website. (2.D.8)

Students receiving financial aid assistance are informed of any repayment obligations by accessing their information through the Financial Aid portal and through email communications from the Financial Aid Office. The institution regularly monitors and assesses its student loan programs by reviewing US Department of Education’s program guidelines and reports. (2.D.9)

The evaluators noted that the college supports student success with a proactive group of a highly educated, passionate advisors and faculty counselors. Ongoing and mandatory advising by counselors, faculty members, and a cadre of specialized student support specialists keep students abreast of program requirements and graduation requirements. Counselors have implemented a new system for reporting advising contacts to Institutional Research to track the effectiveness of advising efforts across campus. Advising information, including resources, requirements, and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to the students on BBCC’s website. (2.D.10)

As is consistent with the institution’s mission, the institution provides co-curricular activities that offer cultural enrichment and intercollegiate and intramural competition designed to promote school spirit. These activities also accommodate interests and talents of the students, enhance their out-of-classroom learning and help build a sense of community. (2.D.11)

The institution operates several auxiliary services that enhance the quality of students’ experiences while attending the college. Auxiliary services include the bookstore, student housing, and food services. These services support the institution’s mission. Students, faculty and staff provide ongoing feedback about services through Institutional Research and Planning
surveys. The bookstore, which is college-owned and operated, provides book rentals in order to reduce costs for students.

Two residential halls include lounges, kitchen and laundry facilities and are served by designated management, custodial, and security staff. Public transportation is also available nearby. Recent renovations add to the comfort of students living in these facilities. Food service is contracted with Sodexo, which also surveys students and staff regarding menus and services on a regular basis. (2.D.12)

The institution’s intercollegiate athletic program is consistent with the institution’s mission and is conducted with appropriate oversight. The institution belongs to the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC). In 2010-2011, approximately 84 athletes participated in three intercollegiate teams for women and two teams for men. Student athlete admission requirements and procedures, financial aid awards, academic standards and degree requirements are the same as for all students. Athletic-related financial aid is distributed following policies set by NWAACC. (2.D.13)

The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for distance students via its Learning Management System (LMS) and the BBCC Portal, which require a network login with password. (2.D.14)

Standard 2.E Library and Information Resources

The institution has made substantial investments in its library and study facilities. The new library/AITEC building was opened in 2005, tripling the library's square footage and updating library technology and teaching spaces. Collection shelving capacity also tripled. The new facility provides approximately 100 student-use computers and two technologically enhanced classrooms for library instruction, testing and student use. The library also benefits from modest rental revenue on these spaces. Ten new study rooms accommodate group collaborative study and learning. The new library is aesthetically open and inviting, and facility design is flexible and supports easy access to support staff. The English Skills lab is now housed in the library, and the Math and Science Resource Center has been temporarily relocated to the library while those facilities are being remodeled. BBCC has also invested in a new Student Success Center (SSC), further expanding student access to textbooks, laptops and student support services. The SSC is located in close proximity and provides a variety of complementary services to those housed in the library. This layout concentrates a variety of student support services in a single convenient location. Many of these new services and facilities were created through grants and external funding. The evaluators commend the institution on its support of student learning needs outside of the classroom and on the significant enhancements made to student-use facilities since the last accreditation cycle. The library/AITEC building and related services addressed important unmet needs. Planning for the facility was forward-looking, student-centered, and closely aligned with the core themes and the college's aspiration to create "wrap-around services" in support of student success.

The evaluators would also like to compliment the library, SSC, and other student resource centers on the supportive, caring, climate they create for students. Student feedback and foot
traffic patterns indicate that the new library is a popular, comfortable hub of student activity on
campus. In fact, foot traffic counts from the 2010 NCES survey are significantly higher than
other regional peers. Students also note the supportive, friendly environment created by library
staff. The Library now provides 240 study seats. These investments are aligned with core
themes, Access, Student Achievement and Climate.

Electronic resources are sufficient in currency and scope to support the institution's mission, core
themes, programs, and services, though comparisons with other peer institutions reporting to
NCES reveal that expenditures and the number of electronic databases is on the low side of the
spectrum for a rural school of this size. BBCC's electronic holdings and expenditures appear to
be on par with other peers in Washington. Some ebooks have been purchased. These
acquisitions represent approximately a seventh of the collection available locally. No recent
ebook acquisitions have been made. Print holdings are sufficient in number to support the
information needs of the BBCC population.

Access throughout the college's service area is supported through remote access to digital
resources and a books-by-mail service. Appropriate interlibrary loan services are available to
supplement local holdings, and loaning activity is in line with other rural peers in the region.
Major collection services are accessible to online and on-ground students. However,
expenditures on print/book-length materials have been decreasing steadily since 2008. An
inspection of the collection and interviews with staff revealed that some areas, especially those
supporting career and technical education are becoming increasingly outdated.

The committee identified a concern related to collection funding levels. Due to budget cuts,
expenditures on the book collection have experienced an 82% decrease since 2007-2008.
Current expenditures are unlikely to maintain resource currency at levels sufficient to support all
programs if sustained long-term. BBCC is encouraged to actively engage instructional faculty
and advisory groups in an evaluation of library resources (both print and electronic) to determine
long-range funding strategies that will ensure access to current resources for BBCC programs
and student attainment of information literacy skills. (2.E.1)

Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from
affected users. Students are regularly surveyed regarding the frequency of use, satisfaction and
perceived quality of library and information resources. These measures are reported to the
college Board and incorporated into indicators that measure student services support of the
institution's core themes. Levels of satisfaction with library, technology access, instructional
facilities, online education and computer labs are consistently high. The Library actively seeks
faculty involvement in the development of library resources. However, collaboration with
instructional faculty on resource acquisition and management could be more intentional and
pervasive. (2.E.2)

The BBCC library maintains a healthy and growing instruction program. Information literacy
instruction is progressing, though there is room for improvement (See 2.C.6 and 2.E.2). No
significant inequities were apparent in service delivery to students at a distance, but BBCC is
encouraged to continue its efforts to create virtual library instruction and online tutorials to
support these students. Big Bend Technology (BBT) offers brown bag information sessions to
support staff. The Library and BBT also partner throughout the year to provide workshops and beginning of term drop-in clinics, "Viking Technology Workshops," to help students. Library and BBT are to be commended on their recent collaborations to help students successfully navigate core instructional technologies, i.e., accessing student portal and ANGEL, using email, and setting up a network login. Students report a high level of satisfaction with technology support and very high satisfaction and quality ratings for library and computer labs for both academic transfer and professional technical populations. (2.E.3)

The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality and adequacy of library and information resources through established weeding practices and faculty-initiated consultations with librarians about resource needs. Direct feedback from users is also considered in selection. Standard review sources are regularly consulted, and clear evaluation criteria are utilized. Analysis of electronic resource utilization and return on investment could be more rigorous if resources were provided to acquire tracking tools. There is also local interest in licensing a federated search tool, which often improves electronic access and use. Standard outputs are consistently collected to measure resource utilization and key library services.

Assessment of the adequacy of services and resources is limited to user satisfaction measures. Little evidence beyond user perception was presented to determine efficiency or service gap analysis for library services and student computing resources. There was also no direct assessment of the impact of library and information resources on student learning or student success in the current approach. However, some point-of-instruction assessment is employed to assess the impact of library instruction sessions. This data also contributes to the continuous improvement of teaching in this area. Specific assessment of services intended to serve students at a distance, such as books-by-mail was not evident. It should be noted that remote database use seemed healthy when compared to on-site use. A library security system is in place and maintained. The library and IT adhere to state-defined surplus practices for equipment, books and other property.

Given the concern stated in 2.E.1, BBCC is encouraged to develop collection and service measures specific to library use and information resource integration in the learning process for consideration in the college's planning and resource allocation. (2.E.4)

**Standard 2.F Financial Resources**

The college demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow, healthy financial ratios and has established reserves to support its programs and services. Despite declining state support, financial planning reflects realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and ability to meet anticipated long-term obligations. The college has little debt and has a conservative approach to limit future liabilities. (2.F.1)

Resource planning and development is carefully reviewed by college leadership. Planning and budgeting projections appear to be conservative and realistic. Students are involved in areas of interest such as technology fee expenditure decisions. The college budget process is inclusive and transparent to invite broad campus participation. Innovative use of grant resources have magnified and enhanced limited budgets allowing the college to accelerate development of
needed facility improvements. Budget policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development are clearly defined. (2.F.2)

The college complies with the Statewide Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) policies and procedures. It has also supplemented state requirements with appropriate local policy and procedure to improve financial effectiveness. (2.F.3)

The college ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of the Washington State accounting system. Their system follows generally accepted accounting principles and provides numerous reporting options. Access is controlled by role-based security profiles. Compliance is reviewed annually by outside auditors from the state audit division. (2.F.4)

The college has embarked on long-term capital planning with a Facility Master Plan to accommodate future growth consistent with their mission and core theme objectives. Long-range capital plans support the institution’s mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. These plans assist in obtaining capital construction funds from the state legislature and SBCTC. Most physical facilities are owned without any debt service. The college has one facility constructed with Certificates of Participation (COP). (2.F.5)

The college currently has only two auxiliary enterprises in the bookstore and residence halls, which both report to the Vice President of Finance and Administration. Auxiliary operations are self-sustaining for operating and capital requirements. The college uses funds from auxiliary services to support COP obligations of the college. (2.F.6)

The college had an external financial audit by the Washington State Auditor’s office and was found to be in compliance with generally accepted auditing standards with no material findings noted. Results from the audits, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the board of trustees. (2.F.7)

All college fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. The college has a clearly defined relationship with the BBCC Foundation and contributes to strengthened ties between the college and community with targeted scholarship outreach to the entire district. (2.F.8)

**Standard 2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure**

The college has constructed or obtained physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and currently sufficient in quantity and quality. Innovative funding strategies have enabled program-enhancing projects such as the SSC remodel (See also 2.E.1). Facility improvement projects have been completed at least annually for several years, and space for additional growth is available to support the institution’s mission, programs, and services.

However, there is cause for concern about aging infrastructure, particularly in laboratory and career technical programs, that has become outdated and inefficient. The evaluators recognize
that the college has to compete for limited capital investment funds within the state but urge every effort to communicate the impact of outdated facilities on learning. (2.G.1)

The college currently adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. Compliance with the college Hazardous Materials Management Plan is reviewed regularly by the Director of Campus Security and Safety and regular training is provided to college employees as required. (2.G.2)

The college has developed and is using a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans. The college has thoughtfully provided for informal student engagement space facilities and has implemented “smart” classrooms with robust audiovisual capabilities. The college regularly reviews and updates the master plan. (2.G.3)

Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. The college has found creative ways and multiple sources to replace and update instructional equipment and technology. (2.G.4)

The college provides an extensive technology platform to support academic and administrative operations. The college is expanding the wireless network to ensure all locations have robust access to internet resources for students and staff. The college is in the process of updating its learning management system (LMS) to expand and enhance online learning. (2.G.5)

The college provides instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems through the information technology department that provides training, help desk support, self-help support, and classroom technology support. Faculty members are provided support and training to use instructional software tools. Informal opportunities to expand the technology literacy of students, staff, and faculty are provided through technology workshops and “brown bag” discussions (See also 2.E.1). (2.G.6)

The college involves representative committees to provide guidance for technological infrastructure planning from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology. This feedback on what works best enhances the priority and direction for institutional operations, programs, and services and academic support initiatives. (2.G.7)

The college has established an aggressive technology update and equipment replacement plan to ensure technology is kept current and is keeping the total cost of ownership low while maintaining a current infrastructure. The college is investing in systems to enhance student success with smart classrooms, interactive whiteboards, and lecture capture equipment. (2.G.8)
Chapter Three - Planning

Standard 3.A Institutional Planning

The evaluators found that the college engages in systematic and comprehensive planning that is made available to appropriate constituencies and offers them opportunities for input (3.A.1, 3.A.2).

This work at the college largely centers around the development, review and implementation of the Academic Master Plan (AMP) and its three annual reports. The AMP has historically been the primary strategic planning document on campus; initially based on the six mission areas and in 2002 revised to align more closely with the Board’s six end statements. The planning work is informed by appropriately defined data used by the college to assess its work and is used to guide the facilities master planning process as well as decisions on resource allocation (3.A.3, 3.A.4). The college represents the planning process through the diagram on the right.

The evaluators observed that institutional planning and core themes planning are not fully consistent (3.B.1) and as such have concerns that the planning work of the college does not naturally lead to evaluating mission fulfillment (3.A.1, 3.A.3). The evaluators understand from discussions with college leadership that the college is fully aware of this concern and is committed to revisiting and unifying its planning processes in the coming year.

Emergency preparedness and contingency planning is made through the Emergency Operations Plan. The plan includes training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and allows for participation of local emergency responders to any incident. The plan is reviewed and updated as necessary (3.A.5). BBCC also maintains compliance with the Clery Act reporting requirements and disseminates a report by October 1st of each year. The Campus Alert System notifies students through text message or email of any campus-related information or incident.

Academic Master Plan (AMP) Components:
Access – focuses on providing resource awareness, recruitment, and enrollment.
Programs – focuses on retention, completion, and progression towards goals. Instructional programs and college services perform program audits to assess the effectiveness of each program.
Outcomes – focuses on the assessing and grading of our efforts to achieve AMP outcomes.
Standard 3.B Core Theme Planning

Big Bend Community College identified four core themes during the self-evaluation process for the new NWCCU accreditation standards. The four core themes are Access, Partnerships, Student Achievement, and Climate. The core themes closely reflect the Board of Trustees’ End Statements and were identified by a sub-committee of the Academic Master Plan committee after review of “the Mission Statement, the Academic Master plan, the Board’s Ends Statements, the monitoring reports to the Board on the Academic Master Plan, and the minutes of various shared governance committees.”

Core Theme 1: Access

“Access: BBCC provides quality resources and affordable access to the diverse population of its entire district in order to meet their educational needs.” (emphasis from BBCC)

The first of BBCC’s four core themes is Access. Although Access is one of the six Ends Statements identified by the Board of Trustees; it is less prominent in the actual mission statement.

The six core theme objectives chosen by the College tie Access as a core theme to the six mission areas (transfer education, professional/technical education, developmental education, business & industry partnership and continuing education, and student services), but the reasoning behind why these six areas were chosen and how they related to the definition of the Access core theme is not readily apparent to the evaluators.

There is no objective that relates to “affordable access” in the definition nor is there any objective such as distance education delivery or remote learning centers that directly related to access in general. The case is not made effectively that the areas chosen support “quality resources” or “diverse population of the entire district” or “meeting educational needs.”

About sixty faculty and staff attended an open forum held on-campus during the evaluation visit and were asked how the college supports the core theme Access. The immediate responses embraced the core theme definition components of affordability, quality resources, serving the diverse population of the college district and educational needs. This response appeared to the
evaluators to further demonstrate an apparent disconnect between the core theme definition and the areas selected. The rationale for selected indicators did not seem to be consistently presented.

The evaluated indicators frequently do not specify the areas they serve to evaluate. Additionally, while the indicators chosen are assessable and verifiable in some instances, the evaluators find that they do not form the basis for evaluating achievement of the selected core theme areas.

The first indicator (75% to 80% of current and former students report overall satisfaction with their classes and are engaged in learning) for the first area (Regularly assess academic areas with a systematic review) provides a good illustration of the apparent lack of meaning and clarity provided by the indicators. This indicator does not clearly tie the areas back to the definition of Access as a core theme. Further, the evaluators find that using student satisfaction ratings as an assessment of academic areas is incomplete and insufficient.

The chosen objectives and attendant indicators do not fully evaluate the achievement of the Access core theme as defined by the college.

As a planning document and measurement of achievement for the college, the AMP is commendable. However, as a method of demonstrating planning, assessment, and improvement for the core theme Access, it adds a layer of confusion where there is a lack of alignment of the Access core theme areas and the AMP outcomes.

Evaluation of Access for AMP is based upon student use of resources, enrollment numbers, and tuition and other revenue. These outcomes and measures of achievement for the AMP Access do not readily align with the Access core theme objectives and indicators.

Assessment and improvement processes are integral to the Academic Master Plan processes. The AMP provides a means for systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data. However, the data collected for the AMP have not been fully aligned and are incomplete in terms of evaluating the Access core theme objectives (4.A.1). The evaluators find that the Annual Monitoring reports could provide an effective framework with which to evaluate programs and services once the Access core theme objectives and AMP outcomes are aligned. The AMP process and reports currently provide a holistic evaluation of the AMP outcomes with respect to the programs and services and resources, capacity, practices, and assessment that support those outcomes. However, the report does not clearly address the Access core theme objectives (4.A.5). The AMP is reviewed every five years to maintain its value as a plan for achievement. The Facilities Master Plan considers the AMP outcome in developing facility plans.

Core Theme 2: Partnerships

“Partnerships: BBCC works with a variety of organizations to enhance access and student achievement for our district population.”
This core theme coincides with the Board Ends Partnerships Statement: “BBCC works with organizations and agencies to enhance access and service for our district population.”

The college excels in establishing and maintaining partnerships with area industry partners and educational organizations within their service district. Most of the indicators do support their objectives and with outstanding ratings in three out of the five mission areas. There are two indicators that do not adequately support the objective. In the mission area of Business & Industry Partnerships/Continuing Education, objective 2.BI/CE.1 states “BBCC works with partners to provide quality instruction for continuing education courses and training.” Indicator 2.BI/CE.1. states “Business and industry partners report satisfaction with training offerings.” The only measure to support the objective is an employer survey. Relying solely on an employer satisfaction survey does not appear to the evaluators to be a sufficient basis for a meaningful assessment of quality of Continuing Education courses and training.

The evaluators are concerned that the indicators identified are not sufficient to evaluate accomplishment of the Partnerships core theme.

Regarding objective 2.AT.1, the institution states that they “maintain communication and articulation with appropriate transfer institutions, grant partners, and K-12 districts to support community needs.” The indicators provide information for regular participation to maintain articulation agreements and that the college seeks grant support to enhance transfer opportunities. They provided some support for the articulation agreements between colleges and have received grant funding. There do not appear to be any indicators provided for communication and partnerships with K-12 schools.

BBCC does note 2.DV.1.a: “Partnerships make basic skills training available to service district organizations and businesses” only received a rating of satisfactory. The college does recognize the need and would like to work on expanding partnerships with local school districts and other agencies to increase college readiness. The evaluators find that this indicator misrepresents decreased contacts as decreased partnerships. This is not the case for Adult Basic Skills. Due to reduced funding, Adult Basic Skills has had to reduce the number of off-campus sites than in years past but is still maintaining many important relationships with local school districts and other agencies to increase college readiness. The college must establish measures that provide meaningful data (4.A.1) to “yield meaningful results that will lead to improvement” (4.A.6).
The Division of Developmental Education is currently developing a plan to increase partnerships with Basic Skills, WorkFirst, and others.

**Core Theme 3: Student Achievement for Standards Three and Four**

“**Student Achievement**: BBCC students develop and achieve their goals with support from the college and its partners”

The Student Achievement core theme is indirectly connected to and supported by the college’s strategic planning document, the Academic Master Plan (AMP) entitled “Student Success.” Student Achievement is also a Board of Trustees Ends Statement. This core theme is also supported by the Washington State Student Achievement Initiative, which lays out a framework of momentum points at various stages of student progress, from building toward college level coursework (developmental education) to degree completion.

The planning and monitoring documentation is published on the college website. College personnel are regularly involved in developing and updating the planning documents. Due to the nature of the student achievement data collected, it does not appear that academic programs find it necessary to interact with the data or the office of institutional research as it is collected. Planning for the Student Achievement core theme (3.B) is very much aligned with the comprehensive planning of the college and contributes to the achievement of the goals of the respective programs and services.

With regard to Standard 4, the college has implemented sound procedures for assessing the objectives and indicators for the Student Achievement core theme. While the indicators lack learning outcomes assessment as a feature of the core theme, the existing indicators are well-supported with significant and comprehensive data elements.

BBCC is to be commended for the strengths of the Student Achievement core theme planning and assessment, which include the statewide Student Achievement Initiative data, supporting indicators with significant and relevant performance data, and communicating progress with an easily understandable rating system. A concern however, is that without expressly stated benchmarks or standards for success, the indicators do not adequately express the threshold of mission fulfillment for their respective areas.

Clearly missing in the Student Achievement core theme is the incorporation of identified program and degree learning outcomes, their systematic assessment, and the use of those assessment results to guide improvement. (Standard 2.C.1, 2.C.2, 2.C.3, 4.A.3, 4.B.2).
Core Theme 4: Climate

“Climate: BBCC provides a climate that facilitates cultural understanding, safety and a welcoming environment to support students, staff and community.”

The evaluators found the overall climate of the college to be very positive, as reflected in the enthusiasm and passion evident in comments made by students, faculty, staff and administration. The college’s commitment to ensuring an “atmosphere conducive to open inquiry and cultural understanding” was readily apparent to the evaluators.

With regard to systematically addressing Climate as a core theme within the context of core theme planning as defined by the Standards, the evaluators did identify several areas of concern.

The evaluators find it difficult to establish an explicit connection between the commitment represented in core theme 4 and mission fulfillment (3.A.1). Core theme 4 was derived (pg 17) from the Board Ends statements on climate (E-5) and amended by the AMP committee to include the Board End statement on Multiculturalism (E-6). Because the mission statement’s six program and service areas do not mention either climate or multiculturalism, this core theme doesn’t appear to “individually manifest” an identifiable aspect of the mission statement (1.B.1) and as such might appear to some as a core value that qualifies the college’s work.

The evaluators were unable to identify a convincing rationale guiding the selection of data indicators showing that they were sufficient to assess this core theme’s objectives (4.A.1) or a convincing rationale that the core theme objectives were sufficient to evaluate accomplishment of this core theme (1.B.2).

The ratings assigned to core theme 4 objectives do not appear to be verifiable (1.B.2, 4.A.1). The campus discussions that assigned ratings were reportedly based on the data indicators. However, there is no record or justification for the development and ultimate aggregation of ratings that can be directly traced back to this data and no record of additional considerations beyond the data indicators.

The Institutional Effectiveness flowchart (pg 122) makes no mention of core themes. The selection for objectives that are addressed through program assessment appears to be idiosyncratic rather than “holistic.” While it may not be the case in practice, there appears to be a system vulnerability that leaves room for the possibility of core theme 4 not being assessed at all by individual programs (3.B.3, 4.A.2, 4.A.4).
Standard 4: Effectiveness and Improvement

The Academic Master Plan (AMP) process provides a method for improvement. It is broadly distributed, and trustees and staff are asked to rate their perception of performance for each outcome. The annual monitoring reports are spaced regularly throughout the year for timely appraisal of information by all constituents. Reports include action lists with individuals assigned for principle responsibility. Reports include progress made on previous objectives.

During interviews on campus, the evaluation team consistently observed the culture of inquiry and evidence and drive toward continual improvement which is active at BBCC. The college engages in significant assessment work based on well-qualified data analyses. However, the evaluators also found that this work is not yet in alignment with the processes described in the accreditation standards.

Currently, the core themes are defined based on the Ends Statements, not on the mission statement as required in 1.B.1 and 1.B.2. The evaluators found that the objectives that were defined for the core themes were not sufficient for providing a meaningful basis for assessing the core themes, particularly in Access and Climate.

The evaluation team found the rationale for the selection of the indicators of achievement for all of the four core themes was not apparent. BBCC engages in ongoing assessment of verifiable data, but this work is not yet in alignment with core theme evaluation. (4.A.1 and 4.A.2)

Faculty members are responsible for evaluating student achievement within their teaching responsibilities. At the course level, the learning outcomes are clearly identified. However, the evaluators discerned that at the program and degree levels, learning outcomes are neither systematically nor systemically identified. (4.A.3)

The evaluators find that the college AMP process provides regular opportunities to evaluate programs and services; however, the evaluators do not find this work to be in alignment with core themes and do not find the core theme objectives and indicators to be sufficient for meaningful assessment of the core themes.

Holistic evaluation of programs and services in light of the core theme objectives doesn’t appear to be well-supported, given a lack of alignment, correlation, and integration of Academic Master Plan outcomes and core theme objectives. The evaluators found good evidence of structured planning and data-driven decision-making in college decisions. Appropriate constituencies reported timely awareness of evaluation information. (4.A.4, 4.A.5 and 4.A.6)

The evaluators do find that the college is using the AMP reports as a basis for continual improvement. Learning outcomes assessment has not yet been implemented at the program and degree levels and is not used systematically to guide improvement. (4.B.1 and 4.B.2)
Chapter Five: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability

**Standard 5.A Mission Fulfillment**

The college’s commitment to mission fulfillment is amply illustrated by its institutional effectiveness model, which articulates the college mission as Ends Statements created by the Board of Trustees to direct institutional initiatives. These Ends Statements have associated outcomes that are revisited annually and are implemented through an Academic Master Plan and Facilities Master Plan. The achievement of those objectives is regularly assessed by a participative process that collects data from monitoring reports, assesses accomplishment of objectives, and adjusts decisions accordingly. (5.A.1)

The Board of Trustees participates in the assessment three times annually to measure institutional mission accomplishment. This assessment begins with departmental goals which are subsequently evaluated in terms of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment of the measured outcomes in three annual report processes.

However, mission fulfillment does not appear to be aligned with the core theme objective indicators of achievement assessment. The use of the mission statement, Board Ends Statement, Academic Master Plan and core theme objectives and indicators are related but appear to complicate the determination of mission fulfillment. (5.A.2)

The college communicates assessment results on its portal and on various college web pages to ensure assessment conclusions are broadly discussed and available to all constituents. The college master plans are updated at least every five years, and the three annual monitoring reports provide a basis for self-reflection and evaluation at all levels in the college. The college was able to demonstrate numerous examples of how data from outcomes measures impacted institutional policies and practices to better meet college goals.

**Standard 5.B Adaptation and Sustainability**

The college has demonstrated remarkable adaptability in recent years by serving 18% more students while losing significant budget resources from reduced state appropriations and a 13% loss in full time staff. The college has, in part, offset those losses with additional grant funding and partnership opportunities but notably has primarily used these funds to create organizational improvements, adaptations and efficiencies. Despite fiscal adversity, through regular self-evaluation of mission fulfillment, the college has sharpened its focus, improved its practices, and met the mission. (5.B.1, 5.B.2)
General Commendations and Recommendations:

Commendations:

1. The evaluators commend Big Bend Community College for its culture of inquiry and evidence. The campus community has a high level of engagement with annual assessment. The campus community has a high level of engagement with the annual Academic Master Plan (AMP) supported by a comprehensive set of baseline data, and the college is very responsive to additional data needs.

2. The evaluators commend Big Bend Community College for its high level of sensitivity and commitment to its students. The college provides comprehensive outreach and supportive services to students at all skill levels, all socioeconomic positions, and at great distances. Even during a period of significant decreases in budgets and positions, the enthusiasm for student access, support and success is clearly evident.

3. The evaluators commend Big Bend Community College for an excellent and admirable spirit of collaboration. Faculty, staff and students alike refer to Big Bend as a caring institution, and it is evident that the college makes student success its highest priority. The college is recognized for establishing and maintaining important partnerships with area business, industry and community organizations to provide outstanding service to the students at Big Bend. While the college has faced funding constraints, they have been able to maintain and improve critical partnerships that have enhanced learning services for students.

4. The evaluators commend Big Bend Community College for its strategic use of grants and external fundraising to transform the climate and explore cost-effective methods for enhancing student success, especially with regard to student learning support, facilities, and access to technology.

5. The evaluators commend the members of the Board of Trustees for their unwavering commitment to Big Bend Community College, specifically for their efforts to ensure community access to educational programs by bringing college visibility to all corners of the service district, for providing leadership through their intentional assignment of college priorities to each of the five board members, and for their unified and firm grasp of policy governance and oversight.

6. The evaluators commend Big Bend Community College for their excellent and extensive facilities planning, with a comprehensive master plan, multi-hazard emergency planning and budget plans.
Recommendations:

1. The Evaluators recommend that the college ensure the alignment between the mission statement and the core themes – that the core themes “individually manifest” and “collectively encompass” the college mission statement (1.B.1), that the core theme objectives and verifiable indicators be sufficient to evaluate the accomplishment of core themes (1.B.2), and that the evaluation of programs and services be holistically informed by indicator data for each core theme objective (3.B.3, 4.A.4).

2. The evaluators recommend that the college document enhancement of student learning achievement which is informed and guided by systematic assessment of student learning (4.B.2), that the college develop an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment that documents student achievement of identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. (4.A.3)