Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Accreditation Ad-hoc Report
2024

Introduction

Following the Fall 2022 Seven Year Institutional Self Evaluation Report and the Site visit, Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) received seven recommendations. In reaffirming BMCC's accreditation on February 27, 2023, the Commission requested that the College develop an Ad-Hoc Report with a visit in Spring 2024 to address recommendations 2, 6, and 7.

Three recommendations are covered in this Ad-Hoc Report:

2. Maintain a stable and effective administrative structure and fully engage the college constituencies in decision-making processes on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest. (2020 Standard(s) 2.A.2; 2.A.4)

6. Base resource allocations and staffing plans on an inclusive analysis of institutional capacity needs and equity gaps. (2020 Standard(s) 2.E.2; 2.F.3; 1.D.4)

7. Follow BMCC's administrative procedures regarding faculty evaluations on a regular and consistent basis. (2020 Standard(s) 2.F.4)

The following responses address each of the three recommendations.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation 2: Fall2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness – Maintain a stable and effective administrative structure and fully engage college constituencies in decision-making processes on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest. (2020 Standard(s) 2.A.2; 2.A.4.

2.A.2 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

2.A.4 The institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.

Response
During the Fall 2022 NWCCU visit, the President's Executive Team consisted of the Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Dean of Student Services, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, Dean of Learning & Academic Engagement, Dean of Workforce Development & Community Education, Chief Technology Officer, and the Executive Assistant to the President.

In January 2023 an interim Chief Academic Officer was hired to serve until a new CAO was selected. The selection process began in Spring 2023 with interviews in Fall 2023 and selection. Dr. Rebecca Schwartz began her service as the new Vice President of Instruction (VPI) on December 15, 2023. The newly constituted position of VPI encompasses all the duties which previously fell to the CAO and more accurately reflects not only the level of importance, priority and expertise needed in the role but also aligns far closer to the work that peers are doing at other institutions throughout Oregon and those under the purview of the NWCCU.

In August 2023, the President introduced the new governance structure to the Executive Team, and then to the College community at the college-wide Check-In meeting on October 13, 2023. The new governance structure consists of a College Senate and President's Cabinet; it was designed to:

- Increase opportunity for participation across all employee classifications

- Strengthen collaboration and communication internally through wider, broad-based approach
- Address NWCCU recommendations on governance and participation
- Build capacity within the Executive Team

The college president set out to ask for interested parties to join an ad-hoc group to work on a collaborative vision and guidelines for each of the senates. Response from each of the groups was taken in; all who responded were asked to join the workgroup. Work began in November with a series of meetings with representation from all three (3) employee groups. Work slowed in December with the end of term, faculty being off contract and the college's annual closing between Christmas and New Year's. The group was pulled together in January as soon as faculty were back on contract and campus. General guidelines were established, sufficient to the point that each group agreed to meet on their own to look at customizing bylaws and expectations. Work with each group is now underway with an expectation that each group will be ready to hold elections later this spring.

General guidelines:

1. BMCC College Senate

   The purpose of the College Senate is to oversee the College committees and recommend policies and practices to the President's Cabinet that are consistent with the strategic direction of the college.

   The BMCC College Senate consists of:
   - Four (4) Faculty representatives, one (1) of which is reserved for part-time faculty. from Arts & Humanities, Lower Division Collegiate
   - Four (4) representatives from Classified staff
   - Four (4) representatives from Exempt staff

   Representatives are elected from the membership of each constituent group. In addition, the following requirements are being considered as part of each senate's bylaws:

   - Membership from all employee groups across the College. Full-time and part-time are eligible. Currently Faculty have expressed their intent to reserve one (1) seat just for part-time/adjunct faculty.
   - College administration executives (Cabinet) personnel not eligible

- Faculty currently considering exempting department chairs. Undecided at this time.
- Serves as the primary vessel through which all governance committees are formed, function and report
- Chair rotates annually between faculty Senate representative, Exempt Senate representative and Staff Senate representative
- Vice-chair ascends to chair
- Past chair serves a one-year term as "immediate past chair" to provide continuity
- Tie votes fail
- Full senate votes require a 2/3rd vote for passage to ensure one group cannot dominate agenda and outcomes
- Senate meets monthly
- Monthly report to the Board of Education

College committees that report to the College Senate

- Curriculum Committee
- Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee
- Facilities Committee
- Budget Advisory Committee (formerly the Integrated Resources Committee)
- Information Technology Committee

Once elections in each senate are held, the official seating of the BMCC College Senate can take place. It is the intention of the college president that the Senate be "seated" properly so that work that should flow to the Senate can commence at the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year.

2. Stable Executive Leadership

As referenced in the Year 7 report, BMCC has experienced an extraordinary high level of turnover in all levels of senior leadership, starting with the President/CEO. The current president/CEO is now well into his third year. The president has presented to the BMCC Board of Education a plan that will ultimately transition senior campus leadership into two (2) main groups:

A re-constituted Senior Executive Team and a new, expanded President's Cabinet.

The Senior Executive Team will consists of:

- President/CEO
- Executive Assistant to the President
- Vice President of Instruction
- Vice President of Finance (This is a new position that combines the former VP of Operations/Finance and the Chief Fiscal Officer position)
- Vice President of Student Services
- Vice President of Human Resources/Administrative Services

The expanded President's Cabinet will consist of:
- The President/CEO
- All members of the Senior Executive Teams and the following:
- Dean of Learning/Engagement
- Dean of Workforce and Community Education
- Dean of Students (This position has not been announced or approved but is expected to start with the new 2024-2025 fiscal year)
- Chief Information Officer- formerly the Chief Technology Officer
- ASG President (non-voting ex-officio)

The Senior Executive Team meets weekly and focuses on strategic visioning of the College in an effort to guide the successful implementation and execution of key college initiatives.

The President's Cabinet meets twice a month. Members identify challenges and potential solutions before presenting to the Cabinet for information or approval.

In addition, the Cabinet members are charged with developing mid-level leadership in an effort to build capacity within the College leadership. Members of the President's Cabinet may not serve on the College Senate.

While this new structure is yet to take full hold, efforts are underway to address needed resources, positions and other measures necessary to implement the model no later than July 1, 2024.

Recommendation 6: Fall 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness – Base resource allocation and staffing plans on an inclusive analysis of institutional capacity needs and equity gaps. (2020 Standard(s) 2.E.2; 2.F.3; 1.D.4)

2.E.2 Financial Planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.

2.F.3 Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.

1.D.4 The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.

Response

In order to develop resource allocation and staffing plans, an institution-wide system of program review was needed. Academic program review has been in place and was reviewed by a faculty committee. The program review template for career and technical (CTE) programs was updated to be consistent with the Perkins review process and the program review template for transfer courses was not altered. 3

The non-instructional program review process had not been fully implemented and appeared to be a cumbersome process. The instrument was evaluated and condensed to include relevant information and resource requests based on assessment and achievement of objectives aligned with the College goals. The new template was approved by the Executive Team, and a three-year schedule for Non-Instructional Program Review was developed.

As of winter 2024, a thorough review of programs, course offerings, and degree and certificate plans is underway. BMCC is working to reaffirm all programs meet NWCCU's standards and submissions with the state and accreditors are up to date.

Financial and human resource requests related to academic programs are made cooperatively with the executive team and well documented needs. The Office of Instruction, in association

with the departments, identifies additional staffing and faculty needs. An analysis of the need is conducted by Office of Instruction, identifying causes and potential resources. A position description is designed to fulfill the identified need and brought to Executive Committee for review. The Business and Human Resource Offices determine the total cost of the position. Executive finalizes the position and funding model and notifies the board of education of the new position.

The need for faculty position is primarily determined by load and class size. Per the collective bargaining agreement, a full load is classified as teaching 44 IUs (credits). Class sizes are capped at 25 students. When course offerings become consistently beyond the load of full time faculty, and adjunct faculty carry beyond the capacity of a full time faculty member, it is recommended to proceed with opening a new position.

BMCC is also creating a new faculty application pool process, which delineates different disciplines for recruitment of capable adjunct instructors rather than having a single application for all instructors. BMCC plans to actively engage in the recruitment of more adjuncts with the goal of having an established, sustainable pool by the end of Fall 2024.

Recommendation 7

Recommendation 7: Fall 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness – Follow BMCC's administrative procedures regarding faculty evaluations on a regular and consistent basis. (2020 Standard(s) 2.F.4)

2.F.4 Faculty, staff and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.

Response

Administrative Procedure 05-2004-0003 outlines the process for faculty evaluations. Per the cited process, new full-time faculty are to be evaluated every year for the first four years, and regular (non-probationary faculty) are to have an administrative review at least every four (4) years. In Academic year 2022-23, administrative review of twenty-four (24) full-time faculty members and twelve (12) part-time faculty members was completed. In Academic year 2023-24, evaluation of all new full-time faculty has been assigned to either the Dean of Learning and Academic Engagement or the Vice President of Instruction.

For part-time faculty, the current practice is for department chairs (or a designated full-time faculty member) to do peer evaluations. If the peer evaluator thinks a formal evaluation is required, they are to forward that recommendation to the Office of Instruction. Department chairs have been asked to observe their part-time who were not observed in 2022-23.

In the fall of Academic year 2023-24 the Office of Instruction initiated a bi-weekly Faculty Workshop. As part of its purpose, this faculty run workshop has been tasked with providing input on new and updated Office of Instruction Administrative Procedures. In Fall Term 2023, the faculty reviewed Administrative Procedure 05-2004-003, and the forms used for evaluation. The faculty comments are currently being integrated into a revision of this procedure and the production of new forms.