

# **Year One Peer-Evaluation Report**

## **Spokane Community College**

**Spokane, Washington**

**Fall 2011**

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

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## **Introduction**

Spokane Community College is a comprehensive community college operating under the Community Colleges of Spokane District 17 and Washington's State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Approximately 70% of the College's students are pursuing a professional technical certificate or degree, while the remaining 30% are preparing for transfer to a four-year institution or attending for personal enrichment. Student headcount for 2009-10 was 13,647—11,627 state support students and 2,020 Running Start and international students; FTE was 6,990 state support students and 365 Running Start and international students.

Spokane Community College had its accreditation reaffirmed on the basis of a spring 2010 Focused Interim Report evaluation. The 2010 focused visit found that recommendations from the 2008 Regular Interim Report evaluation had been met, with two commendations and no recommendations.

Highlights of institutional changes since the institution's last report:

- Substantial budget reductions due to prevailing economic conditions
- New programs/offers in health care, entrepreneurial training, and aerospace education
- Termination of several degree and certificate programs
- Receipt of approximately 4.5 acres of former state military property for development of the Inland Northwest Aerospace Technology Center
- Completion of Jenkins Wellness Center and Stannard Technical Education Building

## **Assessment of Self-Evaluation Report**

Spokane Community College provided a 27-page Year One Report (including appendices) and a copy of its 2010-2012 Catalog in a timely fashion. The report was prepared in accordance with Commission guidelines and provided clear information regarding the Institutional Overview, Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3, and Standard One.

The Evaluation Committee conducted its review of the SCC Year One Report during fall 2011 in an off-site, virtual environment utilizing current Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation established by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

## **Report on Eligibility Requirements**

The Year One Report clearly documents that Spokane Community College meets Eligibility Requirement 2 (Authority) and Eligibility Requirement 3 (Mission and Core Themes).

## **Report on Standard One**

### **Introduction**

The mission statement presented in the SCC Year One Report reads as follows:

*At Spokane Community College, we strive to provide our community accessible and affordable educational opportunities responsive to the needs of our diverse population. We do this through:*

- *Industry-standard, professional-technical certificate and degree programs;*
- *Liberal arts and professional-technical programs transferable to four-year institutions;*
- *Developmental and continuing education, distance learning, and lifelong learning opportunities;*
- *Educational programs that emphasize four critical learning abilities: Responsibility, communication, problem-solving and global awareness; and*
- *Instructional support and student services that enhance and promote student success.*

*As we carry out this mission, our skilled and dedicated faculty, staff and administration continuously support the individual and professional growth of our students and the economic success of our region.*

### **Standard 1.A Mission**

#### Standard 1.A.1

Spokane Community College's mission statement was articulated in 2002, affirmed in 2006, and was scheduled for reaffirmation by the Board of Trustees in September 2011. The detailed mission statement addresses the essential responsibilities SCC has to its students and community, is appropriate for a comprehensive community college, and is available to and understandable by the College's various constituents.

### Standard 1.A.2

Spokane Community College interprets mission fulfillment as meeting an acceptable level of achievement on each of its core themes. The minimum acceptable level of attainment is defined as attaining 70 percent for each indicator, with lower achievement resulting in remediation. Eighty percent achievement is considered acceptable, with a desired attainment of 90 percent or better, both independently and in aggregate, on indicators, objectives, core themes, and mission fulfillment.

**Compliment 1:** The College has clearly and succinctly defined mission fulfillment in terms of minimum, acceptable, and desired levels of attainment (expressed in percentages) on indicators of achievement related to objectives derived from the four core themes.

### **Standard 1.B Core Themes**

#### Standard 1.B.1

Spokane Community College has established four core themes: Workforce Development, Academic Transfer, Student Success, and Community Responsiveness. The SCC College Alliance, Department Chairs Council, Deans Council, College Cabinet, and other bodies were involved in development of the core themes.

**Compliment 2:** The College's four core themes were developed collaboratively and reflect essential elements and are encompassing of its mission.

#### Standard 1.B.2

Core Theme 1—Workforce Development—is accompanied by three objectives that focus on preparation of students, employment of graduates, and responsiveness to student and regional needs; ten indicators of achievements accompany the three objectives. The indicators for Core Theme 1 are deemed by Evaluation Committee to be meaningful, assessable, and verifiable.

Core Theme 2—Academic Transfer—is accompanied by five objectives that focus on degree completion by students, student success at transfer institutions, and gains in student knowledge and skills; eight indicators of achievement accompany the five objectives. While the indicators for Core Theme 2 are largely appropriate and quantifiable, benchmarks have not yet been set for all indicators.

Core Theme 3—Student Success—is accompanied by three objectives that focus on effective course and program placement, orientation services, and student learning, engagement, retention, and completion; eleven indicators of

achievement accompany the three objectives. The indicators for Core Theme 3 are deemed by Evaluation Committee to be meaningful, assessable, and verifiable.

Core Theme 4—Community Responsiveness—is accompanied by four objectives that focus on cultural and enrichment offerings, continuing education programming, community involvement, and sound management of public resources; ten indicators of achievement accompany the four objectives. Benchmarks have been set for some indicators, but are still being developed for others. Further refinement of the objectives and indicators of achievement for Core Theme 4 is needed.

**Compliment 3:** In most cases, the College has established core themes, objectives, and indicators of achievement that are appropriate, connected, meaningful, assessable, and verifiable. Furthermore, the rationales for why indicators are assessable and meaningful are clearly presented in the Year One Report.

**Concern 1:** In some cases, indicators of achievement and benchmarks need further development or refinement.

## Summary

Spokane Community College has produced a Year One Report that embraces the revised accreditation standards and process. Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3 are clearly and fully met. The SCC mission, which is regularly reviewed and communicated, is consistent with that of a comprehensive community college and meets statutory requirements of the state of Washington. The SCC core themes appropriately connect to the institution's mission statement, as well as to strategic priorities set by the Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees. Finally, Spokane Community College has, for the most part, articulated appropriate objectives and meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement.

## Recommendation

1. It is recommended the College continue its work to identify indicators of achievement that are, in all cases, meaningful, assessable, and verifiable. (Standard 1.B.2)