Centralia College
Centralia, Washington

Comprehensive Evaluation Report

October 20-22, 2010

A confidential report prepared by the Evaluation Committee for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
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Introduction

Centralia College, founded in 1925, received its last full-scale evaluation in 2000. A comprehensive evaluation visit was conducted October 20-22, 2010. The college submitted the institutional self-study and basic institutional data form well in advance of the evaluation visit. College personnel were helpful in providing information and arranging appointments and interviews for evaluation committee members.

Committee members found the college self-study to be well written and well organized. The self-study process was participatory, and committee members noted the honesty of the narrative. Additional detail in the form of charts and data may have been helpful within the report. However, additional data and documents were easily accessible in advance of the visit on the college’s intranet. Supporting documentation was also available in the exhibit room.

To verify the self-study report, committee members held open meetings for faculty, staff and students and conducted many individual interviews. The chair and the evaluator for Standards Seven and Eight met with the Board of Trustees. Committee members reviewed minutes, department notebooks and evaluation documentation. One of the committee members visited the Centralia East campus, and committee members toured the Centralia campus facilities. The college personnel were helpful in providing all requested information and in making arrangements.

Eligibility Requirements

Centralia College meets the 20 eligibility requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The institutional self-study addresses each requirement and provides support for compliance within the chapters on each Standard.
Standard One—Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness

Mission and Goals

Centralia College’s mission and goals are adopted and regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees as part of the college’s policy governance structure. End statements serve as the broad college goals and include sub-sections and measurable outcomes. Interviews with faculty, staff and students indicated that the mission and goals are widely understood by campus constituencies. The college catalog, class schedules and other publications include the college mission and goals.

Through the preparation of regular monitoring reports to the Board of Trustees on each End Statement, the college demonstrates alignment of college activities with the goals, records progress, makes results public, and creates action items for unmet goals. Monitoring reports are available for public review in the Office of the President and to employees on the college intranet. Sample reports were reviewed by evaluation committee members. Trustees were very positive about the effectiveness of the policy governance structure and about their role in reviewing the mission, goals and monitoring reports.

Public service activities are consistent with the college’s mission and goals. Centralia College is an integral part of the community providing numerous lifelong learning opportunities and cultural events and performances.

Planning and Effectiveness

The college has a participatory planning process that includes standing committees with representatives from faculty, students, staff and administration. A broad-based Institutional Effectiveness Committee coordinates the efforts of the standing committees, reviews college progress on the mission and goals and makes recommendations to the college president and executive management team. The planning process is well-defined, but the self-study process revealed that it was not clearly understood by all campus constituencies. The college has taken steps to address this by administering a college-wide survey and conducting educational sessions about the planning process.

A review of accomplishments and discussion of goals is conducted each fall at the all-employee September Kick-Off Day. Individual areas develop annual work plans and report on their accomplishments and plans for improvement. Employees indicated that support was available for evaluation and planning processes from the Institutional Research Office.

During the state budget shortfalls of the past two years, Centralia College has used attrition to balance its budget. While the guiding principle of “people first” is widely supported by the faculty and staff, this practice makes it difficult for the college to use the results of its evaluation and planning processes to influence resource allocation and to improve its instructional programs, institutional services, and activities.
Concern: Continued use of attrition as a primary way to balance the budget may lead to a misalignment between evaluation and planning processes and resource allocation.

**Standard Two-Educational Program and Its Effectiveness**

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities standards require that Centralia College provide sufficient resources to support student achievement of program outcomes and further that the programs themselves be compatible with the institution’s mission. The evaluators reviewed a wide variety of professional technical training, basic skills education, and academic transfer departments. As a result, the evaluators concur that Centralia College is a comprehensive educational resource for the community. The institution’s mission to serve the community’s needs is further evidenced by the large number of individuals in the community who access the variety of programs and services provided by the institution. The college has successfully addressed the needs of students throughout its service area. While offering classes on the main campus, through distance delivery, and at off-campus locations, the college has provided adequate resources to meet students’ needs.

Centralia demonstrates its commitment to high academic standards through its processes for assuring a qualified faculty. Full-time instructors are responsible for building curriculum and assuring its evaluation and improvement. Instructional Council, a predominately faculty group, is responsible for approving additions and changes to courses and programs. From the initiating faculty and/or department to the Instructional Council, the process for curriculum changes and additions is clear and accessible. Course syllabi clearly and consistently identify course outcomes.

Interviews with campus faculty and library staff reveal that the use of the library and information resources is well integrated into both the academic transfer departments and the professional technical programs.

Degree and certificate program requirements are clearly described in the Centralia catalog and reflect a coherent design as evidenced by analysis of the various individual programs. Taken in their totality, the various programs reflect adherence to the commission’s expectation for design. Centralia has identified five college-wide educational outcomes, and these outcomes are generally infused in course syllabi throughout the institution. However, the evaluation team found some confusion between the Educational Outcomes listed in the catalog and the learning themes, which are found in the faculty notebooks. Centralia needs to work at aligning these two documents a little better for clarity. Furthermore, because of the rise in adjunct usage at Centralia, part-time instructors need to be included in the Faculty Notebook Assessment Model. While more work still needs to be done on a plan to assess the five educational outcomes across campus, some faculty are to be commended for the leadership role they play in helping faculty meaningfully assess classroom learning and improve teaching strategies as a result of the assessment efforts in the faculty assessment notebooks process.

There is a systematic, four-year cycle program/curriculum review process at Centralia College. However, because of the accreditation process, budget cuts, retirements, and changes in
instructional leadership, this process has not been consistently implemented across campus over the last couple of years. It is imperative that Centralia College make this a priority in its yearly assessment activities. The process appears to be quite efficient but the cycle must be consistent.

**English**

The English department’s instructors have a great deal of energy and especially focus their enthusiasm on the best interest of the students. As evident by their involvement in the advising process, they understand the importance of helping students progress toward the goals they set for themselves in their educational plans. Those interviewed commended the decision-making processes and effectiveness of the instructional dean in leading the department.

The department meets or exceeds all of the commission’s standards. Of particular note is the department’s responsibility in the design, integrity, and implementation of the curriculum and assessment. The department’s study on mandatory placement is a good example of data use to make informed educational decisions that are in the best interest of students. Furthermore, the instructors have consistently developed clear and measurable course outcomes, which are outlined on all syllabi.

English department instructors utilize the library’s resources on a consistent basis to enhance the educational experience for students. Faculty members have collaborated with library staff to integrate information literacy into the curriculum.

**Fine Arts**

The Fine Arts department is to be applauded for its service to the community and promotion of one of the college’s goals: “Centralia College shall provide diverse multicultural, musical, theatrical, artistic, instructional, and social experiences for life-long learning and community enrichment.” Because of its regional location, Centralia College has become a cultural center of the community, and department’s faculty take this role very seriously. The education and technical backgrounds of the instructors make them well suited for their assignments, and they all seem to complement each other, thus creating a well-rounded and diverse group of educators. The department members have a major role in curriculum development and feel that, for the most part, academic freedom is protected. It appears that instructors have a major role in the advising process and work diligently to ensure that their students are ready for transfer to a four-year institution. Course syllabi contain clear, measureable outcomes.

Meanwhile, although all department instructors participate in the Faculty Assessment Notebooks, the evaluator did find varying opinion on the usefulness of such a process. Interviews indicated that more work needs to be done here.

Department faculty had mixed reviews on the usefulness of library resources to support their academic area. Most of the criticism focused on the lack of materials available in the stacks for students and the push to use electronic materials instead of films, books, or magazines.
Child and Family Studies

The Child and Family Studies department is an asset to Centralia College and the community. This department is a resource for community families and is financed by both grant funding and institutional support. The departmental leader is collaborative, involved, and enthusiastic. All of the employees interviewed seem to really like their jobs and the college. ECEAP, T.E.E.N., Educational Support, Parent Support Services, and Parent Education are all successful services provided by this department.

Early Childhood Education prepares students for employment in the field and increases the knowledge and skills of those already in the field. This program offers degrees and certificates, and students are required to work in the Children’s Lab School. Articulation agreements with four-year institutions are in place to assist students with transferring into bachelor degree programs. The program has one well-qualified, full-time instructor who participates in all faculty assessment activities and student advising duties. Course syllabi contain measurable outcomes.

The Children’s Lab School provides education, training, and support for children, students, and families of the community. Students in the Early Childhood Education program work in the Lab School as part of their program. The school meets licensure standards set forth by the State of Washington for child care centers. Undoubtedly, the center is an asset to the college and the community.

Business and Applied Technology

Despite budget cuts made by the state, loss of funding has not, in general, severely affected instructors’ ability to effectively deliver course content to their students. While some departments have been more severely affected than others, there is concern about future decreases that has heightened anxiety over financial resources in their respective departments. Onsite visits throughout the campus and to various facilities in the instructional areas show no apparent signs of financial distress. Grounds and buildings are in good repair; classrooms and shops are clean and well maintained; and equipment, while not the latest and most up-to-date, seems adequate for instructional purposes.

Of necessity, however, curriculum design and implementation have had to change because of the increased number of students. Classes that were once taught in one classroom using a combination of lecture and hands-on experience are now taught by two instructors. One instructor addresses the academic portion of the class, while a second instructor concurrently directs the hands-on portion in a different area. In another department, class size has grown from a nominal level of 18–20 to a current level of 36 students.

The faculty notebooks that are prominently mentioned in Standard Two of the self-study are another victim of increased advising loads and increased class size. These notebooks are intended to be the linkage between the college’s Model of Assessment and student achievement and program-level outcomes. While some faculty are assiduously following through with this program and effectively using this tool, others, through lack of time or the pressure of everyday activities, have failed to effectively use it. All faculty members are aware of the notebook
process and possibly its potential value but, based on a limited sample, only a few are effectively using this tool. Since a template for syllabi has been furnished by the administration, virtually all faculty do include outcomes in this document but translating these outcomes into a set of assessment criteria in the notebook has not been done effectively by all.

The self-study does state that the institution has a clearly defined process for assessing its education programs and that this process is tied to both overall planning and evaluation. Faculty has a central role in this process. Along with this general assessment are course specific outcomes for each degree and ultimately, as noted above, learning objectives that are part of each instructor’s syllabus. While all this is laudable, it appears that a middle component of this process is missing in many cases. The administration has a plan for assessment in place, and the faculty is including learning objectives in their syllabi. However, the piece that seems to be missing in many cases is the programs’ reviews. These reviews should be the mechanism for program and degree changes and improvements in learning outcomes. As a result of recent increases in class loads and student advising, this important component has been somewhat neglected, and this is acknowledged in the self-study.

Library usage is evident in these programs. In fact, the library staff have taught a significant number of orientation sessions on e-resources in the most recent reporting year. Further, a Nursing Department faculty stated that there was a significant number of nursing journals available to the department. Other faculty noted that the library staff actively sought out faculty and offered to prepare course material for them on the library and responded promptly to requests for materials.

Adjunct faculty is a significant portion of most departments and fills a much-needed role in the college’s instructional structure. The adjunct faculty is qualified either by academic degree, industry credentials, or experience to instruct in their respective areas. Many teach in the certificate programs and the AAS degree areas.

Science and Health

The faculty in Science and Health consist of full-time, tenured faculty members, as well as part-time or adjunct faculty members. Courses in biology, chemistry, geo-science, health, and physical education are taught. Full-time and adjunct faculty members teach general education distribution courses. Faculty report having adequate financial resources to perform their job duties; however, there has been a significant reduction in professional development funds to support faculty in their academic endeavors. Adjunct faculty members are not allocated professional development money. Full-time and adjunct faculty members are able to submit applications for extended studies money to pay for professional association membership fees, conference expenses, and tuition or fees for enrollment in academic courses. Priority is given to full-time faculty members in the process of allocating extended studies money.

Full-time faculty members are involved in program review in science in a four-year cycle. Faculty members work at the department level regarding the review of general education distribution courses. Faculty is able to access the curriculum process to institute curriculum modifications with the initiative beginning at the department level and then being processed at
the curriculum council level. Faculty is satisfied with this bottom-to-top curriculum approach and feel that it is an effective process.

Full-time faculty members are actively engaged in the construction and implementation of faculty assessment notebooks. Faculty assessment notebooks are constructed by faculty members in order to assess student learning outcomes at the course level. Faculty members are supportive of the faculty notebook assessment approach and seem to be engaged in the process. Individual faculty members have very effectively employed the individual course level assessment process in order to modify and improve specific courses. It is too early in the process to determine the effectiveness of this assessment process, and there has not yet been a closing of the assessment loop in order to ascertain the impact of the assessment relative to improved instruction. Course outcomes are clearly set forth on course outlines and syllabi. Adjunct faculty members are not involved in the construction of their own faculty assessment notebooks.

Adjunct faculty are involved in department and college activities to the extent that they so desire and receive safety training and CPR training. Adjunct faculty members work with full-time faculty in curriculum matters, lab instruction, and the implementation of teaching strategies. They are encouraged to participate in professional development activity and Angel training sessions. Adjunct faculty members have the use of an office, voice mail, and email.

Faculty members indicated they receive ongoing communication and information. They believe the college decision-making process is open, and they have significant involvement in the process. For example, science faculty members were actively involved at all stages of the process when the new science building was planned, designed, and constructed.

Social Science

The Social Science faculty members believe they have adequate resources with which to perform their job duties. Faculty members have been engaged in curriculum design and implementation in accordance with the bottom-to-top approach that originates with faculty members at the department level. Full-time faculty, including pro rata faculty, teach approximately fifty percent of the social science courses, and adjunct faculty teach the other fifty percent of the social science courses. Full-time faculty members have been engaged in the assessment notebook approach and are supportive of this assessment approach. Course outcomes are clearly stated on course outlines and syllabi. Individual full-time faculty members, like those in psychology, have successfully employed the assessment notebook approach to analyze teaching strategies in specific courses and have implemented modifications to courses in order to enhance the student learning experience. There has been no significant macro level closing of the assessment loop at this stage of the process. Adjunct faculty members are not involved in the Faculty Assessment Notebook effort.

Social Science faculty believe that they have a very strong teaching staff and that their students are well prepared when they complete college and transfer to a four-year institution. Faculty use library resources and have input as to the acquisition of library resources. For example, psychology students are required to conduct library research in order to locate academic journal
articles and write journal article summaries. Adjunct faculty members are highly engaged with their students and are very committed to the college.

Math, Physics, and Engineering

The department of Math, Physics, and Engineering serves to provide instruction in these disciplines equipping students for transfer and advanced study. The department chair is an advocate of assessment and provided several thoughtful and comprehensive examples of assessment at the course level.

Recent assessment and program review efforts have resulted in positive changes to the curriculum. These include increasing the number of credits in certain transfer courses to more closely align with receiving institutions. Additionally, the creation of ENGR 100 appears to be serving as a vehicle to educate students about opportunities in engineering and is hoped to lead to a stable cohort of pre-engineering students.

The building of the new science center and the receipt of grant and other monies in support of STEM students has energized department faculty. However, some concern was voiced regarding a lack of funds to increase faculty and support staff as programs grow.

Off Campus and Other Special Programs Providing Academic Credit - Garrett Heyns Educational Center

Garrett Heyns Educational Center (GHEC) - this educational outreach program has recently received accreditation from the American Correctional Association (ACA). Faculty and administrators are keenly dedicated to their mission of providing educational services and outreach to inmates. Faculty and staff from the program speak of clear support from the main campus and are especially grateful for the interest and support from the board of trustees.

Faculty members from the GHEC described the recent tenure process of one of their faculty members and were appreciative of efforts the tenure committee members made to meet with GHEC faculty at Washington Corrections Center to ensure this faculty member was given the same support through the tenure process as faculty from the main campus.

Centralia College East

Centralia College East offers a wide array of credit and non-credit courses to residents in Morton, Washington, which is approximately 47 miles east of the main campus in Centralia. The program has recently hired a new administrator to replace the former administrator who retired. The new dean possesses a master’s degree in mathematics education and began her college career at Centralia College East.

Centralia College East enjoys widespread support in the area, and attitude of support from the main campus was echoed during a site visit. The facility is immaculate; the classrooms are well equipped with appropriate resources and important technologies like ITV. Furthermore, the site is regularly visited by support professionals, such as counselors and student services.
representatives from the main campus to ensure that CC East students receive the same array of services offered on campus.

**Policy 2.1 General Education/Related Instruction Requirements**

The college is in compliance with Policy 2.1 regarding general education distribution and related instruction requirements. The general education distribution requirements are clearly spelled out and explained in the college catalog. The explanation of the requirements is detailed, clear for students to understand, and sets forth the courses that qualify for satisfaction of the specific area requirements. The distribution area courses include humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, the social sciences, and health/fitness, as well as communication skills, mathematics, and diversity. The distribution requirements are found in the transfer associate degree programs, as well as Workforce Education degrees and certificates of proficiency. The college schedule publication of the quarter’s course offerings also includes a code system so that students are able to identify specific courses and the general education distribution requirements satisfied by a specific course.

The self-study identified a compliance issue regarding Policy 2.1. For example, the college identified weaknesses and exceptions in the distribution requirements for the Associate in Fine Arts-Music degree and the Associate in Applied Science – Transfer degree in Finance and Accounting. The college has undertaken efforts to rectify those weaknesses. Faculty and deans work in a cooperative manner in order to review and update general education distribution and related instruction requirements on an annual basis. Full-time faculty members have clearly set forth the general education distribution and related instruction requirements in their Faculty Assessment Notebooks. Faculty members understand the importance of and the substance of the general education distribution and related instruction requirements and embrace a process of continued improvement.

**Policy 2.2 Educational Assessment**

The college has demonstrated its dedication to the assessment process by placing assessment creation and collection at the center of its academic structure. Centralia College is to be commended on its effort to create a comprehensive assessment process that is across programs and departments and is classroom focused, thus helping to guarantee in-depth learning experiences in individual classes.

However, two more steps are needed. First, the faculty and staff must bring the assessment process full circle, assuring that the assessment data collected is utilized in all areas to direct budgetary and curriculum decisions. The second involves further connecting the publicly stated educational outcomes to the classroom experience of students. The college has committed itself to convey to students the necessary information of the comprehensive academic curriculum and has also committed itself to assisting students to develop the necessary skills and attitudes for successful utilization of the information they are learning. The college needs to give continued attention to polishing the methods and tools that allow meaningful assessment of these goals. Students need to not only know what information they are responsible for learning, but also they need to know what skills are going to be emphasized in the midst of their content.
Policy 2.6 Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate, and Degree Programs

The college ensures that students have access to appropriate library and information resources and services, including the availability of training in the effective and independent use of these resources and services. Library staff provide information literacy training to students to help them search for, access, retrieve, critically evaluate, and effectively use appropriate information resources.

Use of library and information resources and services are incorporated into the curriculum. The degree and level of use varies from department to department, subject to subject, and instructor to instructor. Some faculty utilize assignments that require the use of library and information resources and services.

The library’s shift to electronic resources and services benefits distance courses and programs. Students have access to online databases, ebooks, library catalog, and even 24/7 librarian access. These services can be accessed anytime, anywhere with an appropriate computer and Internet access.

Centralia utilizes Angel as its learning management system (LMS). The system is used for web-enhanced, hybrid, eCorrespondence, and online courses. Faculty are provided training in the use of the Angel system. The instructional designer helps faculty develop distance learning courses that meet quality standards. The college uses the QualityMatters rubric to evaluate the quality of online courses. The Center for Disability Services Director and the eLearning department help faculty ensure the accessibility of their distance learning courses. Universal design training is currently somewhat lacking and therefore the college relies more on retrofitting courses to meet the needs of students with disabilities, instead of developing courses based on universal design principles.

Concern: Centralia College has invested considerable time and institutional energy in the development of an educational assessment program. However, much more work needs to be done. The committee recommends that Centralia College consistently integrate discipline and program review into institutional assessment and planning. Further, the committee recommends that the college finish the development and implementation of its instructional outcomes assessment plan. (Standard 2. B.2; Policy 2.2)
Standard Three – Students

The Student Services division at Centralia College provides a comprehensive offering of services to students in support of its teaching and learning initiatives.

In interviews, student service professionals shared their dedication to the End Statements of the college. Moreover, they demonstrated an intrinsic belief in and commitment to the End Statements:

- Centralia College shall provide all students a quality education while keeping the costs of their college experience as affordable as possible.
- Centralia College shall provide to our greater community an ever-increasing number of educated people having the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors to become lifelong learners and productive and responsible citizens more capable of realizing their highest human potential.
- Centralia College shall provide diverse multi-cultural, musical, theatrical, artistic, athletic, instructional, and social program experiences for lifelong learning and community enrichment.

Student Services programs are designed to provide a student-centered environment, emphasizing values of respect, responsibility, and responsiveness. Staff is committed to acting with integrity while providing services for access and enhancing student success.

Formal assessment of Student Services provides evidence that the organization of this unit is effective in providing services consistent with the mission and goals while operating within the guiding principles of the college.

Purpose and Organization

"Centralia College will be recognized as the best community college in the state of Washington, a driving force in the local economy and the intellectual heart and cultural soul of the community." Student Services assists the college in effectively approaching the achievement of this vision statement.

Student Services policies and procedures are established that govern the areas of student admission, testing, accommodating students with disabilities, confidentiality of student records, grading, academic standards, academic honesty, and student rights and responsibilities. The division’s annual planning process ensures that each Student Services unit develops a department/program work plan with goals, objectives, and strategic actions that are compatible with division and institutional goals. This comprehensive process contributes to support Student Services objectives at the department, division, and institutional levels. The Student Services Strategic Plan documents division-wide commitment to: act with integrity, provide access, enhance student success, exceed customer expectations, put people first, treat people fairly, move paper not people, provide one-stop service, build community, recognize and reward accomplishment, and measure milestones with pride. This commitment is authentic.
The Student Services division is a composite of many long-time Centralia employees and some newer-to-the-college employees. The college president is committed to “one overall guiding principle and that is to take care of our people.” This principle is reflected in confining cuts in the college’s operating budget to materials and services, and natural attrition in personnel (through retirements and resignations), not through deliberate layoffs. This practice has resulted in necessary restructuring of the division, which has included the combining of some positions and responsibilities into fewer positions and in some cases, the reassignment of job duties among employees. Job descriptions have been rewritten to define and delineate the primary assignments for each position. The reorganization has been mindful of employee competencies and the core qualifications required by the positions. The quality of services remains high and the morale of the staff is positive. The term “family” was used time and again to describe relationships between employees throughout the college. Numerous examples were shared of collaborative efforts and employees going above and beyond in assisting others in the work of the college.

The college continues to be challenged by significant budget reductions, coupled with record enrollment. Student Services has addressed this through cuts to programs, attrition in personnel, and restructuring of funding sources. This work has resulted in a leaner division. However, for the most part, this leaner version continues to flourish, remains positive, and works together with a commitment to individual student success.

General Responsibilities

Centralia College students are diverse in their academic and ethnic characteristics, in their preparedness, in their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and in their goals and aspirations. Strategies have been implemented which have increased persistence and completion rates. Demographic data reveals a need to provide support services for first-generation and low-income students. The college has, for more than 20 years, received Title IV funding for TRiO programs, providing academic support to these students. The college has pre-college programs, Upward Bound, and Talent Search, serving area middle school and high school students and the Student Support Services program serving currently enrolled college students.

The college’s governance model provides for student involvement. Opportunities for involvement include: Associated Students of Centralia College, Judicial Board, Student Policy Council, Instructional Council, faculty tenure review committees, and the Sustainability Committee. Students are the majority membership of the ASCC Service & Activities Fee Budget Committee, which oversees the distribution of well over $500,000 annually. Students indicated that they have an authentic role in the decision making within the Services and Activities Fee Budget Committee.

College Policy 4.170 defines the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code as follows: Centralia College has a Student Rights and Responsibilities Code. It is WAL 132A-120. It is published on the college Web site and is available in hard copy format in most Student Services areas. An abridged version of the code is readily available to students in the Student Planner/Handbook. Students and staff consistently expressed a sense of security and perceived safety on the college campus.
However, the college does not have a security office or a visible campus security presence. The college works closely with and is reliant upon Centralia Police Department for public safety enforcement. The college contracts with a local merchant patrol service for an evening presence to check doors and patrol campus. Campus security is enhanced by technology with security cameras that monitor and record campus activity 24 hours a day.

The college has numerous initiatives underway pertaining to campus safety and emergency planning. The Behavioral Intervention Team has been chartered to monitor and react to concerns about individual behavior on campus. An emergency communication alerting service, e2Campus, has been contracted. There is a vigorous campaign to enlist student subscription to this system. The college works closely with the city of Centralia during emergencies and shares resources to ensure safe and secure environments. However, the Crisis Response Manuel was last revised in 2003 and is in need of revision. The college is compliant with the Cleary Act and provides an active sex offender disclosure policy. Student "Right to Know" information is posted on the college's Web site. The college has developed a standard operating procedure regarding the closure of the college, Policy 1.350 Suspended Operations. This information is available on the college Web site, as well as in the Student Planner.

The Centralia College catalog is published every year and is available on the college Web site. The class schedule is published quarterly and mailed to every household in the college district. A Student Planner/Handbook is published annually and is available in hard copy with corresponding information available on the college Web site. These publications provide comprehensive information about academic policies, procedures, and practices.

Ongoing assessment of Student Services is conducted at the institutional level with some limited assessment at the individual department levels. Centralia College participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and Noel-LeVitz Student Satisfaction Inventory in alternating years, utilizing the data to inform and review programs and practices. Some service areas implement less formal surveys of student satisfaction of services in their areas on a regular basis. The commitment to the assessment process and the constructive use of information drawn from the data is genuine. The data gathered as a result of these assessments provides concrete information, which is used to make improvements to existing programs, services, and processes and establish new ones as needed. This information provides the basis to establish new or revised goals in the annual work plans.

Academic Credits and Records

Centralia College is compliant in the evaluation of student learning and the awarding of credit. Student records are secure. The college adheres to FERPA guidelines. The Vice President for Student Services has ultimate responsibility for FERPA access and review.

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Policies and Procedures Manual includes criteria for determining contact hours, credit values, and credit equivalents for all community and technical colleges. Centralia College follows these criteria in determining credit values for its courses. The processes are well documented in college publications.
The Instructional Council is responsible for ensuring that criteria used for evaluating student achievement are appropriate to the degree level. Faculty evaluate student learning according to the criteria specified in the course syllabi. The college's grading system is published in the college catalog and process outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

The distinction between degree and non-degree credit is clear and specific and detailed in the college catalog. Courses are clearly and appropriately numbered with respect to their degree status. Student transcripts do not distinguish between degree and non-degree credits.

Transfer credits are accepted in compliance with Policy 2.5 of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Centralia College follows the Inter-College Relations Committee (ICRC) guidelines and transferability requirements; the Vice President for Student Services has ultimate responsibility for the evaluation of credit, although the day to day authority is delegated to the credit evaluator. The college also applies credit toward academic programs through non-traditional credits: College Level Examination Program, credit by examination, Advanced Placement, military credit and experience, law enforcement/fire protection training, and high school tech prep. This process is clearly outlined in college policy 4.125 Non-Traditional Credit.

Student records and transcripts are maintained electronically and stored in a Washington state community and technical college database, the Student Management System (SMS). Industry standards for securing information assets and implementing regular backups are observed. On the Centralia College campus, archival storage of student records is secure and maintained in duplicate in two separate fire-resistant vaults.

**Student Services**

Centralia College recruits and admits students based upon their educational goals and their ability to benefit from the curricular offerings of the college. It provides a supportive learning environment and strives to facilitate student progress and success. An ongoing challenge is to maintain a full array of student support services despite the small size of the college and with continued budgetary restrictions and cuts.

Centralia College has an open-door policy consistent with WAS 131-12-010 providing educational opportunity in pre-college and the first two years of a transfer or workforce education, accepting all applicants with a high school diploma or GED certificate or age 18 and older or by written release from a high school.

Admission processes are clearly outlined in the college catalog. Applications for general college admission, under age admission and the nursing program are maintained in the Enrollment Services Office. Applications for International Program and Running Start program are maintained by those departments.

Centralia College complies with the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and its amendments. Accommodations for students are coordinated through the Center for Disability Services.
Housed in a converted neighborhood home, the International Student Services office is a welcoming environment. The staff provides assistance to international students at Centralia around a myriad of concerns from admission to housing to academic.

Veterans’ Services are provided to students through the Enrollment Services Office in the Student Center. Centralia College has instituted a special tuition rate program for veterans and their dependents. A discount of 30% is applied to eligible veterans, National Guard, and children/spouses of deceased and/or disabled veterans. Information can be found on the college Web site.

The Phoenix Center oversees testing for the college. New priority students take either the computerized COMPASS test or the paper-and-pencil ASSET test, measuring reading, English, and math skills. Effective fall term 2009, mandatory placement was implemented for developmental and college-level English courses. Placement into math and reading courses is currently still advisory.

New student orientation is offered for all new credit students. There are two orientations, one required and one elective. Students are required to attend a one-hour pre-advising session at a new student advising fair. Advising fairs are offered approximately six times during the summer and twice before both winter and spring terms. New students can also elect to attend CC101, a two-day intensive one-credit class, offered prior to fall term registration. Specialized orientations are required for some professional and technical programs, international students and students in the Running Start program.

Centralia College recognizes academic advising as a best practice or the key to student success. The college employs a faculty advisor model, which has been negotiated as a primary job duty of all full-time and pro-rata faculty. This program provides students a one-to-one connection with a professor in their chosen major or program of study. The advising system is managed and monitored by the Advising Steering Committee, which reports to the Vice President of Student Services. New students attend an advising fair where they are assigned a faculty advisor in their major or program area with whom they will meet every quarter for assistance. Continuing students are required to consult with their assigned advisor each quarter in order to maintain their priority status for registration. This intrusive model of academic advising has resulted in strong retention and success rates for students. Faculty and students alike are enthusiastic about this relationship-based program. It is indeed an excellent program.

The college has established expectations for student progress and academic performance through College Policy 4.005. These expectations are clearly stated in the college catalog. The intent of the Academic Standards Policy is an academic warning system to identify and alert students with low academic achievement and to provide them with assistance to improve their academic performance.

Institutional and program graduation requirements are clearly stated in the college catalog, on the college Web site, and in individual instructional program brochures. The certificate and degree verification process is manually completed by the credentials evaluator. A new automated degree audit tool is currently being developed and will hopefully be available for use by students and
Financial aid services at Centralia College are well-organized and student-friendly, as was recognized in a meeting with students in the Student Forum. The Financial Aid department has adopted a prime directive: *Award the most students, the most money in the shortest time with the most flexibility and the least hassle.* Application deadlines are widely known and publicized to students. The college administers financial aid programs that fall into two categories: grants/scholarships and work study. Sources of aid include federal financial aid, Washington state aid, institutional aid, agency funds, and private scholarships. Services are available to students in person at the Financial Aid office, by phone, via e-mail and through the Web.

The college no longer participates in the federal loan program as part of Financial Aid Services. The decision to eliminate the loan program came at a time when the college had been experiencing a 20% loan default rate and was required to develop and implement a default management plan. The plan required one-on-one financial planning with each student applying for a loan. This was implemented and was found to be time and staff intensive to the point of being prohibitive with current staffing levels. A study of loan applicants was completed and findings that 80% of loan borrowers were students who were dependents with family income of $75,000 or greater led the Financial Aid department to find that the need for the loan program was not essential for the Centralia student population. The elimination of the loan program was recommended to and approved by the Executive Management Team. Since the elimination of the loan program, the default rate has dropped to approximately 10%, which is in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education recommended default rate level.

During 2001 and 2006, the College Board of Trustees held hearings/scans with the Latino population of its service district. As a result of the scans, the college created a campus Diversity Center to better serve their students. This move was in line with work to support End Statement 3: *Centralia College shall provide an inviting and supportive learning environment to those populations that have been traditionally under-served by higher education.* Recent budget cuts and staffing decisions have resulted in the closing of the center. This move has been met with some controversy within the college community.

Professional health care is not available on campus, but counselors do assist with mental health counseling and referrals. Student housing is not available on campus for the general student population. Housing assistance is provided for international students through International Student Services. Food services are minimal with limited daytime hours. Students and staff have expressed that they are satisfied with the offerings, quality of food, and customer service. Snack options are available at the bookstore and from vending machines located throughout the campus.

The college offers co-curricular programming that is consistent with the mission of a commuter college. Several programs are offered weekly during the day and some evenings. The college is a main purveyor of cultural options for the community. Student clubs, while small in number, are active and represent current student interest.
Centralia College has a strong tradition of providing cultural events programming to the college community. Programs and activities offered by the Student Programming Board, athletics, and the music and theater departments are open to the public and have strong community support. Of note is the theatre program and the stunning Washington Hall. Theatre at Centralia College began anew in 2001 with the addition of two state-of-the-art theatres: 506-seat Margaret Corbet Theatre and an intimate 110-seat studio theatre. More than 150 productions have entertained and enlightened the campus and community since 1935.

The mission of the Associated Students of Centralia College (ASCC) is aligned with the mission of the college and demonstrates commitment to the college’s mission and goals as defined by the End Statements. The ASCC is regulated by its own constitution. Two executive officers are elected through a college-wide student election. Three additional officers are appointed. The ASCC president provides a report at the regular Board of Trustees meetings. Other members of ASCC and representatives from the general student body serve on 12 college committees. The Student Programming Board has five positions that are hired each year. Both ASCC and the Student Programming Board are advised by a full-time professional staff member, and the officers are required to participate in a leadership training program.

There are limited recreational facilities available for the general student population. ASCC is currently working with the athletic department to develop guidelines to provide student access to the fitness room.

The college bookstore is owned and operated by the college as a self-supporting auxiliary service. The bookstore manager actively researches and implements programs and services to provide economical and innovative means by which students can access textbooks, and offers new and used text books, e-books, a textbook rental program, and supports a book buyback program. In addition, the bookstore offers student supplies, Centralia insignia merchandise, and limited snack options. The major concern of students is the exorbitant costs of textbooks.

**Intercollegiate Athletics**

There are six intercollegiate sports at Centralia College: men’s and women’s basketball, men’s baseball, women’s fast pitch softball, women’s golf, and women’s volleyball. The philosophy of the athletics program is to “complement academic programs while enhancing the students’ educational experience.” The implementation of this philosophy into practice is demonstrated in the development of an intrusive retention program specifically targeting student athletes, which is coordinated by the Director of Student Life and Involvement Center in collaboration with the athletic coaches. Centralia College is a member and participant in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC). The athletic program is funded through the general education operational fund, services and activities fees, and fundraising.

**Policy 3.1 Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status**

All advertising and promotional materials follow accreditation guidelines for integrity and responsibility. Materials are clear and list appropriate requirements for programs and policies.
Admissions staff is well trained and follow ethical guidelines of the profession. Accreditation representation is in line with the requirements.

Concern: Recent budget cuts have had a significant impact on institutional attention to diversity issues. Students, staff, and faculty expressed concern about the decision to close the Diversity Center and about the ability of the Diversity Action Team to influence decision making related to diversity issues.

Standard Four – Faculty

Faculty Selection, Evaluation, Roles, Welfare, and Development

The college has done an excellent job in faculty selection and retention. The faculty, based upon Spring 2010 Quarter statistics, consists of 52 full-time, one full-time one-year temporary, 16 pro rata, and 166 adjunct faculty members. The college has also done an excellent job in retention of faculty members. Many faculty members are long-term employees, with approximately fifty percent of the full-time faculty having ten or more years of service to the college. The faculty is highly committed to the students and an excellent professor-student relationship exists in the college community. Full-time faculty expressed concern that the difficult fiscal and budget environment over the past two years has resulted in full-time faculty positions not being searched and filled. Accordingly, the college has relied more upon adjunct faculty in the delivery of courses. Adjunct faculty is very satisfied with their experience at the college. Adjunct faculty members feel that they have the opportunity to be as involved in the college community as they want to be based upon their own time constraints. Faculty also expressed concern that the number of administrators has increased over time; however, the number of full-time teaching faculty has not increased over the same period of time. Faculty expressed concern that the services available to teaching faculty during the evening are insufficient and inconsistent.

The self-study report accurately describes faculty participation in institutional governance. Full-time and pro rata faculty are actively involved in serving on college committees and believe that their participation is important and valued. A significant responsibility for full-time and pro rata faculty is student advising. Students overwhelmingly responded with high levels of praise for the faculty advising that exists at the college. Students reported that they are extremely satisfied with the quality of the faculty advising, as evidenced by recent student satisfaction surveys. Faculty members have experienced a steady increase in their advising loads, with some faculty advising upward of fifty to sixty students. Faculty members report that the advising function is one of their critical functions and that they find this function to be a most satisfying part of their duties. The faculty contract sets forth the salary schedule and contractual responsibilities for faculty, including the evaluation process. Faculty is satisfied with the administration of the contract. The self-study report accurately sets forth the evaluation process for full-time, pro rata, and adjunct faculty members. The evidence supports the assertion that the evaluation procedures are being administered in accordance with the terms of the contract and the college policies and procedures.
Consistent with Policy 4.1 the institution utilizes multiple indices in its evaluation of all faculty. These include student course evaluations, peer evaluations, self evaluations and observations by the respective Deans. A review of faculty evaluations demonstrated the institution has a well thought out schedule of evaluation which provides a venue to integrate the multiple points of data. A review of tenure applications provided evidence that the process identifies areas where faculty are in need of improvement and provides a process to accomplish this.

Interviews with several faculty members indicate the process for granting tenure is strongly endorsed. It was described as systematic, comprehensive, and rigorous. Several faculty members volunteered that not everyone who begins the tenure review process is successful. In some cases, faculty members have not continued with the college and in other cases, the probationary period has been extended. There were some reports that previously the post-tenure evaluation process was lacking. However, faculty commented that this process has recently been reinvigorated.

The difficult fiscal and budget environment has resulted in a lower level of resources for faculty development. Each full-time faculty member is allocated a total of $350.00 per academic year for professional development fiscal support. An out-of-state travel financing freeze has also reduced development opportunities. Faculty members are understanding of these measures based upon the fiscal constraints imposed by the difficult budgetary environment. The extended studies fund does provide money to faculty to pay for membership fees in professional associations, conference, and enrollment fees for courses. Full-time faculty and pro rata faculty have the first opportunity for an award of extended studies money, and adjunct faculty may receive extended studies money in the event there are sufficient funds remaining at the end of the academic year.

**Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation**

In accordance with the mission of Centralia College, teaching is the primary focus of the faculty. Faculty is also engaged in scholarship and research, although there is no contractual obligation to engage in such activities. Faculty members conduct research and present the results of their research at conferences. Faculty members attend conferences, workshops, conventions, and universities. Science faculty recently organized and the college hosted a regional conference that was attended by approximately two hundred twenty scientists. Faculty members take academic classes for professional improvement. Faculty members have also conducted college-sponsored tours to Latin America for students, with the students earning college credit. Faculty members have published in magazines and journals, including the publication of two books. Workforce education faculty set an example for their students by engaging in the practice of their profession in the community. Other faculty members engage in artistic creation, including photography, painting, and weaving. A college culture exists that encourages and supports faculty to actively engage in scholarly and artistic endeavors.
Standard Five-Library and Information Resources

Purpose and Scope

Centralia provides library and information resources and services to its college community through the library, the eLearning department, the Information Technology (IT) department, and the College Relations department. In addition, the SBCTC-IT, a state entity overseen by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) administers state-wide mission-critical administrative applications for Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges (WACTC), including Centralia.

Library and information resources and services at Centralia support the mission and goals of the college. Holdings and equipment are sufficient to support the courses and programs offered, whether face-to-face, eCorrespondence, Web-enhanced, hybrid, or online. Financial and human resources have been strained and stretched over the last couple of years, due to budget cuts coupled with record increases in student enrollment.

Library Information Resources and Services

A review of the resources and services offered and feedback received from students, faculty, and staff presented evidence that Centralia provides access to library resources with sufficient quality, currency, diversity, and depth to support the institution’s curriculum. Through one-on-one and small group interviews, as well as open forums, committee members found that students, faculty, and staff are generally satisfied with library holdings and with the helpfulness of library and information resources staff, as well as the appropriateness of college equipment, hardware, and software.

Challenges reported to the committee include the legacy state administrative system that community colleges in the state of Washington, including Centralia, are required to use yet it is very outdated, not user-friendly, and in many ways, it does not meet users’ needs. This is not a new issue, but one that has gone unresolved for several years. Colleges do not have the option to choose a different system, yet the state has not been able to modernize the system to ensure that it meets the needs of its users. The state has gone through several expensive yet failed attempts to “re-host” the legacy system. Currently, it is pursuing a “Lift and Shift” strategy, which only addresses the outdated hardware but not the software side of the state-wide problem. Staff voiced a great deal of frustration over the state-wide administrative system. The lack of adequate professional IT staff with required specific competencies (e.g., programmer, database manager, and Web master) was also noted as significant barriers preventing Centralia from implementing at least some effective home-grown solutions that would help the college better meet the needs of the students, faculty, and staff. Currently Centralia relies on other colleges in the state-wide system to develop applications that they may be willing to share. These applications are not designed to meet Centralia’s specific needs.
Library personnel provide training and support to help students and faculty access and use library and information resources and services independently and effectively. Information literacy training is utilized by some disciplines more than others. Some faculty have assignments that require students to use library and information resources, and those assignments are tied to specific learning outcomes.

Librarians, with input from faculty and students, select materials to add to the collection. Students, faculty, and staff have opportunities to request materials and to provide feedback about library and information resources and services.

The college has several well-equipped computer labs and classrooms. Some of these rooms are equipped with specialized hardware and software to meet the specific needs of various departments (e.g., graphics lab, AutoCAD lab, etc.), are mainly dedicated to the students in those programs and therefore, are not always fully utilized.

The eLearning department administers the college’s learning management system (LMS), Angel, and provides instructional design, training, and support to faculty. The SBCTC licensed Angel state-wide. Centralia’s instructional designer and one of its librarians participated in the initial review and testing process. Faculty receive training in the use of Angel. Support is provided both locally through the eLearning department, as well as through SBCTC.

The SBCTC also provides a state-wide Elluminate license. Elluminate is used for Web conferencing. Some Centralia faculty utilize Tegrity lecture capture. Students reported a high level of satisfaction with Tegrity. They found the ability to go back and review lectures and search for specific topics within lectures very useful and praised faculty who take the time to capture their lectures for the benefit of their students.

Although some information technology training for faculty and staff is available, Centralia does not offer a coordinated and on-going faculty and staff information resources training program.

The college Web site is designed and maintained through the College Relations department by the Web manager with help from staff in various functional areas. The IT department maintains the Web server.

The college develops, updates, and disseminates appropriate library and information resources policies, regulations, and procedures. Centralia also takes advantage of various local, regional, and national networks and consortia.

**Library Facilities and Access**

Feedback from students, faculty, and staff showed that the college provides adequate facilities for library and information resources, equipment, and personnel. The library takes up about half of the Kirk Library building, sharing space with the Phoenix Center. The library includes space for the print and media collections, computer stations/open lab, group study areas, a classroom, quiet study areas, and staff offices. The eLearning department is also housed in the Kirk Library building. Computers in the library open computer lab are often used to full capacity, forcing
students to have to go somewhere else in search of computer access. Under the current configuration, there's little space to expand the number of computers available in the library.

Librarians also expressed concerns over space limitations, namely the classroom, space for expanded computer lab, and group study areas. The classroom is small, not well suited for larger classes, and it does not have the necessary furnishings (desks) and equipment (computers for students). This lack of space and equipment makes information literacy training very challenging in the library. When librarians provide information literacy training inside the library, students need to use the open computer lab which means that for the duration of the session, other students cannot use the computers. Librarians do have the ability to use computer labs and classrooms in other buildings but prefer to provide information literacy training in the library in order to encourage students to visit the library and to have access to both traditional and electronic library resources during the training. In order to address some of these space limitations, the plan is that once the new student center is built, the Phoenix Center will move and the library could expand.

The self-study mentioned the security gate that was broken. Since then a new gate was purchased and installed, allowing the library to protect its resources.

Centralia offers wireless Internet access, further expanding access to technology and online resources. A growing number of students use their own laptops and the college's wireless. Librarians and students noted the unpredictable reliability and spotty coverage around campus as a challenge.

While the hours of operation of the library are limited, access to online resources and services is available 24/7 from any computer with Internet access. Users commended the library for increasing access to information resources by investing into quality electronic resources. Circulation statistics show a decrease in print material circulation while a significant increase in the use of electronic resources.

In order to supplement resources offered and further increase access, the library has also entered into various cooperative agreements. Formal agreements are on file.

Library Personnel and Management

Students, faculty, and staff reported satisfaction with the services and support provided by existing library and information services staff. However, they expressed serious concerns over the limited number of information technology staff to meet the fast-growing demand for training and support. Students and faculty praised Library and IT personnel's expertise and their commitment to providing information resources and services in support of teaching and learning. Several faculty and students commented on how knowledgeable and helpful library, eLearning, and IT personnel were. Faculty and staff emphasized that although they were satisfied with the services offered by existing staff, the eLearning department, the IT department, and the Web related portion of the College Relations department were all understaffed, preventing them from providing adequate development, support, and training in order to meet the growing technology needs of the college. Areas of greatest need expressed: timely and effective technical support
inside and outside the classroom; increased access and technical support during the evening
hours; training and support for distance learning courses and programs, including
eCorrespondence, Web enhanced, hybrid, and online courses; universal design; development of
custom applications to help expand the functionality and usability of the administrative system;
development of Web-based resources and services that meet the needs of end users.

Concerns were also expressed over the lack of adequate professional development opportunities
for information technology professional staff in order to allow them to effectively and efficiently
implement new technology-based solutions to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.
Faculty and staff also expressed trepidation over the availability of funds for equipment,
hardware, software maintenance, upgrades, and replacement.

Planning and Evaluation

Library and information resources personnel perform planning and assessment activities
designed to support teaching and learning and to continually improve the quality and
effectiveness of resources and services offered in support of the college's mission. These plans
are driven by the institution's mission and goals. The IT department developed an Information
Technology Plan in 2005, which needs to be revisited and updated. While these activities are not
lacking, both planning and evaluation processes could be further strengthened in order to ensure
a more systematic, inclusive, and ongoing approach to evaluating the quality, adequacy, and
utilization of library and information resources and services. Furthermore, although the
institution recognizes the need for management and technical linkages among various
information resource bases (e.g., library, eLearning, IT department, College Relations
department, Institutional Research, etc.), these synergies could be further explored and exploited.

Library and information services staff participate in the college’s overall planning process
through involvement on various committees.

Librarians perform collection analysis, track usage statistics, solicit input from faculty on
collection development, and make changes accordingly in order to maximize the benefits derived
from limited resources. The library also utilizes surveys to gauge satisfaction levels with
resources and services. The results of the surveys are utilized to improve services.

Some evaluation processes are in place to assess the use of and satisfaction with library and
information resources and services, their quality, adequacy, accessibility, and effectiveness. In
some areas, learning outcomes are identified and tied to library and information resources and
services offered.

Concerns: The college does not employ information resources personnel in adequate numbers
and areas of expertise to meet the growing information and technology needs of students, faculty,
and staff. Furthermore, the college does not provide appropriate professional development
opportunities to enable professional information resources staff to effectively and efficiently
support the college’s mission and goals.
Planning and evaluation of the quality, accessibility, and use of library and information resources and services need to be more regular, systematic, in-depth, and inclusive.

**Standard Six—Governance and Administration**

**Governance System**

Centralia College formally adopted the Policy Governance model in 2000. This model clearly describes the responsibilities of the governing board, administrators, faculty, and staff. Centralia’s system of governance is participatory with provision for the consideration of faculty, student, and staff views and judgments on those matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest. Faculty, staff, and students indicated that they have representation on all standing committees except the Executive Management Team, which is made up of administrators. They described the governance process as participatory and transparent. An example mentioned by many was the Budget Review Process that has included input from all constituencies, timely feedback, and open communication of discussions and recommendations.

**Governing Board**

The form and composition, duties, and powers of Centralia’s Board of Trustees are prescribed in Washington state statute. Public documents that describe the authority, duties, and responsibilities of the board are available and were reviewed by committee members. Board members indicated a thorough understanding of their role in the Policy Governance model and a belief that it has been very effective for Centralia College. Faculty, staff, and students noted the support of the Centralia Trustees—their participation in college events and their support of college activities. Trustees have made a significant outreach to the community through regular “scans.” The board invites individuals from particular sectors of the community to attend a special board meeting where they can discuss the educational needs of their population sector or occupational area. The Centralia board conducts annual evaluations of the college president and self-evaluations of the board itself. Under the Policy Governance model, the board has delegated the development and approval of the annual budget to the president.

**Leadership and Management**

Centralia College’s current president was hired in 2002. His responsibilities to the institution are full-time, and board policy clearly defines his roles and responsibilities. Faculty, staff, and students indicated that the college’s administrative team is effective and described top-level administrators as having an “open door.” Administrators are evaluated every two years with a “360 degree” evaluation process. The college administers climate surveys and follows up on areas of concern. For example, a recent survey indicated some lack of satisfaction with the process for administrative appointments. The Vice President for Human Resources is conducting focus groups to determine the reasons.

College administrators facilitate cooperative working relationships and encourage open communication. Of note is the annual leadership class that brings employees together to learn
about the departments of the college and to attain leadership skills. Class alumnæ continue to meet and conduct service projects for students and the college community. Some interviewees indicated that a review of processes for making complaints would be helpful for employees and that more timely feedback of the status of the complaint/concern was desired.

The addition of the Institutional Research office since the last comprehensive evaluation visit has enabled the college to inform planning processes and make recommendations for improvements with the results of numerous college-wide assessments. This office works closely with external funding sources to ensure that fund raising efforts align with the college’s mission and goals.

Faculty and Student Role in Governance

Faculty and students indicated that they have important roles in the governance of Centralia College and that their roles are clear and public. Faculty members indicated that they each participate in two-four committees. Student government representatives described their regular reports to the Board of Trustees and listed “student input in decisions” as a college strength.

Commendation: The Centralia College Board of Trustees is commended for its commitment to and involvement in the life of Centralia College. Faculty, staff, and students commented positively on the contributions and leadership of their trustees.

Standard Seven - Finance

The Washington State Legislature grants authority for the finances and budgeting of all Washington state colleges to the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) who in turn confers authority to Centralia College and the five-member Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility for the overall finances and budget development to the president through board policy.

The college uses a financial planning model for operations that estimates revenues and expenditures over a five year period. The primary sources of operating revenue are state resources and tuition revenue. Tuition revenue is estimated based on enrollment goals and projections. State revenue is projected based on information from the SBCTC and can change based on the economic climate of the state. Expenditures are projected based on carrying forward current costs, which include around 90 percent for personnel with the remaining costs for materials and services and a small amount allocated for instructional equipment. There is no allocation for administrative equipment, due to the cuts in state funding the college has experienced in recent years. Multi-year capital budgets are created based on capital projects submitted to the SBCTC.

In preparation for the annual budget, the Executive Management Team—president, vice presidents, and deans (EMT) meets to adopt objectives and priorities for the coming year based on the mission, vision, plans, and objectives of the college. The Vice President of Administrative
Services estimates tuition revenues based on enrollment goals, projects state revenue according to information received by the SBCTC, and uses local funding sources (tuition revenue from enrollment exceeding targets, international enrollment, Running Start student income, and grant and contract indirect/administrative allowance) to estimate revenues for the year. A college committee with broad representation, the Budget Review and Planning Committee (BRP) develops a budget calendar that is sent to budget managers, along with carry-forward expenditure budgets and parameters for building individual budgets. During budget development and throughout the year, the BRP meets regularly to share information with the campus community about the budget situation and makes recommendations to the EMT for changes based on area reviews. In recent years, the BRP has held several campus-wide meetings to share information about state revenue reductions and to make recommendations for responding. Once all revisions are received from departments and the BRP, the preliminary budget is recommended to EMT by the BRP who in turn makes a formal recommendation to the president.

Once the state notifies the college of the actual revenue from the state allocation, the budget office makes final adjustments to balance the budget and distributes copies to the administration and Board of Trustees. The final budget is made available in the Kirk Library and posted on the college’s intranet site. Budget changes are reviewed by the budget office and approved by the unit vice president prior to processing.

In fiscal year 2009 after the budget was finalized, the college received notice that the state allocation was being cut by $535,000 in mid year and then would likely face another cut of $850,000 in 2010. Reductions were addressed by the BRP and EMT using established guiding principles that directed the college to use employee attrition versus layoff during times of reduced resources. The college’s commitment to take care of its people and not lay off any staff was mentioned with appreciation in more than one employee forum. Employees felt that the college administration was open and straight forward about the resource issues and lived up to its promises. At the same time that state revenue is decreasing, tuition revenue is increasing due to enrollment surges. Unanticipated tuition revenue helped soften the state reductions.

Capital planning is done on an ongoing basis and is an integral part of financial planning at the college. The Facilities Master Plan provides the basis for all capital requests, from major repairs to the construction of new facilities. The comprehensive 20-year plan was written in 2002 and approved by the board. Regular updates have been made to the plan every few years based on program and facility needs. The most recent plan was just updated in July 2010. Since 2000, the college has completed two projects—Washington Hall and the New Science Center and renovated the Health and Wellness Center. Plans are underway for the Kiser Natural Outdoor Learning Lab and the TransAlta Commons.

The college currently has no debt for capital outlay purposes, but the Board of Trustees authorized a future issuance of debt for a portion of the new TransAlta Commons scheduled to be built in the next six years. The debt will be paid for from a student approved fee. The Board of Trustees has delegated limited authority for issuing short term debt to the president in policy. All other debt must be board approved.
Adequacy of Financial Resources

The primary source of revenue for the college is the state appropriation which makes up about 40 percent of total operating resources and is received on a base FTE. State funds are augmented with tuition revenue and Running Start, international program revenue, and administrative indirect revenue. Over the last few years, the percentage of state revenue has decreased due to the state’s economy, and tuition revenue has increased due to student demand. The college has been successful in receiving funding from alternate funding sources to leverage resources. In the past year, the college has been awarded over $7 million in grants and contracts.

The college does not prepare financial statements but instead monitors individual funds by type and category. The operating funds, which make up a majority of the college resources, are monitored by the director of budgets and the grant and auxiliary and financial aid funds are monitored under the direction of the director of fiscal services. The directors are charged with notifying the Vice President of Finance and Administration for any variances to budget and the vice president reviews financial status periodically. The vice president has oversight responsibility for the financial conditions of the college under the direction of the president. The college shows a history of financial stability.

Transfers among funds and inter-fund borrowing are authorized by the Washington State Office of Fiscal Management and are carried out according to written procedures. Financial resources are generally sufficient to support the programs and offerings of the college; however, recent budget cuts in state revenue have impacted the college’s ability to purchase instructional and administrative equipment. The college relies heavily on grants, donations, and student fees to equip the college.

Current and future financial aid needs are monitored by the Financial Aid office. The college budgets 3.5 percent of tuition revenue in order to provide grants to students with financial need. The Financial Aid office participates in the federal financial aid programs, and the Centralia College Foundation provides approximately $150,000 in scholarships to eligible students annually. The Financial Aid office does not participate in federal loan programs.

Reserves have been established to cover revenue reductions and unanticipated expenditure increases. The college includes a contingency amount of 5% in its annual budget in order to accommodate fluctuations in the state budget and local revenue and in anticipation of unpredictable events.

The college uses fund accounting to separate education and general and auxiliary enterprises. Auxiliary funds are expected to be self-sustaining and are not supplemented by general operating funds, nor does the general fund rely on auxiliary funds for operations. Auxiliary fund activities are monitored closely. The college budgets and monitors auxiliary funds separately from operating funds.
Financial Management

The president reports the college's operating budget status to the Board of Trustees quarterly along with any variances in expenditures to budget. The college's financial operations are the responsibility of the Vice President for Administrative Services who reports directly to the president. The vice president is well qualified and the business functions reporting to the vice president are well defined. A director of fiscal services oversees operations to ensure separation of duties is monitored closely.

The college uses the statewide financial computer system to track and report all income and expenditures according to generally accepted accounting principles. The system is adequate for the accounting needs and financial management of the institution but outdated and in need of upgrading. College administrators are responsible for monitoring all activity, and business services staff regularly reviews documents for accuracy and compliance with any special rules or restrictions.

The college has an accountability audit by the Washington State Auditors Office. All audit reports are available for review and report no findings.

The college has a board policy that directs the college president to invest funds as permitted by Washington state law.

Fundraising and Development

Centralia College Foundation, a separate 501c3 entity, is responsible for all fundraising activities of the college. A quid pro quo agreement delineates the responsibilities of the foundation and the college. The foundation has adopted procedures related to conflict of interest and ethics. Investments are administered according to written foundation policies and guidelines. In recent years, funds have been raised for student scholarships, a grand piano for the theater, and the foundation has held several capital campaigns raising in excess of $4 million for support of college buildings. The accounting records of the foundation are kept on a separate accounting system and are audited annually by an independent accounting firm. The most recent audit for 2010 had no findings.

Commendation: The Centralia College Foundation Board is commended for its continued commitment and efforts to raise funds in support of the college's mission and goals. The commitment is evidenced by the number of facility improvements and enhancements made possible and the number of scholarships provided to students through the generous support of donors.

Concern: The committee recommends the college prepare individual financial statements that include revenue, expenditure, and carryover funds by discrete fund type on a regular basis.
Standard Eight – Physical Resources

The college has two campuses in its service district. The main campus in Centralia is on 30 acres and has 24 buildings ranging from 1,023 to 70,000 gross square feet. The college also offers courses in a 5,500 gross square foot facility in Morton. The college offers courses at other facilities, such as the Garrett Heyns Education Center, which is part of the Washington Correction Center in Shelton and in rented facilities in the Centralia area.

The first buildings at the Centralia campus were part of the old Centralia High School and for the last 85 years, the campus has expanded into the neighborhood and added new buildings as enrollment has grown. Since the last accreditation study in 2000, the college has added or renovated a number of buildings through state capital funds, foundation capital funds, and local resources. The college has also purchased several pieces of property on the perimeter of campus for future expansion. In 2002, a major remodel was done of the Hansen Administrative building and in 2008, the original gymnasium was remodeled to provide a health and wellness center for sports and training facilities and classes. New buildings include Washington Hall, a 67,000 gross square foot building that houses a 500 seat theater, art studios, radio and television facilities, computer labs and faculty offices. A new science center opened in 2009 that added 70,000 gross square feet of space and provides science labs, a greenhouse, an astronomy deck, a nursing program wing, a 120 seat tiered auditorium, and faculty offices. The science center qualified for the LEED gold certification.

Future plans include replacement of existing buildings to create a student commons to house student and auxiliary services, add computer labs and classrooms, and create staff offices. The new facility will also create a space for community meetings and events. Centralia students are providing partial support for the new facility through a student fee.

Instructional facilities are generally adequate for the programs and staff with the newer buildings being more inviting and current than the older, outdated buildings. Newer buildings, such as the new science building and Washington Hall, are equipped with state of the art equipment for technical education programs and computer and science labs. The new buildings have allowed the college to increase the number of student computer labs from 7 to 22. While some of the older buildings have less than ideal conditions, the college monitors the facilities carefully and has plans to replace or repurpose the older buildings in the master plan.

Maintenance of facilities has become a concern in recent years, because of the cost cutting measures that have resulted from the state revenue reductions and the increase in the space maintained due to new facilities. Employees reported that the staff responded to requests; however, there was a concern that the new buildings, along with new technology, may make it difficult to properly maintain and protect the college’s assets. Funds for maintenance of buildings not renovated or newly-built are scarce because of the recent budget cuts, and any unanticipated costs not budgeted must be approved by the president.

New facilities at the Centralia campus are built to accommodate the needs of individuals with physical limitations. When the new science building was designed, the restrooms were designed
similar to airport restrooms to create the greatest access. Any issues of accessibility in older buildings are brought forward to the Facilities Committee and are addressed in a timely manner.

Parking at the Centralia main campus is adequate in the early morning, but the lot is usually full by 8 a.m. and students park in the residential area adjacent to the campus. The college has future plans to expand parking on the perimeter of the campus, but that space will not be available for several years. The college provides free bus passes to students to encourage use of local transportation.

Facilities and parking for programs held at the Morton Campus and at leased facilities are more than adequate for the programs offered.

Grounds are well maintained, and landscaping and design of outdoor areas for student gathering is exceptional. The campus esplanade, including the tower clock, is an inviting area that students and staff can enjoy and adds to the collegial and welcoming environment of the college.

**Equipment and Materials**

Employees and students generally have the necessary equipment they need to be successful. All new buildings funded through the SBCTC have an allocation for laboratory and classroom equipment, and the college has benefited from a number of grants that have allowed for the purchase of instructional equipment. Student use fees are also available for instructional equipment purchases. Administrative equipment has been on hold because of state budget cuts and only replaced on an emergency basis. Equipment is bar coded, and a full inventory is performed every other year in accordance with state guidelines.

The college developed a Chemical Hygiene plan in 2001 and the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste complies with the plan. The Vice President of Instruction is responsible for chemical hygiene along with the science department lab manager. MSDS online is subscribed to and material data sheets are available as a resource. All hazardous waste disposal is coordinated through the Lewis County Solid Waste Utility and Safety-Kleen. A log of hazardous waste activities is kept by the science department. Annual training is provided on proper handling.

**Physical Resources Planning**

The facilities master plan is reviewed and updated on a regular basis and is linked with the college’s overall strategic plan. The 20-year master plan was developed in 2002 as a result of a structured capital planning process. The facilities committee met with students, faculty, classified, and the community members to determine the future needs of the college and its programs. The plan has been updated every three to five years or when a major building has been completed. Once the plan is revised, it is reviewed and approved by the president and Board of Trustees.

The college participates in the statewide SBCTC capital planning process and uses the information gathered from the updated facilities master plan to submit requests for new construction. SBCTC ranks the projects submitted and the college receives approval based on its
needs compared to other colleges in the system. SBCTC also completes a facilities condition survey of the college's buildings to determine future maintenance and repair needs and provides funding to the college as available. The most recent report was completed in 2009, but no maintenance and repairs were funded due to the scoring of the buildings.

Funding for SBCTC approved projects is received over several years. Project funding includes maintenance and operations dollars and some custodial. Equipment needs for the project is included in the request and funded. The multi-year period can cause some challenges due to the length of time between the project being approved and construction starting.

Once a project is approved a cross campus committee is formed, and a meeting is held with facilities staff and representatives from the areas that will inhabit the building. Some visitation tours are done by the facilities committee and the architects to study design preferences. All new buildings and remodels are built in compliance with ADA standards.

**Standard Nine - Institutional Integrity**

Centralia College’s Policy Governance model and End Statements provide formal guidance for the college president and administrators regarding ethical standards for management and operations of the college. These End Statements are regularly reviewed and revised and include policies on conflict of interest and academic freedom.

College faculty and staff receive training on Washington’s Ethics in Public Service Law, including conflict of interest and the appropriate use of state resources. Interviewed employees were knowledgeable about the college’s policies regarding conflict of interest and academic freedom. A review of college publications indicates that the institution represents itself accurately and consistently through its catalogs, publications, Web site, and official statements.

The college’s participatory governance model supports adherence to the highest ethical standards with faculty, staff and students involved in the decision-making processes of the institution. Processes are in place for individuals to redress grievances. Most interviewees indicated awareness of these processes, but some indicated that additional training on these processes may be needed.

**Summary**

Centralia College received its initial accreditation in 1948 and has continued in good standing to the present. During this 2010 comprehensive evaluation visit, the accreditation team found a college that is an integral part of its community with a dedicated faculty and staff who are committed to meeting student needs. The campus community has been fully engaged in a two-year self-study process that resulted in a comprehensive report and plans for improvement. Since the last comprehensive visit, the college has adopted the Policy Governance model which delineates broad institutional goals (end statements) that guide the college’s planning and evaluation processes. Centralia College meets the eligibility requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
There is much to commend at Centralia College including its student-centered focus, its open, transparent and participatory system of governance, its development of campus physical resources and its strong connections to the community. Recent budget cuts have created a challenge in aligning available resources to meet the college mission and goals. The college has addressed this challenge with a broad-based participatory budget review process that is widely praised by campus constituencies. After review of the self-study and supporting documents and numerous interviews, the committee recommends that the college address concerns in the areas of educational assessment and in providing sufficient information support services to fulfill the college's mission and goals.

The committee members appreciate the college’s hospitality and support in making arrangements and providing all requested documents and information.
Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The college is to be commended on its outreach to and positive relationship with the community. It is reflected in the outstanding level of support demonstrated by community members through gifts to the foundation, involvement in activities and programs, and recognition of the college as an integral part of the community.

2. The college is to be commended for its student-centered focus toward retention and success as exemplified in the faculty-led advising model.

3. The committee commends the college for developing an inclusive, transparent and open system of governance where students, employees, and community members have an opportunity to participate in the decisions of the college. The Budget Review and Planning Committee illustrates this system where information is shared, input sought, and recommendations implemented for addressing the state revenue shortfalls.

4. The committee commends the college for its development of its physical resources. The new facilities are well planned with an emphasis on future needs, and the grounds and outdoor areas are well kept and maintained. Pride in the college’s physical assets is apparent and adds to the vitality of the college life for its students, employees, and community.

Recommendations

1. Centralia College has invested considerable time and institutional energy in the development of an educational assessment program. However, much more work needs to be done. The committee recommends that Centralia College consistently integrate discipline and program review into institutional assessment and planning. Further, the committee recommends that the college finish the development and implementation of its instructional outcomes assessment plan. (Standard 2. B.2; Policy 2.2)

2. With the rise in e-learning and other technologies, the committee recommends that Centralia College provide sufficient information support services to faculty, staff, and students to effectively and efficiently fulfill the college’s mission and goals. (Standard 5.D)