Assurance Argument

Arizona Western College - AZ

1/7/2019

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

AWC is guided by a truly inspirational mission and vision and AWC operates with values of shared governance and responsibilities at its center. The mission and vision were developed in a manner that highlights these values. Arizona Western College developed a revised mission in 2017, broadly involving groups of students, faculty, staff and community, and working closely with the District Governing Board. The newly adopted mission was formally introduced to the community and stakeholders in January of 2018. It builds on the previous mission. (AWC Strategic Plan 2018).

The updated mission is aligned with AWC's priorities to serve the community and meet educational needs:

Transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities.

The new mission was developed with input from the entire region and a variety of stakeholders and constituents. The mission was supported by and adopted by the District Governing Board (DGB). The DGB has been energized and enthusiastic about AWC's strategic planning process and AWC's focus on moving from being a good college to becoming a great college.

Beyond the newly adopted mission there is also an aspirational vision of what AWC plans to accomplish:

Cultivating generations who value knowledge, foster independence, eliminate poverty, and create vital, equitable and sustainable communities

Using the mission and vision as guideposts, measurable and attainable, yet ambitious objectives were developed by teams of AWC faculty, staff, students, and the community. The objectives center around four guiding principles: Agility, Accessibility, Prosperity, and Technology. Under each principle are specific objectives with timelines for completion and milestones to measure progress. (Strategic Plan)

Agility: AWC will cultivate an agile culture and institutional model that strengthens the future of AWC and the region.

Technology: Improve student success by leveraging technology that personalizes the student experience and increases organizational effectiveness.

Accessibility: Eliminate cultural, financial, time and place barriers to education.

Prosperity: Grow and sustain academic programs, fuel economic growth and position graduates for prosperity

This mission continues to guide all the work of AWC. It outlines the three areas of focus – academic and transfer programs, career and technical education opportunities, and the focus on the needs in the community for a wide variety of training and support. AWC's latest graduation (FY16/17) data showing 965 students graduating with degrees and 1249 with certificates highlights the way AWC follows its mission to support the communities it serves.

In 2016, AWC embarked on an 18-month strategic planning initiative to engage the campuses and create the vision and set of guiding documents that drive all decision-making at Arizona Western College. The planning initiative engaged all parts of the community: the faculty, the administration staff, classified staff, students, and the external stakeholders. Building on an already collaborative process that AWC has used to make key decisions and drive its mission, AWC energetically engaged the internal and external communities to update these guiding documents.   At the end of the process, AWC has an updated mission statement that maintains its core central mission and a strategic drive toward growth and enhanced programs and services.

In tandem with the updated mission, AWC has a strategic plan in place that works together with the Mission Statement to ensure that all AWC's actions, programs, and budgetary management are aligned to continue moving it forward. The process has been transparent and has sought to engage constituents from diverse groups. Campus wide presentations ensured that all were aware of and could participate in the process.

1.A.1: AWC opened in 1964 with a mission to serve the students and communities in Southwest Arizona. AWC has a mission statement that was developed in 2017 through a collaborative process with faculty, students, staff, and community. The mission reflects AWC's commitment to the people of our two county service areas. It reflects the commitment to the students – including learners of all ages and diverse backgrounds – and the community. AWC has worked hard to meet the needs of the communities it serves. (AWC Strategic Vision Outcomes)

The mission was updated through a collaborative process as part of the strategic planning process. The new mission statement was crafted through a process that included the community, faculty, staff, students and the District Governing Board. The statement was adopted in January of 2018 and introduced to the entire community.

At the center of the AWC's mission and vision is the student experience. AWC strives to provide an amazing student experience for its students. At the center of this effort are the experienced and trained employees that work to make this positive and productive student experience a reality. AWC has qualified and talented staff that provide support to students. AWC knows that the employees are what make AWC successful and what allow AWC to achieve its mission. In the *National Community College Benchmarks Project* (NCCBP), AWC ranks nationally in the 92% percentile in

career and advising staff to student ratios, 96% in recruitment and registration staff, 98% in financial aid ratios and 93% in student activities. (See NCCBP, 2017) AWC pursues its mission by having adequate numbers of staff and adequately trained staff to support the students (IPEDS Human Resource Data).

1.A.2: AWC's educational programs continue to be consistent with its mission. AWC has robust offerings for a wide variety of majors and transfer programs. (AWC Degrees and Certificates) Its commitment to the community is evident in some of its most successful programs, including programs for Law Enforcement, Fire Science, and Nursing, for example. These programs meet the needs of the local area including the great need in the border region for Border Patrol, Homeland Security, and ICE personnel, many of which are trained through AWC's programs.

Furthermore, AWC has highly successful programs in Healthcare, Science, Agriculture, Engineering, and Math (AWC 18/19 Catalog p. 65 Course Catalog) that effectively meet the needs of the community. AWC values its place as a resource to the community and its employers. AWC looks for ways to increase and enhance partnerships that will offer more programs that benefit the service area and improve the quality of life for residents.

AWC provides articulated transfer programs to university bound students and occupational certificates to students looking for career advancement. Besides the services to help students transfer to four-year programs, AWC hosts all three of Arizona's universities on its campus. AWC fosters partnerships and innovation and strives to provide its students with opportunities to complete degrees in the local area. The University of Arizona, Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University have baccalaureate programs in areas such as engineering, education, business, and health careers.

AWC participates in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) and demonstrates very impressive results when measured against other institutions in benchmarks related to educational programs and related areas. For example, AWC's Fall to Fall Persistence Rate is at the 98% percentile nationally and the Next-Term Persistence Rate is 96%. (NCCBP, see evidence file).

 While certificates and degrees have grown by over 60% in the last ten years, AWC is working to decrease the time it takes for its students to complete degrees and programs. Currently, it takes the average student 4.8 years to completion. Since 80% of AWC's students attend class on a part-time basis, the time to completion is long. AWC is developing several key initiatives to help students complete more quickly. In order for the educational programs to align with and be consistent with the mission, students need to be given the opportunity to attain educational goals more quickly. Shortened but rigorous sequences have been developed in English and mathematics, areas where many students require remediation. (2017 Ten-Year Institutional Performance Indicators).

AWC has developed a Strategic Enrollment Plan (approved September 2018). This plan includes increasing full-time enrollment incrementally and increasing the average credit hour per student. If students are able to complete more credits each semester, students will be able to complete degrees and credentials more quickly. (SEP 2018)

Also, as part of the Strategic Plan, AWC is developing Guided Pathways. Guided Pathways are a student-centered approach that dramatically increase the number of students earning community college credentials, while closing equity gaps. Rather than work with a subset of students, guided pathways are a college-wide undertaking that provides a framework guiding students to a degree or

credential.

Guided pathways (Strategic Plan Booklet, page 8) provide students with clear, educationally coherent program maps that include specific course sequences, progress milestones, and program learning outcomes. These maps are aligned to the knowledge and skills required by four-year institutions and the labor market, thus ensuring that students can continue their studies and advance in their careers. AWC has engaged faculty and student services to develop the pathways and they will be fully implemented by 2021.

Support Services

AWC's enrollment profile is consistent with its mission and its support services align to serve the community. AWC is an open-enrollment community college. The community college focus of the service area at all levels aligns with the commitment to serve the entire community. Traditionally aged students of 18 – 25 are the largest demographic, and AWC is the number 1 option for graduating high school students. AWC also widely serves non-traditional students with great success as evidenced by both student feedback on satisfaction surveys and rapidly increasing number of graduates over the last ten years (2017 Ten-year Institutional Performance Indicators).

AWC is a Hispanic Serving Institution and embraces this designation. In its location near the US/Mexico border, AWC has a unique ability to provide educational opportunities for Hispanic communities. AWC has embarked on programs to collaborate with institutions in Mexico to broaden the experience for our students. In 2017, AWC joined in a historic alliance with all three state universities and Mexico's universities from Baja California and Sonora, Mexico.

AWC also serves several Native American communities in our service area. They include the Cocopah Indian Tribe, Quechan Indian Tribe in Yuma County, and Colorado River Indian Tribe in La Paz County. In 2018 an Innovation Grant was awarded with an American Indian Student Recruitment focus to enhance services to communities ensuring access to information and resources to create a college-going culture on Southern Arizona reservations. (AWC Innovation Projects, 2018)

Beyond the broad alignment of services to mission, AWC has a wide array of programs designed to support students in their academic and vocational endeavors. Some of these programs include:

- ADVISING: AWC believes that students, especially the 70% of AWC's first generation college students, require good information to be able to successfully navigate the college experience. Academic advisors help students make decisions about majors and academic planning and guide them through the enrollment process. AWC has implemented tools to help students with the process including the Student Planning Tool which helps students map out pathways to completion and academic goals, but the key for many students is still the one-on-one support available through Advisement Services.

- TUTORING: A wide offering of tutoring support includes traditional peer and professional tutors at our state-of-the-art Success Center. Additionally, tutoring support available at our remote locations includes math and writing tutors in San Luis, MCAS (Marine Corp Air Station), Wellton and Parker Campuses. For students unable to come to face-to-face tutoring, AWC offers online tutoring with whiteboard and chat capability or phone tutoring. Tutoring also includes embedded tutors and supplemental instruction for high-risk courses. In addition to the direct tutoring services, other resources such as study skills and other student success workshops are available. The tutoring center is divided into a math center

and a writing center. In the math center there is help and support in various areas, including accounting, chemistry and engineering.

- o   Tutoring in math, business, computer information systems, and science

- o   Access to computers (both desktop and laptops)

- o   Small study group room reservations

- o   Textbook and calculator checkouts

- o   Graphing calculator rental

There is also technology available including laptops for check-out. The Writing Center provides free tutoring services for all levels and stages of writing in any academic subjects. This includes tutors for ESL, ASL and Spanish courses and academic writing support for General Education courses such as psychology or history.

Beyond the one-on-one tutoring in the Student Success Center, AWC also provides Supplemental Instruction (SI) tutors in targeted classes. These SI leaders attend classes with students and then schedule sessions to provide support outside of class hours. Many students feel more comfortable asking questions and seeking support from peers rather than the professor and the SI leaders serve as a bridge between the students and professors. AWC has found that some subjects and locations have been very successful in the SI program while others have had less attendance in SI sessions. For example, sessions for English students in San Luis during the School Year 2016-2017 were attended by an average of 17 students a session, while other sessions on Yuma campus were attended by three or four students. SI sessions for chemistry classes were very successful, but sessions in lower levels of math, were less well attended. Using this data on the SI program, AWC has worked to deploy SI leaders where they will have the most impact.AWC is working to assess the success of SI programs and identify the factors contributing to success. AWC has changed the English SI program to an embedded tutoring model with great success.

- DISABILITY SUPPORT: Students with disabilitieshave a full range of support including accommodation services, advising, and specialized technology. Services can be requested anytime during a semester and the Accessibility Resource Services Office works with other college staff and faculty when appropriate to determine which accommodations are the best. AWC provides Sign Language interpreters, equipment on loan, note taking services, testing accommodations, specialized tutoring support among other services. The AccessABILITY Resource Services works in partnership with students with disabilities, faculty, and staff to remove barriers in the educational process through design and accommodation. AWC recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and promotes a culture of inclusion for all diverse groups. We strive to:

  - o Provide reasonable accommodations and support services

  - o Promote achievement of students' educational and career goals. Offer training and support to faculty and staff to ensure equal access

  - o Encourage goals for students: Become effective self-advocates, independent and self-sufficient. Build self-awareness, self-esteem and self-identity. Work through personal obstacles and obtain academic success

- CAREER SERVICES: AWC has a full-service career center for its students, providing a range of services and activities to help students both seek employment as students and to plan for and achieve employment as graduates. It hosts the Jobs for Matadors service which helps students find immediate jobs. These jobs can be part-time employment to help students pay for college or more long-term employment as students graduate with degrees and certificates. In addition, Career Services hosts job fairs, career expos, and majors fairs all designed to move students toward informed decisions on employment options and opportunities as well as steering them toward the education required for their chosen field. Career Services also connects students to internships.

- TRANSFER: AWC's transfer office supports students both entering into and transferring from AWC. Transfer services help students streamline the college experience and transfer. In 2016/2017, 428 students transferred to a four-year university which demonstrates a 19.2% increase over a five-year period. In 2016/2017, 308 AWC transfer students were baccalaureate recipients which demonstrates an 18.9% increase over a five-year period. Transfer services has a close working relationship with Veterans Services and Military Services. They work together to award military students with appropriate credit for military training and experiences. AWC's service area is home to a large military population, and serving the veterans and active duty service member is a high priority.

- EARLY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE: AWC is committed to working with our K-12 community. Wesponsor many events throughout the year to bring students to our campus and send representatives from AWC to schools throughout our area. AWC has recently implemented a $25 tuition rate for students to begin a college-going culture among seventeen and under students. Research shows that most students successfully completing two or more college courses before graduating from high school will go to college. AWC works as a partner with the school system to make this happen. Here are just some of the ways that AWC engages the local K-12 providers.

  o Jump Start Saturday is a program that provides pre-enrollment services to prospective and incoming students at a time that is convenient to them (one Saturday per month; includes Admissions, Financial Aid, and Testing). During SY 17/18, JSS events were held monthly on Saturdays and were well attended by students and the community.

  o Another initiative to engage pre-college level students is the Gadsden Math Program. In this program, middle school students at Gadsden Middle School take college level math. During 2017, over 40 students participated and earned college credit. This program has been recognized nationally.

  o The Yuma County Science Fair is an annual event supported by AWC. AWC faculty act as judges and support science teaching and learning across the district. Additionally, AWC students participate in other fairs and events. For example, AWC students represented the campus at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Phoenix in 2016 with 1,700 students from all over the world. AWC continues to promote and encourage participation and excellence in such events.

  o Partnerships in San Luis are a continued source of engagement with the K-12 system. San Luis is expected to grow by 37% by 2020 and its population is young (40% below the age of 18) and eager for educational opportunities. AWC continues to partner with San Luis schools and K-12 educators.

- TESTING: AWC has comprehensive testing services including placement testing, certification testing, GED testing, industry testing, and proctored services for academic courses. The Testing Center also helps remote students set up proctoring for online courses and other testing. AWC uses the ACCUPLACER to assist students in enrolling in courses where they can be successful and that will prepare them to complete college level objectives. AWC provides testing services in eight different locations across the district. In addition, students at a distance can request placement testing at additional locations.

- FINANCIAL AID: AWC's Financial Aid Office serves approximately 6,850 students per year. Without these services, many of our students would not be able to attend. Financial aid services are available at other sites to ensure that all students have the support needed to pursue educational goals. The Department of Education has put new regulations and guidelines into place over the past several years. For the 2017/2018 academic year AWC is no longer a QA school and Title IV money only pays for courses that pertain to a student's declared major. The Financial Aid office has been able to assist students and award $20,058,670 dollars of aid allowing our population, many of whom are first generation and economically disadvantaged, to enroll in and complete coursework.

- LIBRARY SERVICES: AWC has a successful and vibrant Academic Library, run by AWC, but providing services to university students attending NAU, ASU and The U of A on AWC campus. Over 100,000 visitors enter the library annually and statistics from Academic Year 2017-18 demonstrate that students who receive instruction in the library are 10% more likely to be successful in courses and be retained to the next semester. The Academic Library is committed to supporting the educational, career, and lifelong learning missions of its parent institutions, Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University Yuma Branch Campus. As an integral element of its academic and general communities, the Library provides:

  o   Exceptional environments, resources, and services

  o   Instruction in the use and evaluation of print and electronic resources to foster critical thinking, curricular support, and research assistance

  o   Access to resources in relevant formats via current educational technology

  o   Outreach through partnerships, professional networks, events, and instructional and cultural programming

  o   Services to the people of the Fourth United States Congressional Districts, by fulfilling its duties as a selective Federal Depository Library

1.A.3: AWC has always worked to be good stewards of the funds provided by tuition, local tax allocations, and to a much lesser extent, state aid. AWC provides appropriate resources to programs and initiatives to meet its goals and serve its constituents.

 In the past, the college has engaged in an annual college-wide objective process where goals that aligned with the mission were identified and approved at different levels and by different groups within AWC. The objectives were then approved by the board. In order to ensure that the objectives would be met, budget commitments have assured that funds would be available to achieve the objectives. Beginning in 2016, AWC has entered in an Institutional strategic planning process, to

provide even more alignment of the budget to the mission. Rather than allocate budgetary resources to programs and initiatives simply because that was the way it was done in the past, AWC is carefully studying needs, programs, resources, and outcomes to make sure that dollars are allocated in ways that best meet the needs of the community and the students.

In Spring 2017, new Committees were established to begin the process of implementing the Strategic Plan for AWC. AWC Implementation Teams have been tasked with putting the Strategic Plan into action. Teams will accomplish this purpose by reviewing the objectives in each Direction, determine work groups for each objective, identify current practices that support those objectives as well as potential challenges, research and discuss relevant best practices related to each objective, and create and present a timeline of specific actions to achieve each objective.

AWC participated in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) which provides valuable information about where AWC stands as measured against national data. The latest data measures 242 community colleges and contains more than 150 benchmarks. AWC uses this information as part of the process of self-evaluation and planning for the future. In the NCCBP for FY 2016, AWC's financial information was compared to other institutions. AWC's total expense is at the 66% percentile in the comparison and the institutional cost for FTE students is $14,558 which is 42% when compared with other schools across the country. (NCCBP AWC Strengths, AWC Financial Reports).

Sources

- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK
- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK (page number 3)
- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK (page number 36)
- Academic Library
- Accessibility Services College
- Advisement Services
- AWC 10-Year Performance
- AWC 10-Year Performance (page number 6)
- AWC 10-Year Performance (page number 7)
- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC
- AWC joins historic alliancecampuses to work together
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet (page number 8)
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet (page number 9)
- Board Approval of Mission
- Board Meeting Minutes 8_17
- Career Services
- Degrees and Certificates Arizona Western College
- Early College Experience
- Financial Aid
- Financial Reports

- Institutional Effectiveness
- IPEDS_Human_Resources_Data
- Jump Start Poster
- Jump Start Saturday
- NCCBP Report AWC
- NCCBP Strengths
- SP_Newsletter_Feb_2017
- Strategic Enrollment Planning Final Report Sept 2018
- Testing Services
- Transfer From Arizona Western College
- Tutoring

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

AWC's mission is publicly available and widely visible to students, staff, faculty, and our community. AWC takes its mission seriously to serve the communities of Yuma and La Paz Counties.   This commitment is evident in the programs and services AWC provides and the way it collaborates with the community to ensure the mission reflects community needs.

The mission is visible on the website, on printed documents including schedules and course catalogs. Course Catalog The mission is printed on the back of business cards and displayed with prominence on campus. (Office of the President)

AWC serves its communities with three radio stations and two television stations serving both the Yuma and Parker areas. AWC's mission and place at the center of the educational community of the counties it serves is evident in the content of the media stations and AWC's commitment to provide this media to it service areas. Its annual report to the community is published in print, the website and available publicly (https://issuu.com/arizona_western_college/docs/awc_annualreport_issuu)

1.B.1: AWC's mission is at the heart of the work and functions of the college. The mission drives its initiatives and decision making. It is clearly articulated as part of the mission, vision and strategic plan.

1.B.2: The central mission has been consistent for many years, but it is recently been updated to reflect AWC's clear focus of transforming lives and communities through innovative programs, education and partnerships. Beyond the mission is the vision which sets the aspirational tone of the goals and objectives AWC has adopted as part of its strategic plan. As AWC accomplishes each component of the plan, it fulfills the mission and vision. (NCCBP Strengths)

1.B.3: The center of AWC's mission are its constituents in its two county service area, the communities and people it supports. Thus, the mission reflects that focus in creating thriving, diverse communities.

The course catalog is a representation of the multiple courses and programs offered throughout the college. The AWC website provides information on the mission and the college overall to a broader audience. The website provides information on all the services, course specific information (access to

course syllabi), degree and certificate pathways, university articulated programs, student activities, and support services. The website is all inclusive of the services and locations that serve the different populations. AWC uses data to measure its success and programs. (Institutional Effectiveness Office)

AWC also recognizes the importance of and the use social media as a platform to provide information. Social media sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are used to connect with students, the local communities, and individuals out of the area.

Sources

- AWC_Business_1314_Final
- AWC_FactSheet_1314_Final
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- BusinessCards MISSION
- Curriculum and Articulation Arizona Western College
- Institutional Effectiveness
- NCCBP Strengths
- Office of the President Arizona Western College
- Scholarships and Grants Arizona Western College

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

AWC serves a wonderfully diverse service area. It serves diversity of culture and ethnicity as well as diversity of thought and manner of expression. AWC serves a large area between Yuma and La Paz Counties and has a significant impact on these areas. (Economic Impact and Social Mobility). Part of identifying the diversity between the counties and the multiple communities within the counties is the implementation of strategic planning for the different locations to include South Yuma County, La Paz County, and the Downtown Center. While working in conjunction with the goal of strategic planning for the institution as a whole, these different locations have been tasked with site specific strategic planning to represent the multi-campus and multi-diverse communities. (2016-2017 Fact Book).

AWC recognizes the importance of promoting and celebrating diversity in students and employees. AWC works to encourage issues of diversity and multiculturalism to permeate the college - both in academics and in co-curricular education. Through the general education programs, students take courses and explore issues promoting increased awareness of ethnicity, race, and gender. Beyond the classroom, students have opportunities to become involved in many clubs, activities, and events that explore and celebrate diversity. AWC's Event Calendar (prominently published for all students, staff and community) highlights and advertises events and celebrations of diversity including for example, Day of the Dead Celebration, San Luis Educational Family Night, Meditation, Dia Del Campesino Community Service Event, and so many others. Clubs, just to name a few, include AWC Polynesian Club, Asian Club, and Club SOTE. Events celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month and others are held and well-attended. These events are not held to simply "check a box" and be able to say AWC is promoting diversity. Rather, they are given the attention and focus they deserve with an emphasis on the communities AWC serves and bringing them into the celebrations.

AWC is proudly a Hispanic Serving Institution and enjoys its unique place in southwestern Arizona serving the diverse population. In 2017, AWC joined a project with the Foundations for Student Success. The project is exploring equity in college education and gaps in attainment between different groups. The goal is to identify the gaps and work to close the gaps and provide more equity. AWC looked at disaggregated data to explore which groups require additional support or more innovative approaches. They met monthly with their mentor school (Los Medanos Community College) and explored such issues as attracting and retaining diverse faculty and staff, developing an equity plan and getting buy-in, and creating a culture on campus that celebrates the diversity of the campus population. The project seeks to educate faculty, staff and students and help everyone see education and support services through the lens of equity and inclusion.

The AWC team has actively participated in a pod of other schools to explore best practices for

promoting equity and shifting the culture of institutions toward more equitable programs and support. AWC has been able to benefit from the experience of other institutions who have created and implemented equity plans and have been able to close the gaps in achievement. As AWC explored its own gaps in achievement, it found that there were not large gaps between groups; however, it was an outstanding opportunity to look at the gaps, explore the causes and look for ways to promote equity. At the start-up sessions for Fall 2017, AWC surveyed students, faculty and staff asking about views on equity and what it means to be a Hispanic Serving Institution. AWC is using information gathered from this and other surveys to look for trends and ways to engage its diverse community.

AWC has always been committed to a culture of non-discrimination. This extends to all groups including age, race, gender, disability, religion or national origin. AWC has policies for employment, employee conduct and student conduct that address relevant behaviors and situations related to discrimination. Processes are in place for anyone alleging discrimination to file a grievance and the policy outlines a clear process for redress of any issues (Grievance Procedure).

To enhance efforts of creating an environment free from discrimination, AWC has worked with Safe Zone. Safe Zone is a nation-wide program committed to assisting colleges and universities in creating a safer, more welcoming, and inclusive environment for individuals who identify as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+) community.

Arizona Western College regularly measures student satisfaction. Beginning in Fall 2010, AWC began using theStudent Satisfaction Inventory by Noel-Levitz to gather baseline and comparison data every two years. A benefit of this instrument is that comparative results are available from other two-year colleges across the nation and in the Western States who took the same survey at the same time. In the most recent Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (administered 2016), students indicated satisfaction with Campus Climate (5.8 on a scale of 0 to 7) and Campus Support Services, (5.7). On the same survey, AWC was in the 90% percentile and 76% for active and collaborative learning and student-faculty interaction respectively, demonstrating AWC's ability to engage with the diverse student population successfully. On alternate years, AWC administers the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to help focus on good educational practice and identify areas in which AWC can improve its programs and services for students. (CCSSE.org)

AWC will continue to seek input from students using these instruments to gauge improvements and review trends. AWC also uses other methods for seeking student input on campus climate and culture (and other measures) including focus groups, interviews and other surveys.

1.C.1. AWC's demographics are not typical for the average community college but reflects its community. It skews toward the traditional college age student with 60% of the students under 25. AWC is proud to be a Hispanic Serving Institution, serving its 65% Latino population. Overall 80% of the college's student body is composed of students of color and over 80% of the students are part-time. 10% of the student body are veterans. AWC has unique challenges in finding ways to help students complete degrees and programs. The efforts have been very successful. AWC's degrees and certificates award have increased by over 50% in a five-year period and by over 70% in a ten-year period. (10 Year Performance Report)

AWC recognizes its role in a multicultural and diverse society. AWC has expanded programs available via the web-based courses and provides many of the services via technology supported distance services such as tutoring, advising, enrollment and registration. Advances such as these

allow AWC to support local constituents but also gain global participants. AWC actively serves the local communities with Workforce Development as well.

AWC currently supports services such as international students studying at AWC and AWC students studying abroad. The Coordinator of the International Students Program provides direction and support for students who are interested in studying at AWC or studying abroad. During the 2017/2018 school year AWC served as the education institution of choice for approximately 45 international students who originate from areas such as Asia, South Pacific, Africa, Australia, North and South America, Europe, and the Middle East.

As of Fall 2017 AWC has over 40 student clubs and organization. The clubs support and promote diversity. Annually a multi-cultural event is hosted on the Yuma campus where staff and students share their cultural background, traditions, and foods. There are also many smaller events where multiple cultures are showcased and celebrated.

AWC recognizes its role as a Hispanic serving Institution and continues to review ways of expanding outreach and marketing. The college generates bilingual materials in English and Spanish to reach a broader audience (Grow Employees English and Spanish). In March of 2017 AWC joined an alliance for partnership between Arizona and Mexico college and university campuses to expand educational opportunities for students on either side of the border. Programs like KEYS, CAMP, Talent Search, Upward Bound, provide the environment for diverse sets of students such as children of migrant families, first generation students, low income, and underserved populations. These programs boast extremely successful outcomes as they help student achieve educational outcomes.

AWC continues to work to meet the needs of its population. AWC has an active Strategic Enrollment Planning committee that reviews trends, data and needs. It works to provide the courses, degrees and programs needed by the students and provide a strategic framework for courses and programs that are offered and supported. (Latest SEP Report September 2018).

60% of AWC's employees are from diverse groups and the minority employee/population ratio is .9, helping AWC to connect with and support student groups and populations. AWC is committed to hiring faculty and staff that reflect the demographics of the students. It can be difficult to recruit talented candidates to rural southwestern Arizona, but AWC has been proactive in aligning to salaries to comparable jobs in the state by completing reviews of average salaries to allow it to attract and retain talented faculty and staff. (IPEDS 2017)

As of the 2017 IPEDS reporting, 34% of the faculty is non-white and as stated, 60% of employees overall. AWC is committed to a faculty that reflects the population of AWC and its communities and has made progress in recruiting and retaining diverse faculty. AWC's gender distribution in faculty is 45% women, 55% men while the overall gender ratio of AWC staff and faculty is close to 50/50.

1.C.2. Diversity is one of AWC's key strengths. AWC brings together a wide range of individuals, ideologies, backgrounds, and viewpoints and creates an environment where all can thrive. This diversity also applies to students at all levels of academic preparation. AWC is an open-enrollment community college and as such, it takes seriously its responsibility to accommodate students in their wide range of readiness.

Such accommodations include an active and supportive Disability Services Office (AccessABILITY Resource Services) where students with documented disabilities receive services to access educational opportunities. (See 1.A.2 above).

AWC serves an area where many speak English as a second language. AWC offers a robust ESL program focusing on academic literacy and communication, preparing students to succeed in educational pursuits and go on to degree and certificate programs.

Beyond ESL, AWC is committed to quality developmental education to serve the diversity of students with different levels of academic preparation. As an open-enrollment school, AWC must serve students who need remediation to be prepared for college level course content. AWC's developmental math and English curriculum were both reviewed and redesigned during the last ten years. First, math was the focus of a large three-year STEM grant. A Math Center was created in 2009 to focus on tutoring and other support for math learners and all the developmental math courses were redesigned. Courses changed from three credits to four credits, allowing students the extra time each week to interact with their professors and master content. In addition, a new math course, MAT 150, College Algebra with Review was added. It provides students with the required GE level outcomes while offering students extra review to improve success.

The writing curriculum was also revised as part of a Title V federal grant ([Steps to Success 2011-2016](#)). The developmental sequence was redesigned completely. The first level of developmental writing was increased to six credit hours (shortening the time frame to one semester rather than two) and the curriculum was redesigned to focus on academic writing rather than literature. In the first year of the new course, students performed at 8% higher success rate than the previous year before it was re-designed. The English department has continued to work to increase student success in the developmental writing sequence as well as the college level composition courses. In Fall of 2017, pilots of a co-requisite English 100/101 course were undertaken. ENG 100 is an introduction to college level writing that many students place into. To shorten the time required to complete writing requirements for degrees, certificates, and transfer, the English department developed curriculum and sequencing to help students complete required remediation as well as the first level of college composition in the same semester.

AWC works to reach out to communities in the service area with sensitivity to different groups' needs. AWC's diversity extends to different communities and geographic locations.

- New outreach to K - 12. In La Paz County part of AWC's service area, there are two high schools, Parker High School (PHS) and Salome High School (SHS). AWC representatives meet with staff and students monthly.

- Parker High School: Monthly meeting with PHS Career and Technical Education Director, high school counselors, and representative from Western Arizona Vocational Education Joint Technical Education District (WAVE JTED) to discuss the student recruitment, career and technical education program development, student enrollment, and course standing. AWC also attends once a month during lunch periods to meet with high school students to discuss scholarship opportunities, reduced tuition costs, post high school plans, and the benefits to early enrollment. AWC and PHS continue to explore opportunities on how to expand dual and concurrent enrollment offerings for students.

- Salome High School: AWC provides a college and career exploration program for juniors and seniors at SHS. AWC staff meet with students every three weeks to discuss college and career preparedness and support the college-going mindset while engaging students in the activities which focus on attending college and entering the workforce.

  - A recent program addition to San Luis is the Informatics program.

- ○ Somerton provides K-12 outreach efforts which include admissions and financial aid workshops, English Second Language workshops, math night, adult education. The multiple presentations and workshops are information sharing and recruitment opportunities to better inform the schools and community as to programs and educational resources available at the Somerton center. Some of the partner schools include: Yuma High School, Jose Yepez PPEP Tech High School, Orange Grove Elementary School, and Desert Sonora Elementary School.

- Equity and Inclusion Project - During the 2017-2018 academic year, the following Equity and Inclusion programs (with number of attendees) were offered at Arizona Western College Campuses:

  - ○ Healthy Relationships – 190

  - ○ Safe Zone/Safe Zone Train the Trainer – 82

  - ○ StepUP/StepUP Train the Trainer – 67

  - ○ Rx for Disaster – 15

  - ○ Alcohol and Substance Abuse – 35

- International Student Program had 45 students in fall 2017 and 65 students in spring 2018.

- AccessABILITY gave accommodations to 101 students during fall 2017 and 79 students in spring 2018.

- The Veteran Services Program served 331 students in fall of 2017 and 276 students in spring of 2018.

AWC has taken a proactive approach to exploring new relationships with colleges and universities in Mexico; one that focuses on partnerships, sharing in education, and economic development. (Alliance with Universities in Mexico). In June 2018, two different institutions visited the AWC Yuma Campus to discuss training opportunities, program development, student exchange, development, and opening lines of discussion to share ideas.

- Nursing Department worked with visiting faculty and staff to provide training in simulation labs for childbirth and blood draws.

- Fine Arts/Languages/Communications Divisions visited two Mexico based institutions to discuss ESL program development, visiting student showcase, and developing new ideas on how to approach ESL for international use and student success.

AWC partners with the Arizona Department of Corrections (AZDOC) to offer for-credit, trade-based courses and training for inmates. The goal is that the skills acquired will lead to gainful employment once the individual returns to the community. As noted on the website: "The program provides inmates at the Arizona State Prison Complex with the opportunity to complete three college Career and Technical Education Programs. They are Plumbing, Masonry, and Foundations of Construction. The courses range from 10 credits to 16 credits." In 2017, AWC was recognized for having the second highest number of inmate students who completed a CTE program while in the AZDOC.

AWC Foundation partners with donors to offer multiple scholarships which are available to the diverse needs of its students. Qualifiers for scholarships may include GPA, education level, gender, culture, and program interest. The Sylvia Plotts Scholarship is one that is available for Native American Students, for example. AWC's Endowment (Dreams to Reality) offers scholarship opportunities for students as well.

Sources

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- AWC 10-Year Performance
- AWC joins historic alliancecampuses to work together
- AWC_Economic_Impact_13-14
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- Clubs and Organizations Arizona Western College
- Dreams to Reality
- Event Calendar
- FSS Project with Los Medanos
- GrowEmployees_Spanish_v3
- GrowEmployees_v8
- International Arizona Western College
- IPEDS_Human_Resources_Data
- KEYS Program
- Policies and ProceduresArizona Western College
- Scholarships and Grants Arizona Western College
- Social Mobility AWC
- Strategic Enrollment Planning Final Report Sept 2018
- Student Satisfaction Inventory
- Workforce Education Arizona Western College

1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

AWC's mission clearly demonstrates commitment to the public good. Further, AWC's actions in creating academic and non-academic programs, community events, and partnerships with a wide variety of entities throughout our service area, tangibly show not only a commitment to the public good, but a demonstrated benefit to our community. AWC is a hub for cultural, intellectual, and economic opportunities for the residents of Yuma, La Paz Counties, and Mexico Super Region.

The contributions of AWC influence both the lives of students and the regional economy. The college serves a range of industries in the Yuma-La Paz District and supports local businesses and society. As a result, Arizona benefits from an expanded economy and improved quality of life. The benefits created by AWC even extend to the state and local government through increased tax revenues and public sector savings. (AWC Economic Impact).

AWC's biggest impact results from the education and training it provides for local residents. Since the college was established, students have studied at AWC and entered the workforce with new skills. Today, thousands of former students are employed in the Yuma-La Paz District.

During the analysis year 2014, former students of AWC generated $253.6 million in added income in the region. This figure represents the higher wages that students earned during the year, the increased output of the businesses that employed the students, and the multiplier effects that occurred as students and their employers spent money at other businesses. (See Economic Impact).

Courses and programs are developed and adapted to meet the needs of the local community and local employers. AWC considers itself at the center of economic development and works closely with partners across the district to develop and offer coursework and other training that meets the needs of the community. Partnerships include Arizona@Work, Yuma Private Industry Council, Yuma County, City of Yuma, Yuma Police Department, and AZ Customs and Border Protection to name a few.

Local business and economic partners benefit from the credit-bearing courses at AWC; however, they also benefit from the workforce development and training offered by the office of Continuing Education, an extension of Arizona Western College. It offers a wide variety of courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences aimed at business and industry professionals. Businesses or individuals may be seeking to expand knowledge of a particular subject, improve professional or personal skills,

embark on a new career, or advance toward an academic degree. Workforce Education offers non-credit, fee-based courses and activities designed to serve individuals with educational goals that do not require college credit. Courses include, but are not limited to:

- Adult education
- Business
- Computer training
- County code enforcement
- CPR training
- Customer service
- Fitness
- Health training
- Professional development
- Security officer training
- Supervisory skills

In the 2017 National Community College Benchmarks Project report, AWC demonstrates its ability to achieve its commitment to the public good by improving the social mobility of students. After attending, AWC students increase their incomes by **two quintiles** over their parents. This is a remarkable change in students' lives and their families' lives. It also impacts the community in many ways. The public good is improved as these students enter communities to serve in the workforce, in local government, in civic areas, and contribute to improved quality of life for all. (NCCBP, 2017, Mobility).

AWC also hosts artists, authors, and guest speakers with most of these events open to the public and free of charge. It has a robust sports program with opportunities for local athletes to participate on teams and for the community to attend sporting events. These events and athletic competitions foster growth, opportunities for teamwork, community support, and other benefits for the public good.

1.D.1 Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

AWC keeps the community and its needs in the forefront of discussions and decisions. For example, the new Strategic Plan, kicked off by the Horizon Event was a dynamic event attended by hundreds including staff, students, and members of the community. AWC understands its symbiotic relationship with the service area.

AWC meets the diverse needs of business, industry, and community development which enhance skills for today's workplace. AWC maintained a key partnership with local **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** offices and houses a successful program, the AWC Job Training Program at its Downtown Center. The Job Training Program is a federally funded grant program through theWIOA . The main goal is to train individuals for employment and help them become employed.

AWC understands its role beyond degree and transfer programs for traditional college students. The course catalog reflects a variety of offerings designed to meet professional and personal goals while meeting the needs of business and industry. A variety of on campus work experiences, internships in the community, and course practicums exist, for example student internships with USGS, General Motors and local agriculture companies such Barkley Farms and Condor Seed. (See AWC Stem Metrics). Frequent Career Expos & Majors Fairs help connect potential employers and students in a

mutually beneficial partnership.

AWC has instituted a Sustainability Council that promotes recycling and conservation of resources on campus and within the community. Community service projects, such as collecting donations for the local food bank, homeless shelter, hospital, and elementary schools, are a popular effort among clubs and departments on campus. Students learn civic responsibility in addition to the standard curriculum. This helps students while supporting local communities. One key achievement of the Sustainability Council was the reduction in the use of electricity by 7% from 2011 to 2018 despite adding new buildings and technology. (See Sustainability)

1.D.2 The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests. As a public-not-for-profit institution, its sole mission is to support the post-secondary needs of the residents of its service area. The college does not in any way function as a money-making institution.

AWC carefully follows all rules and regulations relating to the fiscal responsibility to act as a public entity and responsible steward of the funds within the confines of law and propriety. AWC complies with all regulations; each year, AWC works closely with the State's Auditor General's Office in an annual audit process to ensure compliance with all requirements. AWC in no way functions as a money-making institution. It is a non-profit, community- based institution with a focus on its mission of educational outcomes and services.

1.D.3.   The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow. Among these external constituencies are Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona. All have a significant presence on AWC's campus and AWC works closely with these partners to provide pathways to 4-year degrees for the students.

In addition, AWC works with the K-12 system to provide outreach to students, such as the very successful, "I'm Going to College" program (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQa1tniMNOc) and dual and concurrent enrollment programs for middle and high-school students. AWC recently received permission from its District Governing Board to offer courses at $25 credit to high school students as one more way to reach into the high schools and encourage a college-going culture within our community. Enrollment of high school students in college courses has more than doubled since this program went into effect. (Dual Enrollment, HS Capture Rate)

Jump Start Saturday was born out of the necessity to provide services to prospective and incoming students at a time that is convenient. Jump Start Saturday is held one Saturday per month and allows students to complete PRE-enrollment steps (admission, financial aid, placement testing, citizenship verification, registration holds, etc.). AWC recognized that while students are in school, their parents are working, and the adult learners are working, so it is difficult to come to campus in person during regular working hours. Jump Start Saturday was developed as an effort to respond to the needs of the diverse community. In addition to these services, Student Services and Business Services have extended hours to 7am to 7pm during the week. These changes to service assist in meeting the needs of our community.

The high school capture rate report shows the number of students who choose to attend AWC the semester after graduation, within the year following graduation, anytime during high school, or anytime at all. This is a demonstration of the engagement with local high schools. AWC has the

highest high school capture rate out of all Arizona community colleges and as part of the Strategic Enrollment Planning process, has set a goal to increase this capture rate from 46% to 49% by 2021. (SEP Final Report)

AWC has partnered with the local Yuma Union High School District to hold a 3C Expo (3C = College, Career, CTE) to expose students to CTE programs and demonstrate the pathway opportunities between the high school CTE programs, AWC's CTE programs, and the potential careers. The event has been held at the AWC Yuma Campus as well as individually on the high school campuses. AWC Admissions staff also presented at regional and statewide conferences about this collaborative effort.

Sources

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- AWC_Economic_Impact_13-14
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
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- Dual Enrollment Arizona Western College
- HS Capture Rates 2017
- Job TrainingArizona Western College
- Jump Start Saturday
- NCCBP Strengths
- NCCBP_ExecRept2017
- Social Mobility AWC
- Strategic Enrollment Planning Final Report Sept 2018
- Sustainability
- Workforce Education Arizona Western College

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

AWC's mission is clear and inspiring. AWC has recently engaged in a process of strategic planning and mission building that involved the groups from across the campus locations and the community. One highlight of this process was the Horizon event which was attended by faculty, staff, students, and community members. The goal was to foster discussion about AWC's mission and vision and bring diverse groups to the decision-making process.

On April 28, 2017 AWC held the Horizon Symposium, a first of its kind event at Arizona Western College. AWC had embarked on an 18-month comprehensive strategic planning process, and this event was an opportunity to invite the college staff, students, and community members to help imagine a thriving, sustainable future for higher education in the region. The event consisted of several TED Talk style presentations to engage the participants and then encourage brainstorming in small focus groups. AWC also included other locations in the event by live broadcasting to San Luis and Parker. The event was extremely successful and attended by several hundred staff and community members.

Participants in Arizona Western's Horizon Symposium generated thoughtful, provocative, and strategic impact statements after listening to Symposium speakers and melding their message with the realities and needs of the region. The result was a focus on the planning process that was unfolding and Impact Statements from the focus groups.

After this successful kick-off event, the committee developed a task force with balanced representation from the three employee groups: classified, administrative, and faculty, with input from students and the community in a collaborative effort to develop and drive AWC's Strategic Plan. The task force drove the planning process and engaged the campus and community in gathering and analyzing data. Together they created a shared vision, set short and long-term goals, and developed an implementation plan for the new strategic initiative.

This process which resulted in an updated mission, vision, and objectives highlights AWC's focus on mission-driven educational outcomes, involvement in the communities it serves, and a forward-thinking mindset. AWC has created a document, "Growing Our Communities: Arizona Western College Strategic Plan 2025" which outlines the Strategic Plan and Vision and lays out 19 objectives with timelines to completion.

Sources

- Horizon_Executive_Summary

- Strategic Planning

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Arizona Western College operates with integrity and holds its employees to high standards of ethical behavior. The District Governing Board (DGB) is also ethical and demonstrates standards of integrity in its oversight of AWC. AWC complies with all regulations for spending and purchasing and allocates dollars responsibility to promote excellence in teaching and learning as well as non-academic activities. AWC takes its responsibility to the taxpayers in our two-county service area very seriously and strives to equitably provide services.

AWC promotes educational attainment with a focus on teaching and learning by operating all of its areas with high standards of ethics and integrity. Part of this focus is transparency in its decision making, initiatives, and processes. AWC has multiple opportunities for multi-directional communication. This starts at the top. AWC's president holds several town hall meetings during the year with ample opportunities for lively question and answer. The events are not simply a recitation of policy or announcements. Rather they are inspirational with give and take in an environment where employees feel secure and heard. The president starts and finishes these events with a focus on the students, often inviting students to attend or present. This focus reminds employees where the focus must be: on promoting student learning with integrity and ethics. In addition to the town hall meetings, the president also holds regular "office hours." In the spirit of higher-learning, where professor office hours are a fixture in the day-to-day operations, AWC's president has opened several hours a month for employees or students to come into to his office, share concerns or ideas and engage with him on a personal level. Other offices and departments on campus also maintain regular open door and open communication policy. AWC has strived to remove departmental silos and promote communication and collaboration across disciplines, departments, and locations and is involved in ongoing strategic planning.

AWC has a large service area and strives to provide exceptional services to residents in various locations in the two-county area in an equitable and fiscally responsible manner. In 2004 AWC's voters passed a bond, and subsequently, AWC built campus centers for residents in San Luis, Wellton, and La Paz County. Since then, grants were secured to build the Writing Center, the Engineering Building, and updated, modern welding and automotive labs. In 2015, AWC leveraged funding to build a Public Safety Institute to house academic and vocational programs in law enforcement, homeland security, and other public safety areas. Most recently, AWC has completed a new Technology Center in San Luis and expanded classroom capacity in Somerton by adding a new computer classroom. AWC seeks to serve its constituents by providing as many services in the local

areas as possible while maintaining budget responsibility.

Financial: AWC pays particular attention to conducting all financial processes and making all financial decisions with integrity. All of AWC's financial information is available as a public record and it is open and honest about how it uses its funds. AWC is audited annually by the State Auditor General and fully complies with all requests and regulations. AWC follows internal and external guidelines strictly for the budgeting and management of its financial resources. For example, in August 2017, AWC announced to the public that was providing a 2.4-million-dollar rebate on the secondary bond levy. The burden to the taxpayers will be one half of what it would have been. AWC works hard to provide value to the communities it serves and to be a good steward of the resources.

Academic: AWC is proud of the academic excellence that it offers through a wide offering of courses and programs that meet the needs of its constituents. When AWC is compared to the other community colleges in Arizona, it ranks as number 1 or 2 in several key measures of academic success. For example, AWC transfer students are number one in the state for completing baccalaureate degrees after transferring. The number of degrees and credentials has increased dramatically in the last ten years. The number of credentials has increased by 88% and the number of degrees by 62%. This demonstrates AWC's commitment to academic attainment and focus on assisting students toward completion of academic and vocational outcomes. (AZTransfer, NCCBP 2017; Ten-year Institutional Performance Indicators, Fact Book)

AWC's academic programs articulate with the universities in Arizona and its 100 and 200 level credits transfer. Individual programs adhere to policies and procedures specific to those programs to ensure that degrees and credentials awarded are valid and accepted.

Since 2010-11, the percentage of AWC students who are members of an underserved racial/ethnic group has increased substantially and exceeds the percentage of the Yuma and La Paz County population belonging to an underserved minority group (39-65%). AWC enrolls fewer adult learners than the statewide average (36%), but more Pell recipients (30%). AWC is committed to providing academic programs that meet the needs of these underserved groups. AWC's retention rates are substantially higher than the national average and even higher than the average across Arizona. AWC is working to help persistent students achieve credentials more quickly. (NCCBP, 2017)

AWC uses ethical hiring practices to recruit and retain skilled and passionate faculty who adhere to best practices for delivering content to students. Courses are articulated through State Task Forces to ensure that students at AWC have the same learning outcomes as students at other Arizona community colleges and that students are prepared to successfully complete junior and senior level courses to earn baccalaureate degrees. AWC complies with specific program guidelines for programs with outside accrediting and certifying agencies. In fact, AWC's students succeed at a high rate in licensure and certificate exams such as Welding, CNA (certified nurse assistant and nursing programs).

Personnel: AWC has policies and procedures for the hiring, retaining, and ethical treatment of employees once they are employed. There are policies in place to guide decisions and procedures to ensure that employees are qualified and of the highest caliber and that they have a positive working environment once employed by AWC. Compensation schedules are published on the Human Resources page under compensation. (Policies 400, 402, 403, 405, 410, 411, 430, 435, 440, and 450).

All policies and procedures have been updated within the last year to reflect current requirements and

practice. Policies are in place to ensure that personnel issues are resolved fairly and ethically including:

- Grievance processes and appeals
- Fair employment policies including protection from unfair dismissal, and adequate leave.
- Policies on nepotism and conflict of interest and political activity by employees.

AWC reports a less than 1% Grievance Rate in the Human Resources data provided to the National Community College Benchmarks project. AWC has policies in place for fair and ethical behavior and processes for filing of Grievance when such behavior standards are not met. The extremely low rate of grievance coupled with the fair and open way that the Human Resources Office allows for such grievances to be filed, demonstrates in part, AWC's commitment to fair and ethical behavior. AWC uses the College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS) as one way of giving employees an opportunity to express satisfaction.

Auxiliary Function

AWC operates all auxiliary functions with integrity and with adherence to policy. Some processes and services which operate as auxiliary functions include the AWC Bookstore (Barnes and Noble or B&N) and Food Services (Sodexo). AWC works with these entities to provide services to students. For the bookstore, AWC and B&N have a gross revenue share agreement. Food Services are run purposely at a loss to AWC to keep food prices affordable for students. The management of food services is responsible for adhering to appropriate codes, hiring, and health requirements, and AWC does not directly manage the business except for major expenses and renovation of facilities. Other programs which run as Auxiliary are Housing, Athletics, and the AWC Police Department. Independent construction crews work under the direction of the Director of Facilities but are responsible to meet all state and local codes. The Police Department is 100% internal, but its officers are sworn peace officers of the State of Arizona and provide assistance to local surrounding areas when required.

Governing Board

AWC has a strong and active board. The board promotes fair and ethical processes and follows the rules set out by the state statutes regulating community college boards including ARS15-1444, the General Powers and Duties of District Governing Boards.

The board is made up of five elected community members representing geographic constituencies. The board meets regularly and publishes meeting notices to the public as required by statute. Members of the public are encouraged to speak to the board during the call to the public in regular meetings.

AWC's faculty, administration and staff are required to adhere to ethical policies and practices as outlined in the AWC Policies and Procedures Manual. Additionally, more specific handbooks and procedures are housed within specific departments and updated regularly. For example, the Student Code of Conduct Student Handbook, and the Faculty Handbook Faculty Handbook are used to dictate policy used to promote and ensure compliance with ethical conduct.

Sources

- 15-1445 DGB Powers
- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK
- 400-College-Personnel-Employment
- 402-College-Employees
- 403-Code-of-Ethics-for-Employees
- 405-Contracts-and-Advices-for-Employment-for-Employees
- 410-Job-Descriptions
- 411-Faculty-Credentialing
- 430-Insurance-for-College-Employees
- 435-Leaves
- 440-Employee-Evaluation
- 450-Due-Process
- AWC 10-Year Performance
- AWC 10-Year Performance (page number 7)
- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC
- AWC San Luis Informatics Campus
- AWC Strengths NCCBP
- CESS_Main_Report_Fall_2013
- District Governing Board
- Financial Reports
- NCCBP Report AWC
- Office of the President Arizona Western College
- Policies and ProceduresArizona Western College
- Strategic Planning

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

AWC works hard to inform its students and the public. AWC updates all appropriate documents annually (with updates as needed) such as the Course Catalog, Major Checksheets, Fact Book, Institutional Benchmarks, Student Progress and Outcomes Report (Strategic Vision Outcomes Report), and others.

Arizona Western College regularly measures student satisfaction. Beginning in fall of 2010, AWC began using the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. It administers this survey every two years to gather baseline and comparison data. Beyond the analysis of trends and issues at the AWC locations, this instrument also provides comparative results from other two-year colleges across the nation. This helps AWC in its decision making and budget allocation as it focuses on students. On the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction survey administered in 2016, students indicated overall satisfaction with the experience (5.6 on a 0 to 7 scale) and that they would enroll here again (5.8 on the scale) demonstrating that AWC presents itself clearly to the students and that the experience meets their expectations. The results of this survey are widely discussed, and information is used to make decisions and better meet student needs.

Staff is updated on pertinent guidelines or policy changes from State or Federal agencies (such as state universities or Federal Title V funding) so that the staff can pass along updated and factual information to students. Thus, the appropriate staff can inform students seeking transfer or federal financial aid, for example, of any changes, updates, or new considerations.

AWC's website was updated in 2016 with a student-centered focus. Information and resources were made available and searchable for students to help them obtain appropriate and relevant information. The website was updated for better mobile viewing, recognizing that many of its students access the website using mobile devices. The old website performed poorly in a mobile view so it was imperative to streamline and update the website so it could perform its primary function: providing up to date and easily searchable information for the students and community. In addition to the mobile functionality, pdf versions of many documents were made available for download for offline use, recognizing that many students operate with less than optimal access to wi-fi or other internet service.

AWC added a Self-Service module to its online portal allowing students to easily and quickly map out future course needs with planning, scheduling, and projecting of future needs. This puts information where it is most needed - into the hands of students - in a way that is convenient and accessible 24/7. AWC also has advisors available for students who want to do this planning in a one-on-one session.

Discover AWC is another way that students are given information in a meaningful way. Discover/Experience AWC - Orientation to Advisement and Registration is designed for all

incoming students to provide them with the necessary information, resources, and advising assistance to helpthem have a successful start and experience at AWC. Participants learn about AWC degrees and certificates, importance of assessment/placement test scores, tips on how to choose classes, ideas on how to build a semester schedule, how to register for classes using Student Planning, an introduction to other digital services like Blackboard and TORO Webmail, and other important topics necessary for a successful transition into college. AWC also hosts Majors Fairs and Non-Traditional Career Conferences to expose students to a wide range of options (AWC Advisement).

AWC communicates with the public in several meaningful ways. First, AWC's website is accessible and informative to members of our communities. It lists contact information and particularly a searchable directory of individuals and services so that the public and get in touch with staff or offices and get information or schedule events. The website is also a key way that the public can find out about employment opportunities.

Beyond the website, AWC has an active Public Relations Office that works closely with local media to disseminate information to the public via newspapers, television, social media including Facebook, Twitter, and radio. AWC also has its own public radio stations providing information and entertainment to both counties in our service area.

Finally, AWC personnel is active in working with the community through meeting with local service clubs, visiting K-12 campuses, partnering with local government and other non-profits, etc. to have a respected and visible presence in the communities served. In Summer 2017, for example, AWC held a public groundbreaking for the new San Luis Technology Institute housed at San Luis Middle School. The center houses a destination program in Informatics for the students in San Luis. The event was well attended by the public and local and visiting academic leaders and publicized via local media.

COSTS: AWC publicizes its tuition rates to students. All fees and additional costs are listed in the catalog. AWC's tuition and fees are amongst the lowest in the country, and AWC works hard to make sure that local students know the cost of attending college as well as the economic impact to their lives that college credentials will afford them.

In 2016, the District Governing Board approved a $25 per credit tuition cost for students younger than eighteen. This remarkable value to our communities has been well publicized. In-person outreach has been made to the local K-12 district and through our Early College Experience programs. The rates are also listed in the Tuition and Fees Schedule which is updated annually and published on the AWC website. Enrollment of students under 18 has more than doubled since making this change. This change in tuition cost will create a culture of college-going students and prepare students to successfully enter post-secondary studies.

CONTROL: AWC has policies and processes in place to provide appropriate control at all levels of the institution. These policies guard against the potential for improper individual actions to negatively impact the college or the communities AWC serves. AWC adheres to guidelines for purchasing and travel. Its Accounts Payable Department has rigorous control to ensure that all payments are correct and legal under state and local guidelines.

AWC works to demonstrate transparency to the public and all stakeholders. The college publishes information regarding the District Governing Board including meeting information and minutes in local media as required as well in on the AWC website.

ACCREDITATION: AWC publicizes information about its accreditation on its website. It is important for students and other constituents to know the status of AWC's accreditation. AWC posts general information about institutional accreditation and the regional and national associations of schools and colleges that provide this important assurance of a college's standards. This information explains that accreditation evaluates all educational activities and that it also looks at governance, financial stability, and relationships with external constituencies. It is vital that communities and students be able to rely on an institution to meet its obligations academically and in all other ways to the community.

Beyond the overview of accreditation, AWC publishes information about the Higher Learning Commission and AWC's process and timelines for its 2019 accreditation process. It also posts a link to the HLC verification page that affirms AWC's affiliation with HLC and verifies that it is an accredited institution of higher learning. The Gainful Employment Information is published prominently as required by the U.S. Department of Education (Gainful Employment Information).

Sources

- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK
- Advisement Services
- Arizona Western College - SSI (Western) - 11-2016
- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC
- AWC San Luis Informatics Campus
- AWC_Student_1314_Final-1
- Checksheet Example
- Communications Marketing Arizona Western College
- Discover AWC Orientation
- District Governing Board
- Early College Experience
- Gainful Employment Disclosures
- Key Performance Indicators
- NCCBP_ExecRept2017
- Tuition Fees Arizona Western College

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

AWC is governed by a five-member Board with geographically based representation of AWC's service area, including Yuma and La Paz Counties. The District Governing Board (DGB) is elected in local, county elections. Information about the board including policies and procedures related to its governance as well as meeting information, agendas, and minutes are published on the AWC Website. Board members serve six-year terms and hold public meetings once a month and as necessary. Board members are elected and if necessary, Yuma and La Paz County School Superintendents have the statutory authority to appoint governing board members. Each member's information and district of service is also listed on the AWC website.

2.C.1 - The DGB's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. Each meeting is open to the public and is a robust collaboration of AWC personnel, the board and members of the public. Each meeting consists of reports from key groups within AWC including Finance and Administrative Services which presents financial information for review and discussion. In addition, Learning Services, including faculty and students present information about academic, events, or accomplishments. Classified staff also presents relevant information to the board. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations. Minutes from each meeting are posted on the AWC website and are available for public review.

The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution. The governing board follows applicable regulations.

2.C.2 The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations. Meetings are open to the public and people are encouraged to ask questions and offer input. The DGB reviews pertinent information and research before making decisions.

2.C.3 The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors,

elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution. Conflicts of interest are avoided, and the board adheres carefully to policy.

2.C.4.   The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to AWC's administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

The organizational structure at Arizona Western College is in place to ensure best practices in management and oversight of day-to-day functionality of the different departments. Under the direction of the governing board, the college is led by President Daniel Corr, and the vice presidents of Learning Services, Student Services, Finance and Administrative Services and Advancement. Under this level, there are several deans: Dean of Public Relations and Marketing, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Grants, Dean of Students, Dean of Career and Technical Education and Dean of Campus Locations and Academic Resources. Each of these leaders has oversight and control of the appropriate personnel, budgets and programs. All individuals and programs have the general task of achieving goals and objectives related to the strategic plan and have specific responsibility for their areas and are stewards of the budget and processes they oversee.

Sources

- Advancement
- District Governing Board
- Finance Administrative Services
- Learning Services
- Policies and ProceduresArizona Western College
- President_Cabinet_Direct_Reports
- Student Services

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Arizona Western College is committed to academic freedom. AWC understands the balance that must be reached between that freedom, the need to ensure that learning outcomes are aligned, and that faculty's freedom of expression does not exceed the limits of the scope of the academic material. AWC Faculty Handbook outlines the following for teachers to help clarify that balance:

- Instructors are entitled to academic freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject.
- Instructors are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results.
- College instructors are citizens and when they speak, they are free from institutional censorship or discipline.

The Center for Institutional Excellence is a hub for supporting and improving teaching and learning at AWC. There is an annual Professional Development Day for faculty and staff to participate in learning activities and training. There are all training events throughout each academic year to foster growth and collaboration. Educational Growth credit (handbook, page 4) is provided to faculty and staff who pursue additional degrees or coursework as well as attending workshops or other appropriate training.

To encourage the pursuit of excellence in scholarship and academic areas, AWC is committed to providing professional development opportunities for faculty, including external conferences and trainings. Despite cuts to funding, AWC continues to support faculty to attend and present at conferences. AWC understands that faculty gain valuable knowledge when they interact with colleagues from across the country. They share best practices and interact with cutting edge ideas from scholars across the county. Faculty are also encouraged to be active in the community.

In addition to the faculty pursuit of knowledge and their freedom to explore ideas without undue constraints, students are also encouraged to explore ideas and challenge their thinking. Course requirements for degree stipulate that students take course in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences where they are exposed to ideas that may be new. AWC sponsors clubs and other activities for students on a wide range of areas of interest, and students are encouraged to participate. Clubs range from an AI club, Christian Challenge, Chefs, political groups, leadership, service clubs, and many others.

Students are also encouraged to create their own groups and organizations as long as they follow AWC guidelines and seek a club sponsor who is an AWC employee.

Sources

- 625.1-Academic-Freedom
- Center for Instructional ExcellenceArizona Western College

- Clubs and Organizations Arizona Western College
- Faculty_Handbook_v2016
- Faculty_Handbook_v2016 (page number 4)

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

AWC has always maintained high standards of integrity in relation to acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge. AWC maintains safeguards for ensuring ethical research when applicable including rigorous review and oversight by our IRB Committee. In addition, students are held to ethical standards in acquisition of knowledge and the use of materials in academic pursuits.

2.E.1 AWC is a community college; thus, research is not a primary focus. However, AWC welcomes opportunities to be involved in research that is applicable to AWC's mission and follows strict standards of integrity when doing such research. AWC has an active Institutional Review Board (IRB) to protect the rights of human subjects in research. This includes protecting vulnerable populations and ensuring that informed consent is maintained. IRB functions through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Grants. It maintains policies and procedures that are adopted by AWC's District Governing Board and provides oversight of research. In addition, IRB administers required training for researchers to ensure that all comply with the guidelines.

2.E.2 Student guidance in using information resources ethically is part of the curriculum and the culture at AWC. AWC's Library is at the center of this effort and works closely with the faculty. Anti-plagiarism programs as well as practices are in place. The library provides training and workshops on using content and sources and academic integrity. Students learn that plagiarism goes well beyond copying written content. In fact, in a world that is filled with resources, video, audio, images, ideas, and design concepts, students learn to navigate the ethical use of these resources in ways that enhance their abilities to achieve in the professional world. Faculty and librarians help students to responsibly use and cite content as well as navigate digital content. When guidelines for the use of content are breached, faculty can set the consequences for such behavior including failing grades and other negative consequences. The Conduct Office assists in the process. Any student who engages in dishonest academic work or who engages in prohibited conduct in the classroom may be subject to action by the instructor. In the event of disruptive student behavior in the classroom, faculty members have the authority to temporarily exclude a student from the current class session. Persistent disorderly behavior, cases of academic dishonesty, and other violations of the Code are referred to the Conduct Office, who has the authority to implement consequences. The goal is always to prevent this type of behavior by educating students about the ethical and legal use of materials (Raise System for Academic Integrity).

The library has digital resources including guides for citing sources and responsible use of content as well as well-attended workshops for students on similar topics. The workshops are offered at multiple campus sites to ensure that all students have access to the information. There is a link to

Library resources in every class (via the Blackboard course shell). This link, which by default is in every course, online, face-to-face, hybrid and ITN, has extensive resources available for students including searches for materials and plagiarism resources. The site is student-friendly and easy to navigate so that students can get content and learn about the ethical use of materials. Most importantly, the site makes it easy for students to ask questions and contact librarians.

Beyond the library, teachers in nearly all classes help students understand the use of content and information resources. Such information is also part of all new student orientations.

2.E.3 AWC publishes the Student Code of Conduct (Student Handbook) annually. It is available on the AWC website and in printed form. The document clearly explains academic dishonesty in its many forms including cheating, copyright violation or plagiarism. In addition, each AWC syllabus contains information about academic dishonesty and the possible repercussions. Faculty are encouraged to use an online form to report questionable student behavior of all types and this includes academic dishonesty. By having a centralized reporting function, Student Affairs can see patterns where individual teachers cannot. It also allows for intervention and education so that students can learn to use resources and information and then go on to be successful academically.

AWC has clear guidelines for academic integrity and consequences for academic dishonesty. For example, in the Student Code of Conduct, it clearly states that an individual shall not engage in any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, copyright violation, or plagiarism. An individual shall not use or attempt to use the academic work or research of another person (or agency engaged in the selling of academic materials) and represent that it is his or her own or otherwise engage in dishonest academic work. An individual shall not share his or her knowledge or work with another student during an examination, test, or quiz or other academic assignment unless specifically approved in advance by the professor. An individual shall neither bring to an examination any materials or notes unless approved by the professor or shall the individual receive or attempt to receive any test response from another student during an exam or at any time unless expressly authorized by a faculty member. AWC uses the RAISE System for Academic Integrity.

AWC uses tools and resources, such as SafeAssign, an anti-plagiarism tool for written content, and lock-down browsers for testing. Also, access to course content and testing is safe guarded by individual student ID's, passwords, and authentications.

Sources

- 2012AWCFullReviewForm
- Academic Library
- Institutional Effectiveness
- IRB_Registration
- The_RAISE_System_for_Academic_Integrity_Education

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

AWC is committed to excellence. In order to achieve this, integrity and ethics are at the core of everything that AWC undertakes. While there are always areas for growth, AWC has long-established a reputation of integrity. Its financial obligations are handled appropriately, the institutional oversight is responsible and functions responsibly, and its faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and research (when applicable, as AWC is primarily not a research institution).

AWC is proud of its record of integrity and ethics and its stand in the communities that it serves. The District Governing Board represents the communities and oversees AWC's work to serve its communities fairly and responsibly.

Finally, this code of integrity and ethics is transmitted to students. Academic honesty is integrated into the curriculum of every class and is part of the general education curriculum.

Sources

- District Governing Board

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

All the degree programs at Arizona Western College are at the level of quality and rigor that are appropriate for the level of coursework. Degrees and courses are articulated with other colleges and universities across the state to ensure that students who leave AWC have the equivalent competencies as the transfer institutions. Students who leave AWC and go on to Arizona's universities achieve baccalaureate degrees at a high percentage compared to other community college in the state as of 2017. (AZTransfer Reports, Dec 2018)

3.A.1 Courses and programs are current and require relevant levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. AWC's degree requirements are clearly stated in the AWC Catalog and most require 60 credit hours of college level coursework. In addition, AWC confers hundreds of certificates annually with a wide variety of requirements. Where applicable, these requirements adhere to and align with standards in industry.

AWC requires placement testing to ensure that students enroll in courses they have requisite skills to pass. AWC prepares students for the courses and programs they enroll in and then requires appropriate performance for successful completion. AWC's retention rates for developmental courses are very strong: 92% for math, 94% for writing, and 96% for reading. The success rates in these gateway courses are somewhat lower, but above average when compared both in Arizona and across the nation (Arizona Community College rankings and NCCBP 2017 report). Success rates in math are 63%, writing - 68%, and reading - 77%. During Academic Year 2015/16 and 16/17, AWC redesigned curriculum to shorten the developmental writing sequence and provide more support for students. Math also piloted new tools and additional support. AWC students who begin in developmental courses require an average of 1.5 years longer to complete degrees and programs, and AWC is looking at ways to shorten the process and provide appropriate support. AWC is piloting a pathways model to focus students toward appropriate course choices early in the process. AWC anticipates that the pathways model will be fully implemented by Fall of 2021.

Beyond the developmental courses, college-level courses require appropriate levels of performance by students for successful completion. When applicable, courses have prerequisites or corequisites that are clearly stated in the AWC Course Catalog. Course outcomes and rigor are aligned with the level of the course and to the standards for the degree or certificate awarded. AWC has general education requirements and outcomes. The general education curriculum encourages wholeness in learning by focusing on values and meaning, knowledge and understanding, imagination and creativity, reasoning and judgment, consciousness, and existence. General education enables students to see that education integrates and unifies knowledge clarifies ambiguity, and develops appreciation of cultural diversity while encouraging comprehensive literacy.

In order to maintain standards and stay current with changes in industry or academia, faculty and administration are responsible for reviewing programs and course offerings. Articulation with state universities in the state is very important to AWC's students and communities. AWC participates in Articulation Task Force groups to ensure that courses transfer, students are prepared to complete upper level coursework, and ultimately complete baccalaureate level degrees. AWC's transfer office helps students transfer in credit from other schools to complete AWC credentials. AWC Transfer is dedicated to evaluating all incoming transcripts of students who have been admitted and enrolled in classes. Once students decide to further their education at a university, transfer specialists help each student with specific requirements at all three in-state universities for a smooth transfer. Transfer Services offer personalized support to all transfer students in various aspects of the transfer process by following specific educational plans, guides, and resources for a successful transition.

Individual departments and faculty work together to choose appropriate textbooks and other materials and to select digital content. Currently faculty are collaborating to identify appropriate Open Educational Resources (OER) to significantly reduce textbook costs for students.Part of the Strategic Vision is at least 50% of course materials are available through OER by July 2022.

Changes in course requirements or program requirements go through a process with AWC's curriculum committee, a committee made up of faculty and administrators which reviews all such changes before they become official.

Several of AWC's programs, including Nursing and Radiologic Technology, are accredited by outside agencies and undergo separate rigorous self-study and review. AWC has successfully maintained these accreditations and offers programs with high standards to its students.

3.A.2 The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for associate and certificate programs. AWC offers the following degrees: Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Business (ABUS), Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Applied Science (AAS) and Associate in General Studies (AGS). In addition, AWC offers a variety of certificates including the Certification in AZ General Education (AGEC) and wide range of certificates in areas such as Law Enforcement, Technology, Allied Health, Food Science and Family Studies. In the 2016-2017 academic year, AWC conferred 1392 degrees and certificates. These graduates go on to make an enormous impact in our community with a taxpayer rate of return of 10.7% (Economic Impact Study FY 2013-14).

Additionally, as part of the strategic planning process, faculty & staff convened December 2017 through November 2018 to research and adopt a Guided Pathways model appropriate for our students and our region. Following guidelines established by the Community College Research Council (CCRC), Complete College America, and models developed by California College Pathways, and Maricopa Community College, AWC developed three essential components for its Pathways framework (GE Report):

Pathway Success Course

- Orientation (ORI) course revamped
- Mandatory first semester, as appropriate
- Co-taught by faculty & advisors
- Tailored for each meta-major
- Includes successful student mentors
- Major/Career exploration
- Offered in varied delivery modes & times to align students with level of support needed

Pathway Coursework

- Programs/Courses intentionally sequenced & aligned with meta-major
- FT & PT student educational plans
- 15 credits each semester encouraged
- Early alert system
- Coordinated learning and peer support for high-risk courses and at risk students
- Intentional & Systematic advising (faculty advisors/academic advisors)
- Redirection as Necessary

Pathway Capstone Course

- Complete transfer/job applications
- Develop resumé and/or scholarship essays
- Secure internships/job shadowing
- Prepare Webportfolio for program & institutional assessment of learning outcomes

The Pathways team has collected feedback from over 175 students and 135 faculty and staff. Much of the feedback received informs the Implementation phase, which begins in earnest in January 2019. Essentially, strategic planning and other campus-wide initiatives indicated *why* AWC should adopt a Pathways model; the framework indicates *what* that Pathways model will include, while implementation will indicate *how* we achieve the model—and for *whom*, since the purpose is to intentionally design Pathways to serve all students.

In other words, the grouping of meta-majors, the sequencing of courses, updating of curriculum, numbers of credits for the Success & Capstone courses—and delivery modes and timing of those courses—will all be decided by the appropriate faculty & staff throughout the Implementation process.

Also, as part of strategic planning initiatives, AWC faculty and staff have adopted Guiding Principles for Learning that articulate expectations for AWC graduates. The draft Principles were shared with students, faculty, and staff at Yuma, Somerton, San Luis, and Parker campuses for feedback during September and October of 2018, and were finalized and adopted in November 2018.

Guiding Principles for Learning

The purpose of Guiding Principles for Learning is to create common areas of inquiry & practice that characterize the AWC student experience.

1. *Aesthetics & CreativeThinking*

Students will develop an expanded awareness and appreciation of the arts and sciences through the exploration of the human imagination and its expression.

2. *Analytical Reasoning & Metacognition*

Students will think critically and self-evaluate to identify, analyze and solve problems in a variety of situations and areas of study.

3. *Collaboration & Inclusion*

Students will communicate and cooperate in order to respect similarities and differences among diverse perspectives and experiences.

4. *Ethical Growth & Wellness*

Students will act ethically and responsibly in personal, academic, and professional settings and strive to develop overall well-being.

5. *Application & Creation of Knowledge*

Students will apply learning in new contexts and create knowledge in innovative ways.

AWC clearly outlines learning goals for graduates in all associate and certificate level programs. Learning outcomes are all clearly stated on official AWC syllabi and these outcomes are aligned with appropriate learning goals for completers of the courses and programs.

Learning outcomes for students are agreed upon by faculty and standardized for each course. Teachers have academic freedom and may approach subject matter in individualized ways, but learning outcomes are the same for each course of the same prefix and level, and students should meet the competencies and outcomes for the course (.

3.A.3   The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

AWC offers courses at multiple sites and through multiple modalities. AWC's academic leadership is keenly aware of the difficulties in maintaining consistent outcomes in all locations and in all learning modalities. In order to address these challenges, AWC has practices in place to mitigate the challenges.

AWC offers courses in 15 locations across its 10,000 square mile service area. The institution offers courses online and through its interactive television network. AWC also offers courses in hybrid format (50% online and 50% face to face), allowing students more flexibility in scheduling course load and allowing teachers to employ the best methods from each of the modalities.

AWC has also entered into an agreement with the local public transportation company (Yuma County Area Transportation, YCAT) as another way to ensure that students have access to the courses and locations they need to complete programs. This partnership makes travel to and from campus locations affordable to its students. Thus, along with the courses offered in different

modalities, students have access to the courses they need to complete degrees and other educational goals. Students pay a $5 transportation fee which entitles them to a six-month bus pass. AWC has worked with YCAT administration to ensure that schedules and routes enable students to get to their classes.

AWC has courses in many locations. Some of these locations are shared with K-12 entities. To ensure access to similar technology that students have in other locations., AWC created a movable instructor station with similar technological resources. It invested in additional Wi-Fi for these locations to allow for mobile laptop carts and other technological solutions. These are just some of the strategies AWC has implemented to ensure students at more remote sites still have access to what they need to be successful.

Another way AWC engages with students is by offering online content (Course Catalog). Students demand high-quality online courses, and most of AWC students take some online courses as part of degree programs. Web-based courses use the same syllabus, textbook, and have the same learning outcomes. AWC ensures that courses are rigorous and comparable to face-to-face offerings. AWC offers multiple trainings for faculty including a week-long technology training course at the beginning of each fall semester to help teachers build engaging courses. AWC has offered this technology and teaching training for fifteen years and every year tries to bring more opportunities to the faculty who teach online.   Beyond the brand-new faculty who attend, AWC's Distance Education Department also invites more seasoned users to participate in the training both to mentor the less experienced faculty as well as update their own skills in online technology and pedagogy. AWC also offers extensive one-on-one support for teachers building courses and content. The Distance Education Department works to be a 'just-in-time' resource for teachers as they build educational content.

AWC has recently, expanded its outreach to online teachers. In 2017, two new levels of training were developed for faculty teaching online. The first level demonstrates how to create an online course, including videos and interactive content so faculty can easily navigate the material. In-person training is also available for those who prefer it. The second course focuses on best practices for engaging students and creating an effective online learning environment.

In Spring of 2018, AWC implemented navigation standards for online courses. There has always been a tension between the idea of academic freedom and the need to streamline the student experience and help students successfully navigate their online courses. This is especially important since the success rates in web courses trend lower than in traditional courses (78% success for face-to-face for AY 2016-17 versus 70% for web courses). (Fall 2017) To balance the need for academic freedom with the desire to standardize, AWC requires that the top four navigation buttons in online courses be standardized. Faculty can then customize additional buttons for each course based on the subject matter and content. The required navigation buttons are: Syllabus/Course Outline, Contact My Teacher, My Grades, and How to Use Blackboard. The How to Use Blackboard button links to online help files, instructional videos, and searchable topics for students with frequent questions such as how to attach a file in Blackboard, How to Respond to a Discussion Question, and How to Take an Online Quiz. The How to Use Blackboard has information about in-person orientation sessions offered at multiple locations and the phone number to call for help from a technical support person. AWC has found that many students prefer to navigate online help content, but some prefer to call a live technician, and others like the hands-on experience of an orientation. AWC provides a variety of help and orientation experiences to meet student needs. Requiring the standardization of course menus and offering multiple ways to get support helps students easily navigate online courses.

In addition to these required buttons, all online courses also have a Library button on the menu and a Tutoring button. Both of these vital areas have provided information geared to online students including chat sessions, video chat sessions, online searchable databases, help getting resources at more remote locations, and a variety of other services.   The library has online searchable databases for students. Online AWC students have access to the same resources as the students on the Yuma campus through online resources and agreements with local public libraries. In addition to the self-service searchable content, AWC Library has live help available for students to locate and evaluate resources and determine the best way to get the students the academic resources they need.

As an extra quality control measure for online courses, the Distance Education Department reviews all online courses and offers support and training to ensure that all courses meet quality standards. Each course is viewed regularly by Distance Education staff to verify standards of teacher engagement and content. The Distance Education Department uses a rubric to evaluate online courses and reviews each class to ensure compliance with standards. The Distance Education department works closely with division chairs when courses need attention to reach standards. In collaboration with faculty, division chairs, and Distance Education staff, the online course is brought up to standard. AWC provides extensive training on online teaching on both the technical components and the pedagogical issues. (See Online Evaluation Rubric)

Online courses have the same requirements and the same syllabi as face-to-face courses, and instructors and Division Chairs work to ensure that the rigor is the same. Recently, AWC recommended a new process to compile a detailed notation of course content, activities, and interaction for each course with an estimated time requirement for activities or assignments. The Distance Education Department is working with faculty and Division Chairs to implement this process. The AWC Distance Education Department has always reviewed courses for content and assignments, but this is a new formalized step to improve this evaluation process. This documentation allows for alignment of the time requirements for online and face-to-face courses.

Another way that AWC offers classes is via the Interactive Television Network (ITN). Since AWC's student population is spread out over a large service area, ITN (Interactive Television Network) is used to reach students and teach courses that the students would not be able to take in their local area. Teachers are trained in the use of the equipment, engagement strategies, and best practices to ensure that all of the students participate in the class. This maintains the equivalency for the ITN classes and the face-to-face courses. All student comments and questions can be heard in the multiple locations so that students feel a part of the class. In addition, AWC has made the decision to have an "ITN Operator" in each class. The ITN operator handles the technical functions, zooms in on the person speaking or the student asking question, and otherwise keeps the classes running smoothly. Having the ITN operator frees the professor to teach the course and engage with all of the students. Many institutions who still have ITN courses have moved to a model where the teacher is responsible for managing all of the technical issues; however, AWC wants the faculty to focus on students rather than technology. It is important for students to feel like they are part of the classroom learning environment even if the students are participating at a distance via the ITN network.

Having the ITN operator in the classroom also allows the professor to send and distribute material easily to students in the remote sites. Tests can be proctored, technical problems can be quickly solved, and the overall experience for students in the remote location is more positive and personal. AWC will maintain the ITN learning environment at this level. Students at distant sites need access to course content that they cannot get at their local center without using ITN. AWC has researched and piloted other methodologies for teaching to remote sites such as streaming video and

webinar style teaching where students log into a virtual classroom. Many of AWC's students prefer the in-person classroom (even if the teacher is teaching remotely) and AWC will continue with this model for the foreseeable future.

AWC has carefully evaluated its ITN system during the FY 2017-2018 and has reached several conclusions.

- Utilizing an operator allows the teacher to focus on teaching. The operator can zoom in on the speaker and make the experience better for students at all sites.
- More ITN classrooms have been added to meet student needs.
- Courses are recorded and kept for two weeks. Recording is helpful when a site loses connection.
- Students have more options for coursework without traveling.

AWC also maintains consistency and rigor in dual credit courses. AWC firmly believes that reaching students while they are in high school (or before) is key to encouraging them to enter college and ultimately complete degrees. Dual credit is an important part of this endeavor. All courses taught for dual credit are approved through Learning Services. Both dual credit and non-dual credit courses use the same books and same syllabi, and the learning outcomes are the same. In addition, the criteria for credentialing the teachers is the same for dual credit. Faculty teaching these courses must meet the same standards as other faculty at AWC, submitting transcripts for evaluation to ensure that they meet criteria to teach the level of course assigned.

Dual credit increased 38% between 2017 and 2018. This increase was fueled by a new program allowing high school students to pay tuition of $25 per credit. In addition, AWC has focused on improving collaboration with the local high schools to provide students the coursework they need. AWC has also been innovative in trying new approaches to dual credit. For example, in 2018, an English professor was hired with split responsibility between AWC campuses and Yuma High School. Further, on-site biology courses, taught by a full-time AWC professor are offered at Yuma Catholic High School.

Students enrolled in all of the different sites and modalities have access to tutoring, bookstore services, orientation, and library services. AWC has online resources for these services and maintains in-person support for students at other locations. For example, tutoring support is available via phone or online chat, but there are also in-person tutors in multiple locations including the MCAS Center (Marine Corp Air Station), the San Luis Learning Center, and the La Paz Center.

Sources

- AWC 10-Year Performance
- AWC 10-Year Performance (page number 7)
- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC
- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC (page number 6)
- AWC_Economic_Impact_13-14
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- AZCC 2016 Student Progress and Outcomes Report
- Course Syllabi Arizona Western College

- Degrees and Certificates Arizona Western College
- Dual Enrollment Arizona Western College
- Fall 2017 Standard Reports (as of census day)
- First Year Performance AZCC
- First Year Performance of New Transfers Dec 2018
- Focus Areas Arizona Western College
- GECC Assessment Plan 2017-18
- NCCBP_ExecRept2017
- Online CourseRubric
- Procedure 601.3 Modes of Teaching
- Transfer From Arizona Western College

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1 AWC recognizes a responsibility to provide general education to the learners in our two-county area. Through general education, AWC encourages faculty and students to pursue wholeness in learning by providing a curriculum that focuses intensely on values and meaning, knowledge and understanding, imagination and creativity, reasoning and judgment, consciousness, and existence. General education enables students to understand that education integrates and unifies knowledge, become aware of ambiguity, and appreciate cultural diversity while encouraging comprehensive literacy.

AWC's mission is: *Transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities.* The General Education program aligns with that mission by providing learning opportunities allowing students to accomplish goals and degree attainment.

AWC provides general education courses and content centered around the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC).   The Arizona public community colleges and the three state universities have agreed upon a common structure for a general education core curriculum. This common structure is called the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC). AGEC is composed of a minimum of 35 semester units of lower-division general education course work that prepares the student for transfer. In addition, general education offerings appropriate to students seeking certifications and other credentials are offered. Students at AWC acquire broad learning and skills preparing them for employment or baccalaureate level programs.

General education is designed for all undergraduate students to examine the links between various disciplines and the relationships among areas of knowledge. By completing the general education curricula, students will discover the power and limitations of the historical foundations of thinking and understanding. In the general education curricula, critical inquiry prepares students to explore

and critique their thoughts about these models through comparison with alternative models from other thinkers and cultures.

Critical Inquiry involves the development of sustained and increasingly complex levels of questioning that lead to the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence within and among disciplinary communities. A responsive general education program requires thoughtful and precise writing, critical reading, quantitative thinking, scientific inquiry, digital literacy, civic discourse, and the development of the processes of analysis and synthesis which underlie reasoning.

Part of the general education curriculum are the writing intensive (WI) courses. Arizona Western College believes writing provides a unique opportunity to learn disciplinary content while mastering writing skills. Writing-Intensive (WI) courses at Arizona Western College integrate writing assignments in ways that help students learn both the subject matter of the courses and discipline-specific ways of thinking and writing. Writing-Intensive courses help develop students' identities as good writers by linking their writing proficiency with their desire to know more about the field of study, to engage in questions in the discipline, and to become a participant in academic discourse.

Students are required to complete two WI courses to graduate with an associate's degree or transfer degree. As part of the Guided Pathways Model, the second WI course will be a capstone course which allows students to demonstrate skills and achievement of Institutional Learning Outcomes. The outcomes for WI courses are adhered to for each WI course to ensure that students completing degrees and transfer credentials are prepared for the rigor of university programs.

Writing-Intensive Course Outcomes
Upon satisfactory completion of AWC's Writing-Intensive component, students are able to:

- Demonstrate critical inquiry through the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence in writing
- Develop flexible strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading, using instructor and peer feedback on written discourse to guide improvement through revision
- Effectively compose discipline-specific writing, which includes overall organization, analysis, grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and style; Develop strategies for composing both in class and out of class compositions
- Demonstrate through written discourse a sequence of increasing complexity/skill in knowledge of content as well as discipline specific discourse form.

AWC's Office of Assessment and Program Review helps faculty to demonstrate student achievement and proficiency in the following:

- Arizona Western College graduates will demonstrate competency in critical inquiry, communication, civic discourse, quantitative analysis, scientific literacy, and digital literacy.
- Arizona Western College graduates will demonstrate expertise in their selected fields of learning.
- Arizona Western College graduates will be able to interact, communicate, and work effectively with partners, teams, and networks.
- Arizona Western College graduates will be able to participate actively in the political, ethical, and aesthetic aspects of community life.

3.B.2 The institution articulates learning outcomes based on an established framework. Educational outcomes are grouped into five broad categories: Civic Discourse, Communications, Digital Literacy,

Quantitative Analysis and Scientific Literacy. Each academic year, the General Education Committee promotes awareness of one of the areas. In addition, each academic year, assessment focuses on collecting four types of artifacts:

- Assignments, rubrics, student grade results, and summary/recommendations from faculty teaching courses identified in the GE areas.
- Specific student work for that year's focus area, random selection through IR and the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) develops rubrics for evaluation.
- Student Showcase participation and scholarship essays/interviews and informal student written responses based on prompt from promotional events.

In the Fall of 2012 and Spring of 2013, following the establishment of the GECC, the GECC revamped the AWC GE purpose & philosophy statements, expanded GE Focus Areas from four to five (adding Civic Discourse), and created student learning outcomes for each of the Focus Areas. In Fall 2013, Division faculty matched Focus Area outcomes to courses, and the Curriculum & Articulation Office added identified Focus Area outcomes to GE course syllabi effective Spring 2014. The GECC then worked to update the AZ Academic Curriculum Review and Evaluation System (ACRES) forms, identify assessment opportunities (Spring 2014 was the 1st year the Student Showcase became a GE-organized event and procured private funding for $5000 in annual student scholarships), and create occasions to promote the GE curriculum to students.

In Fall 2015, the GECC established a long-term assessment plan (which has been updated annually, 2017-2018:

- Each academic year the GECC will promote awareness of at least one area of the GE curriculum:

    o 2014/2015 Critical Inquiry

    o 2015/2016 Civic Discourse

    o 2016/2017 Digital Literacy

    o 2017/2018 Quantitative Analysis

    o 2018/2019 Communication

    o 2019/2020 Scientific Literacy

    o 2020/2021 Civic Discourse

    o 2017/2018 Digital Literacy

- Each academic year assessment has focused on collecting three types of artifacts from that GE curriculum area:

    o Assignments, rubrics, and student results from courses identified as that GE area (Fall)

    o Student Showcase participation and scholarship essays/interviews (Spring)

    o Informal student written responses based on prompt from promotional event [i.e.,

sunglasses, tumblers] (Fall/Spring)

- GE faculty have been encouraged to develop an annual assessment plan for their GE course(s) in Tk20 (an online data collection, management and assessment system) to increase the collection, measurement, and results of GE student artifacts.

- Each year the Writing Curriculum Committee (WCC) has administered assessment of Writing Intensive (WI) classes

Each year, following the Fall assessment collection & Spring analysis, the GECC submits a formal Assessment Report to the VP of Learning Services, Division Chairs, and the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Grants, as well as keeping the most recent two years of reports posted on the GE webpage (GE Reports).

Also, since 2014, thanks to a generous private donation from a local company, AWC students participating in the annual Student Showcase have been eligible to apply for a scholarship in one of the following General Education Focus Areas: Digital Literacy, Communication, Quantitative Analysis, Scientific Literacy, and Civic Discourse. Scholarship recipients are determined by the AWC General Education Curriculum Committee, which is comprised of faculty from across disciplines as well as the Director of Assessment. $5,000 in scholarships is awarded to successful applicants through the AWC Foundation and can be applied to AWC and/or a four-year transfer institution.

The Writing Curriculum Committee changed the scoring method for student writing artifacts from a range of five scores (unacceptable, approaching, basic, proficient, advanced) to a range of three scores (developing, proficient, advanced). Each year the writing intensive assessment artifacts collected has been lower than anticipated. It has been proposed that in the 2018-2019 academic year, instead of requesting a 10% random sampling of student artifacts from writing intensive courses and receiving 5%, the institution will request a random sampling of 30% of the student artifacts to hopefully receive 15-20% for assessment.

In 2016-2017 there were two major accomplishments. The first major accomplishment was the first institutional assessment of Digital Literacy. The GECC received 78 Digital Literacy student artifacts of which approximately half were assessed. The assessment process itself revealed several issues that must be addressed before a valid assessment of digital literacy can be conducted on an institutional basis. To address the issues the GECC agreed that:

- Digital Literacy SLOs need to be revisited
- All focus areas need a greater explanation and context for faculty
- Focus area rubrics should be provided to faculty who will be submitting focus area artifacts
- Specific student artifacts must be requested
- Include students in the assessment request

The second major accomplishment was the development of the first institutional benchmark for Quantitative Analysis. AWC determined at least seventy percent of AWC students should beable to identify and extract relevant data from given mathematical or contextual situations; and/or select known models or develop appropriate models that organize the data into tables or spreadsheets; and/or obtain correct mathematical results and state those results with appropriate qualifiers. Because the results collected from the assessment of all MAT 151 class sections in 2016-2017 were below the institutional benchmark, faculty have implemented changes to improve student performance of each

competency and measure. For example, more review content was added to the course to improve success rates. In addition, another course, MAT 150, has been developed and added to the schedule which is 5 credits and shortens the sequence for students. It is College Algebra with Review. This course meets all of the SLO's of MAT 151, but provides review and support to help students through the content.

In 2017-2018 the GECC assessed Quantitative Analysis for the first time institutionally. The GECC received 129 student artifacts of which 67 were assessed. The assessment process itself revealed several issues that must be addressed before a valid assessment of quantitative analysis can be conducted on an institutional basis. To address the issues the GECC agreed that:

   • Successful assessment requires all components (assignment/rubric/student artifact/faculty comments)

   • There should be a uniform submission requirement (pdf, redacted, etc.)

   • Faculty should identify when the assignment appears in the course (scaffolding

3.B.3 All of AWC's degree programs engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

AWC's programs have outcomes and measures for student competencies. For example, in the theatre program, graduates are able to effectively communicate and/or provide criticisms of a performance or production. The graduates also demonstrate the ability to create theatre events, projects, and productions. In the Crop Production program, graduates demonstrate the ability to adapt to changing environments by identifying and solving current problems facing crop production and distribution. Graduates also demonstrate the ability to analyze new and innovative production techniques.

AWC students demonstrate creative work through a variety of academic and occupational programs. Welding students have created a number of creative art sculptures as well as functional equipment such as a large outdoor BBQ grill, and the Culinary Art program students often host luncheons and dinners that demonstrate their creativity and culinary expertise. Two new programs in Geospatial Technologies and Small Unmanned Aerial Systems provide students with an array of opportunities to collect and analyze information and demonstrate their ability to communicate their findings. Both these programs and the graduates will be very beneficial to the farming community in Yuma and la Paz counties.

3.B.4 Cultural diversity is integral to the experience at Arizona Western College. First, all degree programs require general education that exposes students to diverse views, people, and ideas. Further, the college explores and celebrates diversity on its campuses. This is demonstrated in clubs and groups, cultural awareness fairs and events, speakers, workshops, and symposia.

In 2016 the Yuma Fine Arts Association donated a permanent art collection to the AWC Foundation to be curated at the college. This donation provided an opportunity for students to learn to curate, catalogue, and create a system of displaying a variety of cultural artifacts at AWC. Also in 2016, the Continuing Education Office held a Japanese Language and Culture event for military families on the Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma. This event provided a great opportunity for students, Marines, and their families to develop an understanding of the Japanese culture since many Marines spend some portion of their career stationed in Japan. These are just small examples of cultural diversity

events.

In 2017 the AWC student clubs had an opportunity to create and display shrines for the dead to celebrate the Hispanic culture and their holiday, Day of the Dead. And in 2018, during the months of September and October, AWC celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month on the Yuma Campus as well as across the AWC district with a wide range of activities. Students and community members were able to partake in crafts, games, Spanish movies, and creating chalk murals to celebrate the Hispanic culture.

3.B.5 The faculty and students at AWC contribute to scholarship and creative work, and enhance both the students and community of our local areas and also the world at large. Faculty and students at AWC work together on projects and initiatives that further scholarship and community engagement. For example, science faculty work with students to complete research projects, students in English classes engage with the community to complete ethnographic research and student interns interact with local industry. English faculty and students as well as community members participate in the annual English Symposium. Faculties within social sciences effectively guide students in conducting original research projects. Social science students also present their data to demonstrate knowledge of the steps of research. Students involved in child or human development courses participate in an on-campus observation at our Child Development Learning Lab. AWC students have the option of participating on our campus Chalk Mural—sharing mutual and/or positive educational experiences.

Sources

- 2014-2015 Annual Report
- 2014-2015 Annual Report (page number 11)
- 2014-2015 Completed Assessment Plans
- 2017 Academic Program Review Guidelines
- Assessment
- Course Approval Rubric
- Course Syllabi Arizona Western College
- Curriculum and Articulation Arizona Western College
- Degrees and Certificates Arizona Western College
- GECC Assessment Plan 2017-18
- General Education
- Writing Intensive (WI) Courses Arizona Western College

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

AWC's faculty and staff are effective and hired at a sufficient number. They provide high quality education and student services. AWC's average class size remains low at 16 students, allowing students the personalized learning experience required for success. The student/faculty ratio, 19 to 1, is also a good indicator that students have adequate access to faculty members. This ratio puts AWC at the 85% percentile nationally. (NCCP 2017)

3.C.1. AWC's faculty and staff meet the educational needs of over 11,000 students (as of 16/17). AWC's faculty consists of 136 full-time and 261 adjunct faculty (as of 2017 IPEDS data). Despite the challenge to attract and retain both full-time and part-time qualified faculty to the remote southwest corner of Arizona, AWC is able to maintain an exceptional faculty, and the success of the students attests to the fact that the faculty are doing their jobs (2016-2017 Fact Book)

Full-time faculty teach 30 load hours per year (Faculty Handbook); in addition, they spend at least ten hours per week engaged in duties related to curriculum development, program review, committee assignments, professional development, and other related functions. Each faculty member maintains office hours which are scheduled regularly and posted. The faculty are accessible and engage with students. Some faculty hold office hours in the Student Success Center to encourage student participation. (Faculty Load)

Nearly all faculty participate in committees and other forms of college service. The committee structure strengthens AWC's shared governance model. AWC has an active Faculty Senate. Groups of faculty, staff, and when appropriate, students, meet to bring forward ideas, discuss issues, and problem solve. Committees meet regularly and focus on issues requiring action.

AWC also encourages its faculty and staff to be actively engaged in the community. Faculty detail

their community involvement during the annual evaluation process. In addition, the Office of the Vice President of Learning Services publishes a monthly report highlighting monthly activities and accomplishments. This report often includes activities related to the community such as fundraisers, athletic events, faculty volunteer projects, faculty scholarship, and others.

Both full-time and part-time faculty teach courses at AWC with a nearly equal distribution (48% taught by full-time and 52% by part-time faculty). (NCCBP) Part-time faculty have access to the same training and support as do the full-time faculty. In AWC's Center for Instructional Excellence, full and part-time faculty hold office hours, use computers, have access to supplies and support staff, etc. Online resources such as training videos are available to faculty who cannot attend events or obtain other resources.

Support staff, such as the Instructional Designer, Educational Technology Training Coordinator and others are available beyond regular work hours and on weekends to facilitate training and support for part-time faculty. Training sessions and all faculty meetings are held in the evenings or on weekends when more of the part-time faculty are available to attend. (Instructional Support)

3.C.2. All AWC faculty credentials are evaluated and meet or exceed minimum qualifications to teach in their assigned areas. AWC uses HLC guidelines to determine each faculty member's qualification to teach the courses they are assigned. General guidelines are that each AWC full-time faculty member holds a master's degree in the subject area in which they are teaching, or a master's degree in another area and 18 graduate hours in the discipline. (Faculty Credentials)

In accordance with HLC guidelines, credentials for faculty using portfolios or years of expertise are documented in coordination with the AWC Human Resources Office. Faculty in the Career and Tech Education (CTE) area are credentialed according to HLC requirements.

Faculty teaching in dual credit programs must meet the same requirements as faculty in non-dual credit courses. Dual credit faculty credentials are evaluated exactly as other faculty credentials are evaluated.

3.C.3. AWC faculty are regularly evaluated. Probationary faculty are evaluated every semester for three years, and continuing faculty are evaluated every two years. Adjunct faculty are all reviewed annually. The evaluation process is overseen by the Center for Instructional Excellence and completed by each division chair (Faculty Evaluation).

3.C.4. New faculty at AWC go through a rigorous onboarding process. First, they report a week early for training and orientation. The new faculty learn about AWC processes and resources. They have training on AWC systems such as Colleague and Blackboard, and they learn about the resources that are available for them. The Center for Instructional Excellence conducts this training and then serves as a resource for both full-time and part-time faculty through ongoing training and resources. (Professional Development)

3.C.5. AWC faculty are accessible for student inquiry. All faculty are available at least five hours per week for scheduled office hours. Part-time faculty have meeting space within the CIE building on the Yuma Campus to work with students and AWC has provided spaces throughout the district where part-time faculty can meet with students. In addition, all faculty have AWC email addresses that are widely published and available for students. All AWC courses including online, hybrid, and face-to-face have a Blackboard component where students can interface with faculty.

Beyond the traditional methods of office hours and virtual spaces and contacts, AWC faculty and students engage in many other ways. The Student Showcase, for example, highlights outstanding student achievement across the disciplines, and students work closely with faculty to develop projects for this event. In addition, faculty prominently participate in the Majors for Matadors, the Non-Traditional Career Expo, and other career focused events. At these events, students interact with faculty outside of the classroom. There are also clubs with faculty advisors and students who serve as Peer Mentors, and Supplemental Instruction Leaders interact with faculty advisors who train them and oversee their efforts.

3.C.6 In addition to student interactions with faculty, AWC employs professional career and academic advisors to advise and assist students. Full-time academic advisement is available at four AWC campuses (Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, and Parker). Other locations are served by faculty advisors and part-time (fully-trained) advisors.

Career and Advising Services provides the following services:

- CAREER COUNSELING, provides tools and opportunities to assist students with their career development.
- CAREER DEVELOPMENT, assists student in learning about career options, making networking connections, developing employment skills, and exploring workforce and career experiences.
- JOBS AND STUDENT EMPLOYMENT provides opportunities, resources, and employment service to AWC students and alumni in their search for employment and assists employers in finding capable, qualified AWC applicants.
- NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION provides students with the necessary information, resources and assistance to help them have a successful start and experience at AWC.
- SUPPORT SERVICES FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS, provides a variety of academic recovery programs and services that assist students who are on academic probation, returning from academic suspension, or are at academic risk. Support Services equip students with creative and innovative tools to become more engaged in pursuit of their goals.
- STUDENT ATHLETE ADVISING AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT provides athletic academic support services leading to the academic and transfer success of each student athlete.   Services include: Intrusive Tracking, Early Alert/Progress Reports, Midterm Grades, Educational Academic Plans (EAP), Degree Audits, and Study Hall for all student athletes.
- SINGLE PARENT PROGRAM, provides assistance to single parents and/or displaced homemaker students with their college enrollment process (financial aid forms, application for admissions, advising, etc.), as well as providing a travel stipend awarded each semester to help students with transportation.
- TECHNOLOGY, utilizes technology to enable students to engage wholly in their academic and career development through the use of technology.

ADVISOR TRAINING and RESOURCES, develop and provide effective training opportunities for all academic advisors so they have the necessary information, tools, and resources to empower students to explore, experience, and engage in educational activities to develop meaningful educational and career plans that help students meet their full potential. Other support services are designed to work with more specific student populations that historically need the extra support for retention and success:

- The KEYS TRIO (Keep Envisioning Your Success) grant program works with first generation, low income and/or students with disabilities to strengthen and transform each student's

academic, cultural, and social skills needed to complete post-secondary education.
- The CAMP grant program serves our large migrant population through a residential freshman cohort experience that promotes holistic immersion into an academic, social, and cultural programming for academic success.
- Veteran Services advises and supports veteran students and their family members using GI bill educational benefits.
- AccessABILITY Resource Services provides accommodations for students with documented disabilities.
- International Programs supports students by navigating through ICE regulations to ensure that they maintain legal status and provides cultural intelligence instruction through an orientation session.

Professionals in these areas maintain memberships to nationally recognized organizations and attend regular professional development workshops and trainings. To ensure best practices, departments go through regular assessment and program review cycles.

Student Health and Wellness provides resources where students receive assistance to support their personal life. Examples of these resources include district-wide trainings such as Safe Zone LGBTQ+ awareness training, Step Up Bystander training, Mental Health First Aide certificate training and QPR, and suicide prevention training which help to cultivate and foster a more inclusive and equitable campus.

AWC's tutoring center is staffed with a combination of peer tutors and professional tutors. The tutors are trained and certified through CRLA (College Reading and Learning Association). The tutors have regular training with professional staff. In addition, faculty writing and math coordinators serve as liaisons between their respective academic departments and the tutors to ensure that the tutors are trained and aware of the curriculum and pedagogy of different courses. These two coordinators are released from part of their teaching loads to assist the Success Center leadership and train tutors. The faculty serve to ensure that tutors and supplemental instruction leaders understand the learning outcomes for each class and discipline so that the tutors can support the students as they work to achieve those competencies.

Sources

- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK
- 411-Faculty-Credentialing
- 440-Employee-Evaluation
- Advisement Services
- Career Services
- Center for Instructional ExcellenceArizona Western College
- Faculty Senate Arizona Western College
- Instructional Support Arizona Western College
- IPEDS_Human_Resources_Data
- NCCBP Report AWC
- Procedure 601.1 Faculty Teaching Load
- Professional Development Arizona Western College

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

AWC provides the infrastructure and resources for teaching and learning (Center for Instructional Excellence). It provides appropriate support for its students.

3.D.1 AWC has a diverse student population with divergent needs for information, assistance and other support. AWC's website is often a student's portal to the institution. Therefore, the website was redesigned in 2016 with student needs at its center. Students can easily get information about AWC, how to apply, how to register, and where to get in-person help. Students, including those in the Student Government Association, had great input into the design and functionality of the website.

AWC has a required orientation program which includes different types of sessions. Discover AWC, Discover/Experience AWC - Orientation to Advisement and Registration. This orientation is designed for all incoming students to provide them with the necessary information, resources, and advising assistance to help them have a successful start and experience at AWC. Participants learn about AWC degrees and certificates, importance of assessment/placement test scores, tips on how to choose classes, ideas on how to build a semester schedule, how to register for classes using Student Planning, an introduction to other digital services like Blackboard and TORO Webmail, and other important topics necessary for a successful transition into college. (AWC Advising)

A pre and post evaluation is completed by participating students regarding learning outcomes for the event. Based on the evaluations, training content for students has been enhanced and improved so students under the required information.

Each year, AWC New Student Orientation season is kicked off with Experience AWC, a half-day Saturday held in April.   More time is spent for students to explore and engage with staff and faculty from across the college.

From there, Discover AWC-New Student Orientation, the weekly event for all NEW students who plan to register for Fall or Spring semesters is available at the Yuma Campus, San Luis Campus, and Somerton Campus.

Other orientations for specific programs and populations are held for students in the KEYS, CAMP, RadTech, Nursing, and Welding programs. In addition, AWC offers a 3-credit orientation course (ORI-101) for first-time students that teaches student success skills and college readiness; (AWC 104), a 2-credit Career Exploration course; and (AWC 101), a 2-credit Study Skills course.

3.D.2 AWC develops and maintains processes for directing entering students to courses and programs for which they are prepared. Further, AWC provides students who require additional preparation with the resources they need to succeed in college.

As an open-enrollment community college, AWC admits and enrolls students at all levels of academic proficiency. In order to meet students' needs, students are first assessed using the next generation ACCUPLACER test to help enroll students at an appropriate level. Additional writing assessment is provided by the WritePlacer exam which was added in 2012 to fine-tune the English class placement. AWC is currently reviewing placement data to determine its predictive value for students completing appropriate courses. Reviewing such data, as well as cut-off scores and other information, is an ongoing part of AWC's commitment to placing students in appropriate courses and promoting success. For example, based on student performance in the developmental English sequence, placement cut scores were changed to capture more students in a higher-level pre-college level writing course to allow them to get to college level more quickly.

In fact, both the writing and math developmental sequences have been revisited and reviewed within the last ten years. Cut-off scores and curriculum were reviewed and data-driven decisions about the appropriate placement of students were made. Math added an additional hour to each of the developmental math courses to give students more instructional time. In writing, the developmental curriculum was revised entirely. The first year with the new curriculum, students in the new lowest level course succeeded at a rate 8% higher than before the curriculum was revised. The English department has continued to assess the developmental sequence and is working on additional changes. (Steps to Success APR)

Testing is free and provided through the AWC testing center. Testing is available at several locations throughout the service area to meet the needs of students in remote locations. AWC also proctors placement tests in area high schools to engage students in the process and encourage them to enroll in either dual enrollment courses or concurrent enrollment courses.

Preparation materials are available for students through the AWC website as well as in-person at the AWC Testing Center. These materials allow students who may have learned material in the past and just who just need to refresh themselves before testing, to review content. After testing, students are advised as to the appropriate courses they need.

Beyond the developmental curriculum, AWC has other ways to support its learners. The Student Success Center which boasts over 20,000 student visits peryear provides tutoring to students in a wide variety of subjects and through different modalities. The AWC Library is also a great resource for students providing hours of instruction in information resources. For example, in the Fall of 2018, AWC's Library was granted a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to improve infrastructure and develop programs to enhance digital literacy.

3.D.3 Academic Advising is a vital part of the students' educational experience at AWC. 54% of the students are first-generation students and many do not understand the language and culture of college. To mitigate these barriers, AWC employs professional career and academic advisors to advise and assist students. Full-time academic advisement is available at four AWC campuses

(Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, and Parker). Other locations are served by faculty advisors and part-time (fully-trained) advisors.

3.D.4. AWC provides students and faculty with the infrastructure and resources they need for successful teaching and learning, including classrooms, office space, computer labs and other technology, supplies and other resources across multiple locations.

AWC has received grant funding to provide facilities and programs for students. For example, in 2013 AWC opened state-of-the-art welding and automotive technology facilities. Students can learn and achieve degrees in these technical fields in classrooms and labs that meet their needs for current instruction. (STEM Pipeline)

A newly renovated Engineering Building was opened in 2016 where students can complete coursework in engineering. The program is a partnership pathway between AWC and University of Arizona where students can complete four-year programs without leaving the local community. Last year, the winners of the senior capstone engineering project were from the AWC/UA partnership.

To directly meet the needs of our community, a new facility for Public Safety was opened in 2016 where courses in Administration of Justice Studies, Emergency Medical Services, Law Enforcement Training, and Homeland Security are taught. AWC's Firearm Training facility is also housed in that building. It is an interactive training which is used by all branches of our local law enforcement. This collaboration with community law enforcement is a great benefit to the community as well as students enrolled in AWC Administration of Justice programs.

Another newly renovated space is the AWC Theater. This space hosts performances, plays, meetings, and other events, many open to the community allowing our students and community to engage in the arts. It is one more way that AWC engages with the community and offers culture and informative experiences to its constituents.

3.D.5. Students learn about the ethical use of information resources and their appropriate use in various settings. The library is at the heart of these efforts providing instruction and guidance to students. Students who use library services are more likely to be successful, so the Academic Library provides study space, instruction, and expert assistance to students.

Students are taught digital literacy throughout the curriculum and display competencies in interacting with digital materials appropriately, citing materials ethically, and creating original content responsibly.

Sources

- Academic Library
- Advisement Services
- Center for Instructional ExcellenceArizona Western College
- Degrees and Certificates Arizona Western College
- Discover AWC Orientation
- KEYS Program
- NEH Library Grant
- Public Safety Arizona Western College
- STEM Pipeline

- Steps to Success APR

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

At the heart of AWC's mission statement is the goal to provide learning experiences to the community. In addition to classroom instruction, AWC provides co-curricular experiences for the students as well as the staff and community.

3.E.1 AWC has a broad range of programs to provide students the opportunity for learning in and outside of the classroom. This includes clubs, activities, sports and opportunities to engage with other students on campus in informal settings. AWC provides a comprehensive college experience for students and encourages participation in co-curricular programs and activities. (Clubs and Organizations)

Transfer and Career Expos (Career Services, Advisement) are events offered to students to learn about career possibilities within their AWC major and find out what it takes to transfer to a university. These events are offered twice a year at the Yuma campus and once at the San Luis Learning Center, Somerton Center and Parker Learning Center. The events are developed to highlight specific programs and majors. Rather than a one size fits all approach, the events are customized.

3.E.2 AWC provides a range of activities, programs, and opportunities to learn and engage with the community. AWC demonstrates these claims with tangible outcomes. Activities vary from service learning opportunities, the AWC Day of Champions, and a wide variety of club events, etc.

Every year AWC has several events that provide students opportunities to interact with and or serve the community. Several times a year, the Massage Therapy students offer chair massages to the community, students, faculty, and staff. These sessions provide an opportunity not only for the students to interact with the community, but also for the students to demonstrate the skills they have learned in their program.

Another great example of community interaction is AWC's Family Night. For over a decade, each year, the Yuma community and AWC faculty, staff, and students engaged in game and food booths as well as demonstrations of student learning in a variety of academic and occupational programs. AWC has been working to evolve this event into smaller more focused academic and career events such Health Careers focused events, University Transfer Expos, and other career events that bring the community to campus. For example, in Fall of 2017, AWC held an Economics Forum with an expert panel, 80 students and community members (Economics Forum).

The AWC music department is also a key player in community engagement. Each year the music department and their students collaborate with community musicians to offer a variety of concerts and performances throughout the year.

Two large community service projects AWC students participated in during the fall of 2017 were the Day of Champions and the Dia Del Campesino Community Service event. During the Day of Champions event over 200 student athletes provided service to community members. The student athletes painted a youth center in Somerton, sorted donated goods for Amberly's Place Thrift store, and helped at a variety of other non-profit organizations in Yuma county. At the Dia Del Campesino Community Service event, which provides free health exams to over 5,000 farm workers and their families, AWC students, faculty, and staff helped with registration and serving food.

Sources

- Advisement Services
- Career Services
- Clubs and Organizations Arizona Western College
- Economics Forum

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

Arizona Western College provides high quality education in different formats to different locations. In addition, AWC provides the necessary support services and co-curricular experiences to bolster that high quality education. (Examples include the AWC Foundation, Scholarships, Dreams to Reality Endowment, Clubs, Advisement).

AWC grants Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Business (ABus), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of General Studies (AGS), Associate of Applied Science degrees (AAS), and Certificates of Proficiency to students (AWC Degrees and Certificates). AWC uses different modalities including face-to-face classroom delivery, hybrid, online delivery, and Interactive Television Network to teach courses at multiple locations. AWC's ensures that the educational experience for students is consistent between locations and modalities. Students at all locations and using different modalities are held to the same academic standards. Courses use the same syllabi and have the same outcome regardless of location or modality of the class. Instructors across the District receive the same training and academic support as those on the Yuma Campus, its largest location.

AWC employs a sufficient number of faculty and staff, both full and part-time, to carry out the mission of the institution and provide the students with the education they require to achieve appropriate outcomes. AWC follows policies and procedures for hiring, credentialing, and training employees. Faculty and staff have opportunities for professional development in an environment that fosters the pursuit of educational attainment.

To provide students with the support they need to be successful, and to be accountable to the community, AWC provides services to all campus locations. Although the services provided are not identical at each location, AWC aligns the needs of the students with the support services that are offered. For example, students may not have access to a fully staffed Financial Aid Office in Parker, Arizona, but they have a Student Services Specialist who can assist them in receiving funding to pursue education.

AWC offers a wide variety of co-curricular programs to enhance the learning experience and connect students to larger learning environments. Learning Outcomes for co-curricular programs are assessed and documented through the regular Program Review process on a regular schedule.

Sources

- Advisement Services Arizona Western College
- Arizona Western College Foundation
- Clubs and Organizations Arizona Western College
- Degrees and Certificates Arizona Western College
- Dreams to Reality
- Scholarships and Grants Arizona Western College

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

Continuous improvement is key to successful educational programs. Arizona Western College is committed to evaluating courses and programs and then taking steps to improve its programs, courses, and other related services. AWC has a track record of making improvements based on past performance to make sure that students succeed. AWC does this through structured program review and regular institutional evaluation through grants, programs requiring outside certification, assessment of facilities and materials, and development of curriculum that meets student needs. AWC's process for evaluating programs and content is always evolving and improving. AWC is committed to maintaining that process of continuous improvement.

4.A.1. Program Reviews are an important look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, market needs, curriculum, recruitment, success, facilities and equipment needs, and achievement of outcomes. Arizona Western College offers close to 150 academic programs and certificates and has approximately 27 administrative departments. Program reviews are scheduled to be completed on a regular schedule. The Office of Assessment and Program Review at Arizona Western College

maintains and publishes an agressive program review cycle so each program is scheduled to be reviewed on a regular basis. Although not as many reviews are completed each year as are scheduled, the AWC Assessment Office and the faculty are making progress to meet the schedule. AWC reviews academic programs as well as Institutional Departments (Academic and Non-Academic Program Reviews). Each program review consists of a thorough evaluation of the program or support department. Several additional programs have been studied and documented for quality improvement through grants, accreditation of specific programs, and projects.

To help encourage the assessment and improvement of the teaching, learning, and services at Arizona Western College, the Office of Assessment, Program Review, Curriculum and Articulation implemented an Excellence in Assessment Award program which began with the 2013-2014 academic year. The Excellence in Assessment Award was established to acknowledge the efforts of faculty, administrators, and staff who successfully completed well-developed assessment plans and or program reviews. This program has been well received and to date; 113 individuals have received awards for annual assessment plans and 3 departments for program reviews and the program has increased compliance with schedules and requirements. (2016-2017 Assessment Report)

Accreditation for outside agencies requires program review on a regular schedule. AWC completes these program reviews as required and uses data gathered to improve courses and programs. Some of these include National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) which requires review every five year, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) (5 years), National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) (3 years), American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) (8 years) and Arizona State Board of Massage Therapy (5 years). AWC is currently has accreditation with these entities and maintains appropriate program reviews of these programs. (Example: RADTech Accreditation)

The Office of Assessment, Program Review, Curriculum and Articulation is exploring new platforms for institutional assessment and program reviews. The current system, TK20, has many strengths, but it does not perform all of the functions that faculty would like to have in an assessment tool. Despite the numerous training opportunities for TK20, user frustration remains high. Currently, AWC is researching a new platform that will improve the end-user experience and increase assessment activity. AWC will pilot a new electronic system for assessment and program review during the upcoming academic year. Several applications are being examined, especially those with capability to integrate with Blackboard and Colleague. The Assessment office is looking for a smoother, easier, more efficient process for faculty and staff to conduct assessment and report their findings.

AWC has been working diligently to improve its culture of assessment. After the last accreditation visit, AWC joined the HLC Assessment Academy and sent teams to work on assessment. Until 2013, academic assessment was discussed and monitored through the Learning Excellence Assessment Process (LEAP). After that, AWC completed a process with Assessment Coaches representing each division. In 2016, institutional assessment (academic & departmental) was encouraged and monitored through the Assessment and Program Review Office. In 2017, the Assessment Coalition was created, made up of students, faculty, and administrators to discuss assessment across the institution and to educate all on the purpose and benefits of assessment. In 2018, the Assessment Coalition added classified staff and was changed into an official Assessment Committee to discuss, monitor, and assess newly implemented institutional learning outcomes, to educate all on the purpose and benefits of assessment, and encourage students to become agents of their learning by questioning how the learning outcomes are related to learning activities and assignments. AWC continues to

improve its methods and strategy for ensuring documentation of ongoing assessment activities.

4.A.2. Courses at AWC are developed, offered, evaluated, and transcripted using established standards. (Course Approval Rubric) AWC has procedures in place to ensure that lecture courses, lab courses, apprenticeships, internships, and practica follow guidelines for credits (Procedure 601.3). In addition, courses offered via distance follow the same procedures for crediting. Class Schedules

Courses are developed within departments by content area experts and then reviewed through the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee (CC) recommends additions, deletions, and modifications of the College's academic curriculum. The curriculum is processed through the Arizona Curriculum Review and Evaluation System (ACRES).Course Catalog

In order to assure representation of college-wide interests and philosophy, specific entities are represented on the committee. Appointments represent the following entities: faculty members (representative of the academic divisions) the Vice President for Learning Services, the Director of Assessment, Program Review, Curriculum and Articulation, and a faculty member from NAU-Yuma, ASU, and UA as ex-officio members.

Courses are developed in various modalities to meet student needs with careful attention to student learning outcomes and the most effective modes of learning. Course are offered in face-to-face format, via Interactive Television network (ITN), via the internet and hybrid combinations of ITN, and web. The curriculum process ensures that the appropriate number of hours are met and that each course has the same Student Learning Outcomes. (Procedure 601.3)

Course evaluations (assessments) are conducted by the faculty annually. Since 2009, faculty have completed 270 course and or course cluster assessment plans. The average number of course assessment plans completed each year has been 50, and each year the quality of the assessment plans continues to improve. The college continues to develop incentives to promote completion of assessment plans. (2014-2015 Assessment Plans)

The Admissions and Registration office maintains all academic records and ensures courses are transcripted accurately on student transcripts. Transfer Services is responsible for maintaining incoming official transcripts and processing the evaluation of credits. Once reviewed and approved, all evaluations are forwarded to Admissions and Registration for posting.

4.A.3. AWC has policies to ensure that all credit that is accepted meets standards for rigor. The process for accepting credit from other institutions or from prior learning is clearly articulated in the AWC Catalog. To receive credit from accredited institutions, students must submit official transcripts, delivered directly to AWC. AWC evaluates all incoming transcripts of students who have been admitted and enrolled in classes. Students are informed of transfer opportunities at orientation and then once students decide to further their education at a university, transfer specialists help each student with the exploration of degree pathways and specific university agreements with all three in-state universities for a smooth transfer. AWC offers personalized support to all transfer students in various aspects of the transferring process by following specific educational plans, guides, and resources for a successful transition.

Other credit, such as credit for military training or credit from non-accredited institutions is evaluated carefully by the subject matter experts to ensure equivalency before it is accepted. AWC encourages students to use the Prior Learning Assessment process to receive credit for previous

experience and learning. AWC reviews non-traditional education and experience to evaluate whether it may be equivalent to college-level credit. Prior Learning Assessment is learning individuals gain outside of traditional educational classrooms. Individuals may obtain learning in a variety of non-traditional settings such as workshops in the workplace, training through the military or law enforcement, professional certifications, or national examinations. After carefully evaluation, the AWC Transfer Office awards credit for prior learning when it is appropriate. AWC has a Director of Transfer Services who works closely with the AZ Transfer Course Equivalency Guide.

 Prior Learning Assessment methods may include:

- AP
- CLEP
- Special Examination
- Portfolio

A good example of AWC's process in developing and delivering PLA credits is the Border Patrol Academy. Within AWC's Administration of Justice Program, Border Patrol Agents were enrolling in courses to complete degrees. AWC evaluated the training that these agents had already received and developed a course where agents were able to develop a portfolio demonstrating their competencies in required areas. After successfully completing the portfolio, agents are awarded credit based upon previous learning. Thus, the agents demonstrate their knowledge and shorten the time required to achieve the credentials they are seeking. This in just one of many examples where AWC allows students to be assessed for prior learning.

The Prior Learning Assessment process for students and faculty evaluators is posted on the Arizona Western College website.

4.A.4 Curriculum design and the rigor of course content are developed and maintained in the discipline areas while oversight is provided by the Curriculum Committee. Courses are designed around a standardized syllabi template to ensure that continuity and consistency is maintained across all content area disciplines. The faculty are responsible for maintaining and monitoring the prerequisite sequencing for courses, with assistance from Institutional Data, to ensure that students are appropriately prepared in terms of prerequisite knowledge to be academically successful.

Faculty monitor student learning and alter placement requirements and pre-requisites where it is appropriate. For example, the Communications Department changed the cut-scores for developmental writing in 2016. Student achievement was correlated to student outcomes in ENG 80, 90, and 100 (the developmental writing sequence) and placement scores were changed to reflect actual student readiness to complete coursework and the courses themselves were redesigned to meet student learning needs. The evaluation of placement scores, success in courses, and appropriate levels of coursework is an ongoing process. The process evolves as student needs and coursework demands change.

Course quality is maintained by a collaborative process that has faculty at its center. Faculty have the right and the responsibility to determine curriculum and to use appropriate pedagogy, materials, and textbooks to support students in the learning process. Appropriate rigor is maintained by adhering to standard syllabi with the same Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) for each course and maintaining pre-requisites for courses.

Students have access to a variety of appropriate learning resources both on the ground and virtually.

All campus centers offer learning resources and support for online students, learning resources and tutoring is also available virtually.

Faculty are qualified in the appropriate subject area and Human Resources verifies faculty credentials before hiring to ensure that each has adequate qualifications. Documents necessary to verify credentials include but are not limited to: official college transcript(s), employment verification of related occupational experience, state and/or national industry licensure/certification, and any other requirements outlined in the established minimum qualifications. Prospective faculty are then subject to a rigorous hiring process to ensure they meet the academic requirements to teach courses and also meet the level of instructional preparedness required to successfully teach at the college level. (Faculty Credentialing)

Arizona Western College partners with Yuma, Imperial, and La Paz County high schools to offer Dual Enrollment credit for academic and occupational classes. Dual Enrollment courses are held on high school campuses and are taught by high school instructors who have met the Higher Learning Commission and AWC hiring qualifications. The Dual Enrollment Program was established at Arizona Western College to ease the transition from high school to college and to increase the number of college-bound high school students in our communities. The same level of preparation is required for faculty teaching dual enrollment courses as for those faculty teaching through other modalities. (Dual Enrollment).

Documentation of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) from the local high school districts signed by the governing boards are included to demonstrate the administrative control over dual enrollment.

AWC faculty assure all dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to the same AWC course taught through other modalities. Dual Credit courses must use the AWC Division-approved syllabi for the course and all required materials such as text and/or publisher on-line materials. Instructors use the same curriculum and competencies for high school students as those for other AWC students The same standards and guidelines apply as established by AWC. Articulation events happen every year in the spring semester to establish connections between Arizona Department of Education Standards and Arizona Western College competencies.

4.A.5 AWC maintains specialized accreditation for several programs including Paramedic, Fire Science, Massage Therapy, Nursing, Radiologic Technology, and other career and vocational programs. In addition, the AWC Child Development Learning Laboratory is accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). AWC has successfully maintained these accreditations to ensure student achievement. To receive the program specific accreditations, AWC submits required reports and participates in on-site inspections as scheduled for each program in order to maintain their accreditation. Also, in the CAAT area, there are several more programs where AWC maintains accreditation through careful assessment and monitoring of programs. Some include:

ACR: EPA 608

AUT: EPA 609 & Pro Cut; ASE certification test A and L1 series (students are prepared for cert testing but testing is not required by program).

CTM: NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research) Modules in

construction carpentry

DFT: AutoCAD Certified User

ECT: NCCER Modules in electrical

SLR: NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam

TEC: NCCER Modules in construction site safety, 10 Hour OSHA Construction Card & 30 hr. OSHA Construction Safety and Health Card

WLD: NCCER Oxyfuel Cutting module and AWS (American Welding Society) D1.1 Structural Cert. Card

AWC has successfully maintained these accreditations and responded to the requirements of the outside entities offering the specialized accreditation. Nursing, for example, was successfully reviewed and re-accredited in Spring of 2016. The Certified Nursing Assistant Program is rigorously reviewed every two years, in 2010, 2012, 2016 and 2018 and was successfully accredited each time. (Nursing Accreditation)

4.A.6 AWC evaluates the success of its graduates through various processes. First, AWC tracks students receiving credentials and degrees. AWC graduates who transfer to one of the 3 state universities are tracked through ASSIST data (their IDs are protected). Some graduates, such as AWC Nursing, are tracked by employers and how they are doing. Over the past ten years (2008 to 2017), the number of credentials has increased by 88% and the number of degrees by 62%. (10-Year Performance) AWC's graduation rate after six years is higher than the statewide average (AWC, 32%; statewide, 30%). Between 2010 and 2016, the number of students transferring from AWC to an in-state public university increased by 21% to 461. The latest available information from AZTransfer shows that AWC is one of the most successful community college in success rates of students transferring from AWC to Arizona State University. The number of transfer students who earn an AGEC (Arizona General Education Curriculum) prior to transferring remains high. Once AWC's students transfer to universities, 70% of full-time transfers earn a bachelor's degree within four years. This rate is similar to the statewide average and demonstrates that AWC's transfers graduate from Arizona's public universities in a timely manner. (AZTransfer Info, KEY Performance Indicators)

AWC tracks its graduates and transfer students in multiple ways. For example, of the learners in AWC's 2013-14 Occupational Cohort who took a technical skill of end-of-program assessment up to one year after college exit, 91% passed the assessment and/or earned an industry recognized credential. Some of these credentials including Nursing, EMT, Construction, Solar Technologies, and Fire Science. A good example of AWC's graduate success are the consistent results on the NCLEX exam (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses). AWC graduates pass near the national average or just above it consistently. (NCLEX Results)

Information from AZTransfer shows that AWC graduates that transfer to universities in Arizona perform well in their first year of university. In fact, in the two latest years reported, AWC graduates have GPA's that are slightly higher than transfer students from other Arizona community colleges (Junior Year GPA, First Year Performance AZTransfer).

Sources

- 2014-2015 Completed Assessment Plans
- 2016-2017 Annual Assessment Report
- 2017 Academic Program Review Guidelines
- 2017 Non-Academic Program Review Guidelines
- 411-Faculty-Credentialing
- Assessment
- AWC 10-Year Performance
- Course Approval Rubric
- Course Syllabi Arizona Western College
- Dual Enrollment Arizona Western College
- First Year Performance of New Transfers Dec 2018
- Junior Year GPA AWC
- Key Performance Indicators
- NCLEX Pass Rates2017
- Nursing Arizona Western College
- Prior Learning AssessmentArizona Western College
- Procedure 601.3 Modes of Teaching
- Program Reviews Timeline Arizona Western College
- Public Safety Arizona Western College
- Radiologic Technology Accreditation

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

4.B.1 Every course at AWC that is credit-bearing has student learning outcomes that are clearly listed on the syllabi. Faculty then are required to clearly align the goals and content for each course to those outcomes.

Beginning in 2009, AWC attended the HLC Assessment Academy and rigorous engaged with the concepts and principles explored with the Academy. Since that time, AWC has engaged with continuous assessment at a greater level than before participation in the Academy. Based on recommendations from the Academy, AWC has annually assessed General Education Outcomes. Each year a different GE outcome is highlighted to bring awareness to students and faculty.

Every course at Arizona Western College uses an approved syllabus which lists course competencies and outcomes. Each instructor is expected to use the approved syllabus and to align the course with those outcomes. While each instructor is granted the academic freedom to explore topics and assess learning, each is expected to assess students on the approved learning outcomes using a variety of formal and informal assessment measures.The faculty are responsible for program-level and couse-level assessment. SLO's (student learning outcomes) should be approved by all faculty members in the program as well as the academic division's supervisor.

The course-level SLO's are identified on all course syllabi, available on the course syllabi page, and Program learning outcomes are listed on the Degrees and Certificates. Program-level assessment is accomplished both through course learning outcomes that have been aligned with program level outcomes as well as by evaluating students on program-level learning outcomes in capstone courses. (Assessment Annual Report, 2016-17,Completed Assessment Plans)

The Program Review Timeline is clearly established and all Divisions/ Departments strive to follow this timeline. Program Review Committees begin working on a program review in August (Fall) of the designated program review cycle (see below) and end on April 15th (Spring) of the following year. For example, a program review beginning in August 2015 is due on April 15, 2016. Program reviews may be completed and submitted early. The timeline was established to allow academic departments time to finalize those program reviews since most faculty are not available in the summer.

Faculty submit course or program level assessment plans annually using the assessment application Tk20. Since moving to Tk20 in 2012, faculty have completed 253 course and or course cluster assessment plans and 29 program-level assessment plans. Each year the quality of the assessment plans continues to improve as faculty discover more effective ways to use the Tk20 platform to keep track of the Division/ Department Annual Assessment activities.

A good example of process improvement is the Communications Department. Since AWC's last accreditation, there has been a series of activities and progressive steps to continually improve student learning. In Spring of 2009, every program, course cluster, and certificate completed a common assessment matrix. In addition, the English Department began a self-study. Based on the self-study, curriculum was revised to reflect College Writing Program Administration (CWPA) best practices. In addition, during this time, AWC applied for a Title V grant to support development of new curriculum and classrooms to support writing. AWC reviewed student outcomes for writing and revised courses and outcomes. The developmental sequence was revised and the ENG 101 and 102 (College composition) were revised based on CWPA guidelines. In the first year of the developmental revisions, students performed 8% better compared to the baseline. (Steps to Success APR)

As part of the improvements to the programs and processes based on assessment, AWC added a Writing Program Director to the department and established this position to maintain rigor and appropriate outcomes for writing. This position also works with Writing Intensive programs. Training was established for all faculty teaching Writing Intensive courses, and the training was made mandatory. The WPA Director delivers training to WI faculty to ensure that guidelines are followed and outcomes are achieved.

The Communications Department continues to assess and revise curriculum to meet student needs and ensure that outcomes are met. The English AA Program Review was submitted in Fall of 2018 and more improvements to the developmental sequences will be piloted in Spring of 2019, including an enhanced reading/writing course designed to improve student literacy and readiness for college level composition.

Part of the grant to develop writing at AWC included tutoring service improvements. The Student Success Center served nearly 6,000 writing students in Academic Year 17-18. These students have consistently better outcomes than students who do not visit the SSC. (2017 Assessment Report)

The AWC Assessment Committee was established to encourage the assessment of teaching, learning, and services at AWC by creating opportunities for individuals to discuss, document, and share assessment results and the changes being implemented based on the results. A coalition was developed and approved late in the spring of 2016. Based upon the success of the coalition, the coalition was formed as a formal committee. The Assessment Committee has students, faculty, staff and administrators as its members.

The Assessment Committee has a mission statement and specific goals. The mission statement is: The Assessment Committee is dedicated to providing support, resources, and opportunities for faculty and administrators to discuss, conduct, and share thorough, thoughtful, critical analysis and reflection of student learning and services provided at Arizona Western College and to encouraging students to become agents in their own learning.

 The goals are in line with institutional assessment values and HLC requirements. They include:

- Supporting and sustaining a culture of assessment,

- sharing information about assessment practices of curricular, co-curricular, and institutional services and developing a shared language and demonstrated understanding of assessment on campus,
- surveying faculty, administrators, staff, and students on their understanding of assessment and current assessment efforts,
- providing opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the value of learning and assessment, and
- providing opportunities for professional development on departmental goals and learning outcomes.

The Assessment Committee consists of faculty, staff, administrators, and most importantly, students. Regular meetings build a collaborative environment for assessment and continual improvement at AWC.

4.B.2 AWC's co-curricular programs are scheduled in the regular cycle of program reviews and are encouraged to complete annual assessment plans on both student learning and services provided. Since encouraging co-curricular programs to conduct annual assessments of student learning and services in 2013, 49 co-curricular annual assessment plans have been completed. More recently, even more of the programs in Student Services have assessment plans and complete program review. Nearly 100% of Student Services programs participate in assessment activities. Both the Veteran Services and the AccessABILITY departments were awarded an Excellence in Assessment award for their program reviews in 2016 and 2017.

4.B.3 AWC uses its Institutional Definition of Student Learning Outcomes to drive its courses and programs.Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) are statements of observable and measurable student performance which provide the foundation for the assessment of student learning. "Students will be able to ..." statements define what a student will be able to do at the end of a learning activity, course, or program, whereas Institutional outcomes (or goals) are statements of observable and measurable services provided by a department. They define how well a department is meeting the stakeholders needs.A Student Learning Outcome is a brief statement of what a student will know and be able to do. A Student learning Outcomes can be at the Course Level or Program Level.

> **Course level outcomes:** what students know and can do at the end of the course
> **Program level outcomes:** the aggregate knowledge and skills of the entire degree program.

As faculty and staff complete assessment measures on both courses and programs, they are required to identify the areas where changes are recommended. The recommendations for change on each of the assessment plans help drive improvements for student learning. The foundation of AWC's assessment is Learning-Centered Values. With that concept at the core of assessment**,** Arizona Western College expects its graduates will demonstrate competency in critical inquiry, communication, civic discourse, quantitative analysis, scientific literacy, and digital literacy. Rigorous and consistent assessment is required so that curriculum can be adjusted to ensure that the student learning outcome that AWC is using will ensure that its graduates demonstrate expertise in their selected fields of learning. Faculty use Juried Assessments, Portfolios, Curriculum Mapping, and Course Evaluations to name some of the activities to assess student learning. AWC uses Institutional Benchmarks to assess student learning outcomes for Quantitative Analysis and Writing in the Discipline (Writing Intensive -WI).

Over the years, assessment plans have led faculty to not only identify needed changes in teaching and learning, but they have utilized the assessment process to close the loop on assessment by evaluating

the recommended changes. The 81 Excellence in Assessment awards that have been awarded to faculty over the past several years is a testament to their dedication of data driven assessment to improve student learning.

AWC uses grants to drive many of the improvements to student resources and curricular offerings. AWC selectively competes for grants that meet student needs for curriculum and program development. Faculty develop grant proposals to seek support to improve outcomes for students. AWC uses baseline assessment data. Based on student outcomes and gaps in student achievement, AWC has written grants to improve services and outcomes. For example, the CCRAA grant looked at gaps in student learning in mathematics. AWC was awarded a three-year (2009 to 2012) grant to improve facilities and redesign math curriculum. The Math Center was created and since then, over 4,000 individual visits per academic year have occurred (Accutrak Annual Reporting). All the levels of developmental math were re-designed as part of this grant. The grant provided funding for more lab hours and support, which improved student outcomes. (CCRAA APR 2012)

Another example of using assessment to drive programs is the Business Department. The most recent program review recommended creating one business degree with areas of emphasis and eliminating the other majors. This change aligns with transfer programs in the state and allows students to tailor their programs to the requirements of the four-year programs in the state. The department responded to the recommendation and made the changes to the program. AWC also received a grant to improve opportunities for students in Computer Informatics and Business Analytics. Part of the proposal explored ways to improve student outcomes and remove achievement gaps.

4.B.4 At the core of AWC's teaching and learning process is instructional excellence. Arizona Western College established the Center for Instructional Excellence in October 1990 with Title III Grant funds. The CIE was established on the belief that individuals, departments, and institutions have unlimited capacity for professional growth and development. This core value is essential as AWC utilizes its process and methodologies to assess student learning, use the results to improve pedagogical methodologies, and improve student learning outcomes to enhance the student's educational experience. . The CIE dovetails with AWC's Office of Assessment to use data generated by assessment to improve student learning across the whole Institution. The faculty is substantially involved in the CIE and its processes. (Center for Instructional Excellence)

AWC's Office of Assessment oversees assessment, program review, and other curricular areas. This office creates an environment for faculty growth by encouraging impassioned teaching that will lead to student learning that encourages higher orders of thinking and performance, advocates the free exchange of ideas, and is responsive to changes in technology, delivery structures, and markets. The Office of Assessment provides multiple opportunities throughout the year for training that assist Faculty, Administration, and Staff to participate in the assessment process. In addition, there are numerous other committees and groups which engage faculty and other instructional staff members in the process of assessment. Some of these groups include the General Education Committee, the Writing Intensive (WI) Subcommittee, the Curriculum Committee, and advisory committees for various programs. These groups allow faculty and other staff members to engage in meaningful processes to evaluate outcomes, and participate in and review institutional processes and methodologies.

Sources

- 2014-2015 Annual Report
- 2014-2015 Completed Assessment Plans
- 2016-2017 Annual Assessment Report
- Assessment
- CCRAA Final APR
- Center for Instructional ExcellenceArizona Western College
- Course Syllabi Arizona Western College
- Curriculum and Articulation Arizona Western College
- General Education
- Policies and ProceduresArizona Western College
- Program Reviews Timeline Arizona Western College
- Steps to Success APR
- Writing Intensive (WI) Courses Arizona Western College

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

AWC commits to improvements in retention, persistence, and completion rates. There have been significant improvements in these areas in the last ten years, and AWC ranks first and second in the state in several categories. (See 10-year Performance Indicators 2007-2017.) AWC is committed to even more improvement including closing the achievement gaps in diverse groups. AWC added Key Performance Indicators in 2017 as an active and visual way to ensure that progress is being made. This information includes 3-Year Graduation Rates, cumulative transfers, Student Retention, and Retention and Completion Indicators. Using this information, AWC makes decisions that drive success indicators and continually improve the institution. AWC Students perform extremely well when compared with students from other community colleges in Arizona. (AZ Community Colleges AZ Transfer December 2018).

4.C.1. AWC has stated goals for retention, persistence, and completion. Despite the fact that AWC's rates for retention and persistence are high, AWC continually works to improve these key metrics. AWC revised its mission to reflect a visionary focus on students and the community. The goals are attainable and AWC has shown with its ten-year trends that it is making remarkable progress in improving student achievement. Since School Year 07/08, AWC has increased student success (students receiving grades of A, B, C, Cr or I) by 9% to 78% which is the highest rate of success to date. In addition, the withdrawal rate has declined 10% to just 6% over the ten-year period. (AWC 10 Year Performance).

AWC has programs in place to address student completion and success. Advisement Services at Arizona Western College provides a variety of academic recovery programs and services that assist students who are on academic probation, returning from academic suspension, or are at academic risk.   The goal is to support students and equip them with tools and skills to become more engaged in the pursuit of their goals.

Once students are placed on Academic Probation, they must make an appointment with an Advisor to

create an Academic Improvement Plan and sign an Educational Contract (see attachment) where the student commits to following the instructions outlined in the contract.

Academic Restart

When students complete the contract, they are automatically enrolled in the Academic Restart program which includes at least three meetings throughout the semester with their Advisor. The students receive biweekly or monthly reminders of important deadlines and campus resources available to support their educational goals, and Peer Mentors call them to remind them of their appointments. Below is a summary of the numbers of students who have been in Academic Warning, Academic Probation and Academic Suspension over the last three semesters as well as the numbers of those who enrolled in Academic Restart.

AT THE END OF:	SPRING 2015	FALL 2015	SPRING 2016
# OF STUDENTS IN WARNING	904	892	*457
# OF STUDENTS IN SUSPENSION	43	73	58
# OF STUDENTS IN PROBATION	204	105	*470
# OF STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC RESTART THE FOLLOWING SEMESTER	**(FALL 2015) 107**	**(SPRING 2016) 58**	**(FALL 2016) 251**

On average, about 60% of the students who participate in Academic Restart raise their semester GPA above a 2.0. Many of them continue to be on Probation until they are on good academic standing.

To provide additional support for students who are struggling academically, AWC 101 is offered every semester in the Yuma and South campuses. Students in Academic Probation are highly encouraged to take the class, but are not required. It is common for these students to have full-time jobs and/or family commitments and course availability does not work with everyone's schedule. The class has been taught over the last three semesters; 10-12 students are enrolled every semester in Yuma and 20-25 in South County.

AWC 101 is designed to assist students in developing and enhancing common study skills and qualities needed for college success, including: time management, note-taking, test-taking strategies, critical thinking, reading, memory techniques, learning styles, utilizing college resources, discipline, motivation. Students reflect on their own behaviors, expectations, and attitudes to build effective academic strategies.

4.C.2 AWC tracks data and trends in retention, persistence and completion rates with a singular goal of improving outcomes for the students. Each semester, the Institutional Research office collects and analyzes data and produces reports that are widely distributed and used throughout the district to inform decisions. In addition, AWC uses these metrics to compare its success to other institutions across the state. Goals for retention, persistence, and completion are issued from the Vice Presidents

for Learning Services and Student Services' offices. The information is also communicated through the Key Performance Indicators, displayed on the website and updated regularly.

In Fall of 2018, AWC adopted Guiding Principles for Learning and is aligning those with a Guided Pathways models that will allow students to achieve outcomes and obtain credentials.

4.C.3 AWC uses the data on retention, persistence and completion to improve its practice and sets goals through the Vice Presidents for Learning Services and Student Services' offices. AWC maintains its high standing in the state with these findings, which are also compiled by the Arizona community college presidents. AWC collects data on retention, persistence, and completion and strives to improve practices and better serve students.

AWC has several programs such as Talent Search and CAMP that boast high retention and persistence rates through their high-touch strategies and effective leadership. AWC has used the data from these programs to build scalable versions of these interventions that can be rolled out to the greater student population. For example, the Matador Mentor program, started in Spring of 2017 assigns a mentor (faculty or staff) to each first time/full time student. The mentor reaches out to offer support and answer questions. In addition, AWC is working on scaling additional support to all students by using these programs as models for adding peer mentors, Supplemental Instruction, Wrap-Around services for students, etc.

4.C.4 AWC's methodologies for collecting and analyzing data are of the highest standards. AWC collects data in various settings and for various purposes. AWC has an active and effective Institution Effectiveness, Research and Grants Office (IERG) that maintains the standards for ethical collection and use of data. AWC collects student artifacts, uses blind juried assessments, and uses test scores and aligns course outcomes to assignments.

AWC maintains adequate controls over the privacy of student data and collection of academic data. Artifacts that are collected for assessment have student names redacted so that privacy is maintained while vital assessment information can be collected.

Sources

- AWC 10-Year Performance
- AWC Strengths NCCBP
- AZCC 2016 Student Progress and Outcomes Report
- Fall 2018 Standard Reports (as of census day)
- First Year Performance of New Transfers Dec 2018
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Key Performance Indicators
- KEYS Program

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

Arizona Western College works to create a deep culture of ongoing and meaningful assessment of all students' learning experiences and to use the data and insight to continually improve. AWC will continue to make progress on the ambitious goals of a pervasive culture of assessment. (AWC Assessment)

Although engaging all faculty in assessment continues to be an imperfect process, AWC's efforts to increase the participation of faculty and staff in assessment activities are encouraging. AWC promotes a data-driven look at the quality of the teaching, learning, and services at AWC. The AWC Assessment office continues to explore new assessment and program review applications to not only improve the assessment process but to make the assessment and program review process more purposeful and easier for faculty and staff to engage in.

AWC values and rewards participation in the assessment process. The Office of Assessment and Program Review supports the College Vision by providing college-wide leadership in assessment, program review, and the collection of the educational data. (GE Assessment Report) These informational services enhance the college's culture of evidence and assists administrators and faculty in data-driven decision making at all levels of the college. We are dedicated to accessibility, communication, and innovation. AWC has instituted a popular reward program to honor and value faculty and staff who have meaningfully contributed to the assessment process. The honorees are given a special medal and thanked for the important contributions to ensuring that our students are learning and that programs are performing the way they should.

Sources

- Assessment
- GE QA Assessment Report

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

Arizona Western College has teaching, learning, and serving its community at the center of its mission. AWC provides open access to exceptional higher education to the communities residing in Yuma and La Paz counties. (AWC Strategic Outcomes Report) Planning for improvement and allocating resources to achieve objectives that fit in the mission are at the heart of AWC activities. AWC invests in fiscal and human resources that help to meet objectives and align with its mission. Within the last several years, AWC has improved its efforts to ensure that technology infrastructure will carry AWC into the future and provide the means to achieve objectives.

Arizona Western College has a financial resource base that sufficiently provides funds for its current educational programs. AWC plans for the future and will have sufficient funding going forward to meet current needs as well as expand and enhance future programs and initiatives. AWC's primary function is and will continue to be delivery of instruction for students in the service area and the allocation of resources will continue to reflect that focus.

5.A.1. AWC is funded through two primary sources, tuition and local property taxes. It also receives limited state aid based upon FTSE. In the past, state aid was a significant source, but its share of the funding for AWC has declined in recent years to a point where it is approximately five percent of the total of budgeted revenue. AWC has been able to adapt to the decreases in state aid without increasing taxes and tuition that would harm students or local property owners.

AWC stays in compliance with primary tax levy limitations based upon assessed values contained in the Levy Limit Worksheet. AWC is a good steward of its resources and responsibly maintains programs and services for the residents of the service area.

AWC is very strategic in competing for grants. AWC has been awarded over $70,000,000 over the last 10 years and has been able to strengthen the institution and programs for students, improve facilities, add programs, and assist high-risk students. AWC continues to seek grant funds to ensure that funding enhances AWC programs (AWC Grants).

AWC is also responsible to its communities and careful with resources. For example, in August of 2017, AWC announced to the public that was providing a 2.4-million-dollar rebate on the secondary bond levy. The surplus was created by careful use of reserve funds. The burden to the taxpayers will be one half of what it would have been. AWC works hard to provide value to the communities it serves and to be a good steward of the resources the communities provide through tax levies.

AWC provides the appropriate technological resources to students and faculty. AWC is committed to provide a technology rich learning environment for students. As indicated, AWC has sought grant funding to provide cutting edge technology for students. Examples include the new Informatics Center in the San Luis, Arizona campus and the robotic welding system in the Career and Technical area of Yuma Campus. AWC maintains computer labs and student connectivity. In the last ten years (2007 to 2017) AWC added ten computer classrooms or labs and has updated aging technological infrastructure across the campus. Wi-Fi connectivity went from barely adequate to good, particularly for students on campus, and plans are in place to move from good to excellent with additional improvements to the network backbone by 2019, including modern storage capability, more bandwidth, and increased fiber and cabling.

In a multi-site campus, it is always a challenge to provide adequate technology resources to remote areas; however, AWC proactively addresses these challenges. For example, in San Luis, Arizona, a campus location near the US/Mexican border, AWC has built two additional computer classrooms, a new Tutoring Center (with computers), the Informatics Center with two computer classrooms, Interactive Television classrooms, and a connection to the University of Arizona was opened in January of 2018. In addition, laptops and additional connectivity were added to the Somerton Campus Location; ITN capabilities and computer access were added to the Wellton Center; and a building in Parker, Arizona (a campus location in La Paz County) was renovated to add classrooms and technology. AWC is committed to providing technology and support to all its constituents in spite of the difficulty serving a large, rural area.

In 2017, AWC created and hired a new position, the Chief Information Officer (CIO). The primary objective of the new CIO is to develop AWC's technological infrastructure to align with AWC's strategic plan of modern, innovative technology for both teaching and learning, as well as in providing technological tools for staff as they provide services to students. AWC's aging network needed to be modernized and several key areas were obsolete. AWC wanted to provide an exceptional experience using technology for its students, not just an adequate one. The CIO oversaw the renovation of key technology infrastructure and continues to work closely with academic leadership to make the most of limited resources while providing required technology.

The Technology Plan engaged key leadership and other stakeholders in the Technology Advisory Committee to prioritize projects. AWC Information Technology Department increased Wi-Fi in the classrooms and outdoor areas. It evaluated Wi-Fi needs on campuses other than the Yuma campus and provided additional Wi-Fi to the San Luis Middle School campus (now the San Luis Technology

Institute) and improved Wi-Fi to the Wellton campus. In addition, old storage networks were replaced, and some key data was moved to the cloud for better back-up abilities. Video-conferencing technology was researched to evaluate specific needs and pick the right resource for each need.

An example of an important project during this transitional time was the student email project. AWC student email had been running on an outdated system for the last several years. AWC needed to find a better tool for students, soin January of 2018, the student email system was migrated to Microsoft 365. This upgrade allows students to view and respond to mail on their smart devices and offers calendar sharing and other appointment capability between students and teachers. Students have access to a suite of tools, including document editing, document sharing, presentation creation, and others.

AWC has provided other technology resources for students over the years. AWC has three radio and two television stations where students can learn about media, broadcasting, journalism, and other related areas using industry standard equipment and technology. AWC has a modern robotic welding lab and state-of-the-art automotive technology center, and has recently opened an Informatics Center. AWC's is committed to providing the technology students need to earn degrees and be successful in careers.

Other technology systems were upgraded to reflect current needs and changing equipment. For example, the information management system for the college was updated to Colleague in 2014 and moved to cloud hosting to provide a better experience for users, more support, and improved tools to perform key processes. In 2018, AWC upgraded the Colleague software to a more up-to-date version to provide an even better experience for users.

AWC will continue to focus on the technology infrastructure, carefully planning and allocating resources annually to ensure that AWC technology is cutting edge.

Another way that AWC is meeting the needs of students and faculty fiscally was the establishment of the Dreams to Reality Endowment. This endowment allows funds to be used for student scholarships and faculty development. The AWC Foundation manages the million-dollar plus fund and allocates the earnings from the fund for students and faculty.   Funds are used primarily for student scholarships, but funding is also available for faculty development. Students who might not qualify for other scholarships can be funded through this endowment. The endowment will grow and allow AWC to continue to support student scholarship and meritorious faculty training even in times of diminishing financial resources.

 AWC hires and trains highly qualified faculty and staff to meet the needs of students. Personnel is the largest and most important AWC expenditure. As reported in the 2017 IPEDS data, AWC employed 136 full-time faculty and 445 full-time staff. In addition to the full-time faculty and staff, AWC employs 578 part-time staff and 261 part-time faculty.

AWC faculty salaries are competitive to help attract and retain quality faculty. Several years ago, a salary comparison was done, and AWC ranked very low in comparison to the other community colleges within the state of Arizona. AWC leadership, including the president and the District Governing Board, made the decision to strategically increase faculty compensation to align salaries with the other state community colleges. Through a series of increases which carefully targeted only faculty (and faculty by years of service specifically), AWC faculty compensation moved to the middle of the range of colleges within the state. The goal is to recruit and retain excellent professors by being competitive. AWC is also gradually increasing the lab loading equivalency to provide a 1 to 1

lecture, lab ratio to provide equity for professors who teach lab courses. (Compensation Schedules)

The Human Resources Department budget contains funds for staff development and training. All new hires, as well as returning faculty and staff, receive adequate training. In addition to the funds allocable from the Human Resources Department, individual departments have funds budgeted for the purpose of Professional Development in their specialized areas. AWC ensures that resources are available to meet these needs.

The Human Resources Department is sufficiently staffed to meet AWC's needs for acquiring and retaining the necessary personnel. HR uses several systems to help manage the information it processes in the office such as Cornerstone for recruiting and hiring, Colleague to manage human capital and maintain the payroll database, and Webadvisor to provide pay, W2 information, and leave tracking for employees.

In 2018, HR worked with academic leadership to improve the process of load sheets and faculty pay. A paper-based, handwritten system was replaced with a more automated system. HR is currently working on taking this to the next level from a hybrid model to a fully-automated process that will eliminate multistep tedious processing and speed payments.

AWC has adequate resources to maintain its physical resources. AWC's physical resources are managed by an experienced facilities management team. The Facilities Management Department is dedicated to providing an attractive, clean, accessible, safe, and well-planned educational environment to facilitate campus activities and support the mission and goals of the institution. Satisfactory customer service is an essential component and goal of the department.

The AWC Facilities Management Department (FM) consists of over 50 full and part time employees tasked with providing custodial, groundskeeping, maintenance, and repair of all equipment and facilities on all AWC campuses. FM maintains over 725,000 square feet of building space throughout Yuma and La Paz Counties. The principles of environmental sustainability are central to all facilities activities, and by integrating these principles into all aspects of its operations, planning, and policy, AWC enhances its role as a leader within the greater community. Facilities sets an example of responsible environmental stewardship through its ongoing commitment to incorporate sustainable practices into its daily decision-making processes and support resource conservation, reduction of waste and pollution, recycling, minimizing our environmental footprint, and investing in the local community.

AWC's physical resources are adequate and well-maintained. AWC faces a unique challenge in that locations are spread across 15 location/campuses in the 10,000 square mile service area. Students at the widely spread campus locations receive comparable service and each location's needs are met. As of July 2018, AWC created a new position, Dean of Campus Locations and Academic Resources to focus on equitable services to all locations and provide operational support. The hub of AWC is the Yuma campus, but services and instruction are available throughout the service area. Within the town of Yuma is also the Downtown Center which offers academic classes as well as continuing education and workforce training. In addition, AWC has a strong presence in the southern part of Yuma county with the San Luis Learning Center (including the San Luis Technology Institute, a recently renovated hub for informatics at the San Luis Middle School) and a center in Somerton including a new classroom at the Somerton Town Hall. AWC has a center in Wellton, Arizona, providing services to the residents in the eastern part of Yuma County including Wellton, Tacna, and Dateland. This center uses Interactive Television Network services to connect with the Yuma campus and other campuses and provides vital services like testing, academic advising, and outreach

to K-12 students. In the neighboring county, AWC houses the Parker Learning Center and the Quartzsite Learning Center. AWC maintains and protects its physical resources by providing leadership and support to all locations.

5.A.2   The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity. Over 64% of AWC's total budget is used to provide instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships. The remaining portion is used for operations and maintenance. (Financial Reports, FY 19 Budget)

AWC has an annual budget process where funds are carefully allocated to support priorities and instructional needs. The Governing Board oversees the budget process to ensure that funds are provided to support needs across the service area.

STRATEGIC PLAN

AWC's strategic planning process, vision, and mission were announced after a year and a half effort to engage the community and stakeholders. Over 2,500 people participated in the process to develop the plan. AWC has well-crafted, measurable, and attainable objectives that are aligned with its budget and mission.

5.A.3 The goals incorporated into mission statements and elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

AWC conducted an 18-month process to engage the community and stakeholders, rewrite the mission and vision, and create a strategic plan that is aligned with that mission and vision. During this process, over 2,500 people including faculty, staff, students, the community, and other stakeholders participated. AWC developed a mission that engages all of its constituents and the vision aspirationally looks to bring equity to the region and help eliminate poverty. The pieces of this plan were carefully aligned with attainable, yet far reaching objectives to increase student attainment, increase partnerships, and become more flexible. All of the objectives are grouped within four areas: Prosperity, Agility, Accessibility, and Technology. Using this framework, goals were developed that are attainable and realistic, yet stretch AWC's capability to help students achieve educational goals. One of the keys of this process is to tie the strategic plan to the budget. If AWC has an objective or a value, it allocates budget dollars to them to ensure that it achieves goals or mandates. For example, the president established the goal of putting students first and creating an amazing student experience. Then, budget dollars were allocated to creating student "sticky spaces," where students can engage with each other and connect with AWC. Charging stations, student friendly furnishings, and appealing spaces were created. The goal of the student experience was backed up with funding. Another example are the Innovation Projects. Dr. Corr, with approval from the Board, put out a call for proposals for creative projects to improve the student experience. The funded projects are exciting, student-focused, innovations that are already having an impact. (Innovation Projects, Student Town Hall).

5.A.4 The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained. AWC adheres to all applicable fair hiring practices. All positions are authorized through AWC's Cabinet and approved by its Governing Board.

AWC's recruitment information and announcements include clear and detailed information of skills, knowledge, and educational qualifications to meet all credentialing requirements. All recruitment

postings include a job description identifying knowledge, skills, abilities and educational requirements to teach and/or work for Arizona Western College.

One of the most important aspects of hiring at AWC is attracting and retaining qualified faculty. AWC follows procedures for credentialing faculty and abides by all HLC guidelines. All faculty credentials are periodically reviewed to evaluate changes such as new degree attainment or new requirements within a discipline.

To more fully prepare new hires to be successful at AWC, a new process now requires all new-hires (part-time, student employees, staff and faculty) to attend New Hire Orientation (Effective March 2017) that provides comprehensive information. This includes, for example, a welcome from the president, College Mission & Introduction, Campus Safety, Respectful Environment, Campus Life, Policies and Procedures, Ferpa, Data Privacy, Payroll, Travel, and benefits.

Beyond this training, there are several other training opportunities for faculty and staff every year, including but not limited to: Supervisory training, Faculty orientation, and Professional Development day. (Center for Instructional Excellence)

There are also focused technology and other instructional trainings including Camp Yuma, a week-long technology training focusing on technology for teaching online. This training is required for all new faculty and available to 10 to 15 continuing faculty every year.

5.A.5 AWC has a responsible and well-managed plan for budgeting and monitoring expenditures directly tied to the Strategic Plan. As part of the Strategic Planning Process, AWC recommitted to allocating budget based upon its goals and strategic vision, ensuring that funds are allocated where needed to meet objectives.

The budget is administered through the Administrative and Financial Services Departments at AWC. Financial Services oversees the general accounting functions, including the preparation of all College budgets. This office also reviews grant proposals for budgetary soundness, monitors and assures contract compliance, and oversees Travel and Grants Accounting. Annually, all personnel responsible for budgeting and expending resources review the current year budget and the allocation for the upcoming year. They make recommendations and indicate needs for the areas they oversee during this process. Funds are allocated based on annual objectives and priorities and all special projects are adequately funded. Different levels of positions are assigned appropriate spending and approval limits per purchasing policies. All purchases, irrespective of the sources of funding, are governed by the regulations and procedures outlined in the purchasing manual.

AWC has a well-defined purchasing system to identify the goods and services required for district operation, as well as to select and procure them as economically as possible within acceptable standards of quality.

Purchases are made through a purchase order system or with purchasing cards. Training is required for all who use these systems to ensure compliance with the purchasing regulations and requirements and maintaining control over budgetary responsibility.

Each employee responsible for purchasing and budgeting has access to Colleague where budgets, purchases, account balances, and justifications are available. Purchases are approved at the appropriate levels and control is maintained over expense. Personnel adhere to approval processes, and the District Governing Board approves large purchases. The Board discusses and approves the

annual budget, and the administration provides monthly fiscal reports.

Sources

- AWC 2017 Stategic Vision Outcomes Report - AWC
- AWC San Luis Informatics Campus
- AWC_Purchasing_Manual
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- Center for Instructional ExcellenceArizona Western College
- Compensation Schedules Arizona Western College
- Dreams to Reality
- Financial Reports
- FY19_Adopted_Budget
- Human Resources
- Institutional Effectiveness
- IPEDS_Human_Resources_Data
- Student-Focused Innovation Projects Bring Great Ideas to Life Across District
- Technology Plan
- Town Hall-AWC Student Experience

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

5.B.1 AWC has an active and committed District Governing Board. The board is elected with representatives from geographic areas. The Board consists of five members who meet monthly (except for July). Special meetings are called as needed. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution. It provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The Board is actively engaged and updated regularly on college achievements and challenges. Board members often attend campus events and are well known on the campuses across the service area.

The Governing Board is responsible for the annual budget and for providing oversight of the president. During the monthly meetings, the Board is informed by the president and representative groups from the AWC community including faculty, students, business services, and others.

5.B.2 AWC has policies and procedures that are published on the AWC website and available to the campus and the community. The institution employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance. There is a Policies and Procedures Committee that meets regularly for updates and to vote on changes and additions. AWC follows the policies and procedures related to specific groups and situations in the governance of the institution.

All college procedures and policies have been updated with district-wide input within the past year involving faculty and staff ini the appropriate areas. Departments were consults for input, and issues, for example the procedure for Academic Freedom, that involve the faculty, were discussed with the Faculty Senate.

5.B.3 Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort. Key to all initiatives is seeking input from the students. The President of AWC has driven a Student First focus, developing a hashtag #studentsfirst which is promoted in at all events. The Student Government Association was actively involved in developing a more student friendly schedule webpage. They also advocated for more student seating, lounge areas, and charging stations. Providing this student-friendly space helps to connect students to the campus locations and

in turn, make it more likely they will complete coursework. Other initiatives with student input have included a Welcome Center on Yuma Campus, a Home Away from Home at the San Luis Learning Center, a new Student Center in La Paz, and student-designed seating areas near the entrance to the AWC Academic Library. (Innovation Projects) The president is a key part of this process. He meets monthly with the SGA president and speaks with different groups of students about a variety of issues.

Beyond the students, the president seeks input from other groups. He meets with the faculty association and the classified committee regularly. Thus, constituencies from different groups and different locations are involved in decision making.

Sources

- District Governing Board
- Office of the President Arizona Western College
- Policies and ProceduresArizona Western College
- Student-Focused Innovation Projects Bring Great Ideas to Life Across District

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

5.C.1 AWC has consistently been a good steward of its resources. It has been fiscally responsible in managing public funding for the public good. In spite of decreasing resources from the state, AWC has carefully planned and budgeted to remain fiscally sound.

Under the direction of new leadership in 2016 and 2017, AWC began a strategic planning process to improve its stewardship of the resources and the way it allocates funding to align with mission and priorities. AWC developed a new mission, vision, and specific and ambitious objectives working closely with the communities it serves to meet needs. A major part of this process is aligning budget to vision and objectives. (Strategic Plan Booklet)

Part of this process involved a Strategic Innovation fund. AWC's president, in coordination with and with the support of the board, designated $185,000 to be spent on projects and initiatives that support and align with the mission. There was a competitive process and funds were allocated to projects that align with AWC's priorities. It was open to all AWC faculty, staff, and students.

Some of the projects include:

- AWC Welcome Center
- San Luis Home Away from Home
- KAWC Border Radio Project
- Business Incubator Project
- Student Seating & Charging Stations
- American Indian Student Recruitment
- Writing @ AWC
- Art Garden Beautification Project
- South County Ambassador Program
- Parker Student Engagement Fund
- Mobile Mini-Makerspace
- South County Mentoring Program

These projects foster innovation and support student engagement and learning. In addition, they demonstrate AWC's commitment to allocate dollars based on its priorities and mission.

Another exciting project was a collaboration with District 1 (Elementary School District) to provide an inclusive special needs preschool classroom. The collaboration between AWC and District one provides more services to the community and provides students in Early Childhood Education with additional opportunities.

The focus of all of these projects is student success and innovation. For example, the Welcome Center provides students and campus visitors with a friendly welcome and a clear starting point to what can be a frightening task – enrolling in college. The project included sprucing up of the entrance of the 3C (the building on campus where Student Services is housed) with furniture, digital signage, and attractive spirit graphics. Kiosks with tablets and/or computers are available for perusing the website, applying for admission, activating accounts, etc. The Welcome Center will be fully staffed with employees from the Outreach & Recruitment team, student workers, and student ambassadors. Visitors can stop in for directions, ask questions, check in for a campus tour, and get started with the enrollment process before being guided upstairs to complete next steps.

The San Luis Home Away from Home will welcome its students with spaces to interact and engage with the campus; providing multi-functional student friendly spaces to accommodate students during their down time on campus is in the best interest of our students. Dedicating areas on campus for student engagement while they are not in class can create an atmosphere that encourages students to develop friendships and a sense of community. These areas also provide faculty with a welcoming space to host student centered events such as, poetry nights (ENG), student speaking contests (ESL), Drawing and painting displays (ART), technology demos (CIS) and more. This provides multiple departments and disciplines an excellent location to engage with students.

Parker Learning Center also had funds available to welcome and engage students with the Parker Student Engagement fund. Again, these three examples demonstrate AWC's focus on allocating budget to the initiatives it prioritizes.

5.C.2 AWC engages in planning within academic units, departments, and areas of operation to carefully expend funds to achieve the mission of the college, provide support and resources to students, and maintain operations at the level required. This planning includes a yearly review of all budgets by those employees with responsibility and oversight over the funds. The review contains a process to change allocation of dollars and request additional funds to meet student needs. The review process was designed to ensure that funding was not simply rolled over from one year to the next, and that new and developing areas and programs were given appropriate funding.

Another planning initiative is the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP). The SEP is an integrated, district-wide enrollment plan to sustain long-term enrollment growth to meet the educational needs of the citizens of Yuma and La Paz counties and maintain Arizona Western College as a comprehensive community college. During the last ten years, AWC's enrollment planning mainly occurred within the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, an active group of faculty/staff working to manage enrollment trends and foster growth. However, as part of the Strategic Vision, the committee evolved into the SEP. During the Fall of 2017, the committee added members from different parts of the college and subcommittees to gather data and explore enrollment trends. As of Fall 2018, the trend of diminishing enrollment has stabilized, thanks in part to the work of the SEP. The work has shifted from a tactical to a strategic, multi-faceted approach to provide students the courses they need, when they need them, and optimize enrollment. We have dashboard of Key

Performance Indicators to monitor progress to be able to evaluate success of the new process.

5.C.3 Until recently AWC used a College Wide Objective process for working on initiatives throughout the service area. Constituents from the entire district, including representatives from different campuses, work groups, students, and the community, compiled lists of objectives based on college priorities. After the lists were narrowed, the AWC District Governing Board adopted and supported the objectives. Progress and results were reported to the board and the constituents of AWC through a series of town-hall meetings and electronic communication. However, as a next step, the Strategic Vision aligns all objectives to a broader mission and allocates funding that supports the vision.

AWC has expanded on this process and engaged in a strategic planning process to take planning and allocation of resources to a new level.

 5.C.4 AWC collects data carefully and purposefully to use in planning for enrollment needs and revenue sources. AWC's budget is planned annually on realistic projections of student enrollment.

AWC produces a fact book annually with a thorough compilation of key data and indicators. The fact book explores trends, growth, and helps in the decision-making processes, from grant writing to budget planning, course scheduling, and resource allocation.

AWC works closely at the state level to understand and plan for changes in state appropriations. Since Arizona has cut support for community colleges down by a significant amount, AWC does not rely on state allocations to meet its needs.

5.C.5 AWC has a history of planning, using various models, including College-Wide Objectives, a 5-year strategic plan, and Vision. The plan, adopted in 2018 is a Strategic Vision, aligning goals and implementation strategies through 2035. AWC is committed to thorough planning and has undertaken an even more strategic process that aligns the budget carefully with the objectives and future projections as well as complying carefully with guidelines and regulations. As part of this process, a new position was created, the Vice President of Advancement (VPA). This position drives the attainment of the Strategic Vision and Plan. The VPA mobilizes implementation teams to ensure that the vision becomes reality.

AWC carefully analyzes demographic shifts, anticipating changes in student needs and student demographics. For example, AWC's ten-year demographics show marked shifts in student populations. Hispanic student population has increased while others have decreased. This is a reflection of nationwide trends of an increasingly diverse population. AWC wears its designation of Hispanic Serving Institution with great pride and plans for the future with this population in mind. AWC has recently pondered what it means to be a Hispanic Serving Institution, working to ensure that the culture and heart of the institution meets the needs and reflects the values of the students AWC serves.

Globalization is another exciting opportunity for AWC with its location on the Arizona/Mexico border. AWC has formed partnerships with educational institutions to the south, creating possibilities for students on both sides of the border to expand opportunities in a world where borders are less relevant to industry, commerce, and technology. Arizona Western College provides a global experience for students, faculty, and staff. The college signed an agreement, together with the state universities, to work with seven universities in Baja California and Sonora, states in Mexico that border Arizona. Through a mega-region initiative supported by cities within its district, AWC has

supported education initiatives through faculty and student visits with its colleagues in Mexico such as a sponsored entrepreneurial startup weekend where students from both the United States and Mexico worked together on ideas for startup businesses. This initiative, called 4FrontED for the four borders involved, has enabled faculty and staff to share best practices in programs and work with students. This will allow AWC to have additional opportunities for enrollment and growth in the future.

Additionally, AWC commits to providing current and state-of-the-art technology to its students. AWC has 11locations with computers and specialized labs, and maintains an extensive Interactive Television Network to allow students and teachers to connect across its large service area. Maintaining the network and infrastructure for technology over such a large geographic area is a difficult task. AWC recently added the position of Chief Information Officer to its technology organization to leverage the many qualified technicians and engineers the institution has. AWC wants to ensure that there is always an overall plan to accommodate shifting technology needs and provide solutions. AWC has been successful in modernizing network hardware and Wi-Fi connectivity as well as keeping labs and classrooms operating at the levels required for rapidly expanding technology.

AWC has strategically pursued grant funding to add technology resources. For example, AWC received 8.5 million dollars of funding in three separate awards to create engineering facilities and degrees such as automotive technology labs, welding degrees, and other needed technological equipment. This funding allowed AWC to fulfill student needs for technology as they learn in the classroom and pursue degrees that will lead to successful employment in an increasingly technology driven world.

Most recently, AWC received funding to create a state-of-the-art Informatics Center (the San Luis Technology Institute opened in January of 2018) housing technology and connections to other campuses and to the University of Arizona. Students in San Luis will be able to pursue degrees in this emerging field of Big Data and Information and compete globally in high tech fields. Careful planning to seek outside funding that aligns to current and future technology needs has allowed this exciting project to happen. San Luis is a growing community on the Arizona/Mexico border with a student population eager to engage with technology. The AWC San Luis Learning Center is a hub of learning for that corner of the state, and students are eager for new opportunities. This project provides opportunities for partnership with schools and industry in Mexico using the innovation possible with big data and analytics. The community is very supportive of this project and it is just one more example of the ways that AWC has pursued opportunities for growth in technology and expansion in one of its key growth areas.

Sources

- 2016-2017 FACT BOOK
- AWC San Luis Informatics Campus
- AWC_Strategic_Booklet
- Strategic Enrollment Planning Final Report Sept 2018
- Strategic Planning
- Student-Focused Innovation Projects Bring Great Ideas to Life Across District

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

AWC develops metrics and collects data used to make decisions, serve the students, and wisely use resources. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Grants serves the Arizona Western College community by providing the most accurate information possible for decision-making, overseeing research, and pursuing external funding in support of institution-wide initiatives.

To promote transparency and the sharing of key information with all stakeholders, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Grants (IERG) publishes up-to-date data and reports on the AWC web site. The standard reports, the Institutional Research Plan, Fact Books, Institutional Performance Data, College Employee Satisfaction Survey, Peer Comparisons, and Workforce Information are all readily available. In addition, IERG presents information and summarizes key data for the Board, Faculty Senate, President's Council, Academic Leadership, and other internal groups. This information provides appropriate personnel with access to tools and data to make decisions and better serve students.

Student input is often sought. Students have the opportunity to provide feedback using course evaluations, following the guidelines for faculty evaluation. Students also provide important information using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) which is administered every other year. The results of this survey are widely discussed and information is used to make decisions and better meet student needs. (Summary of SSI Results)

Personnel at AWC are evaluated using informal feedback and a formal performance evaluation process. (Policy 440, Employee Evaluation). There is day-to-day informal feedback and guidance between supervisors and employees at all levels of the campus, and there is also a formal process followed annually. This process is a regularly scheduled written review that is directed out of the Human Resources Department.

AWC collects and analyzes data, such as IPEDS data or Title IV data, to improve outcomes and processes and provide required reports to various entities. In addition, AWC collects data to study and measure performance and look for ways to improve. For example, student satisfaction is surveyed in every online course and the Distance Education Department looks for trends and areas for improvement. The information is compiled and disseminated to teachers and division chairs and training is developed focusing on areas that have been identified by the students. Other examples include student focus groups, inclusion of students in committees (such as the Assessment Committee) and solicitation of student ideas for innovation projects. For example in the 2018 Innovation Project, students proposed developing more student "Sticky Spaces," which included seating and charging spaces in key locations including in the Learning Resources Building, which enhances student connection to learning spaces. In the 2019 projects, students were approved to

develop a food pantry for food insecure students.

5.D.2 The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts. Arizona Western College regularly collects data and performance metrics that relate to student satisfaction and student success including the Student Satisfaction Inventory, course level evaluation by students, student focus groups and student participation in campus committees.

Sources

- 2017-2018 Institutional Research Plan
- 440-Employee-Evaluation
- Arizona Western College - SSI (Western) - 11-2016
- CESS_Main_Report_Fall_2013
- Institutional Effectiveness
- IPEDSDFR2017_104160
- Student Satisfaction Inventory

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Summary

Arizona Western Colleges has the physical, fiscal, and personnel resources needed to support its current and projected programs and to continue to support its mission. As evidenced by the recent Institutional Strategic Planning process, AWC is committed to realistically and thoroughly evaluating the needs and resources of the community,students, and college to ensure that the needs and resources align. AWC is committed to making decisions on how to wisely and responsibly use its resources to serve the community and provide educational outcomes. (Financial Reports)

AWC has a well-skilled faculty and staff and has a process to review existing positions and fill new positions to support new programs or initiatives. AWC ensures that all faculty are qualified following HLC and AWC internal guidelines. Faculty Roster

AWC has evaluated its facilities, some of which are new or recently remodeled. Other facilities need attention, and AWC has planned carefully to meet the demands of the campus and community with appropriate resources and buildings. There is a Facilities Master Plan with careful scheduling to ensure that all facilities in need of attention are adequately maintained. In addition, AWC continues to plan for new or remodeled facilities in the future.

AWC has always had a culture of shared governance and adheres to appropriate policies and procedures. In recent years, AWC has strengthened those systems, planning more carefully and bringing in voices representing all campus constituencies. It has re-evaluated processes to ensure that they are relevant, modern, and reflect current needs and future plans; it has aligned those systems and groups with the budget, allowing AWC to intentionally allocate resources to meet priorities and needs. AWC enjoys its place at the center of its communities and works to promote prosperity and achievement.

Sources

- Financial Reports