

Arizona Western College - AZ

HLC ID 1868

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Visit Date: 2/4/2019

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Context and Nature of Review

Visit Date

2/4/2019

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance
- On-site Visit
- Multi-Campus Visit (if applicable)

- Federal Compliance 2018

Institutional Context

Arizona Western College is a public community college serving the counties of Yuma and La Paz in Arizona. The college was established in 1963 and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Serving roughly 11,000 students, the college offers approximately 100 academic programs and certificates awarded through 27 administrative departments. Students may choose to plan a transfer program that will articulate to the state universities (three located on the Yuma campus), or students may complete technical programs leading directly to employment. The college also serves students and the community through a variety of non-credit offerings and community partnerships.

Although the campus located in Yuma, Arizona houses administration, courses are offered in a variety of locations throughout the two counties. Students may complete courses at one of the eighteen sites or via distance learning, and many courses are offered through dual enrollment or early college where high school students may earn college credit at a reduced tuition rate.

The District Board of Governors are elected by region and serve six year terms. The college president reports to the Board and assigns responsibilities to the various division leaders (the Cabinet). Faculty oversee the curriculum and provide instruction in the classroom, via the ICN, at various locations, and through online course offerings. Students with time and place constraints have access to many of the same support services as residential students.

The college grants a number of degrees and certificates, including: Associate of Arts, Associate of Business, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies, Associate of Applied Science, and Certificates of Proficiency. Through partnerships with Arizona universities, students may continue their education on the Yuma and San Luis campus to earn a bachelor's degree.

AWC serves an increasingly diverse student body, including a number of international students. In order to encourage student success, the college offers a number of support activities including tutoring, career planning, and advising. Programs like TRIO, CAMP, and Jump Start Saturday work to engage students with the campus culture and learning processes while supporting diverse student needs, especially first generation students.

Involving a variety of community groups and stakeholders, the college developed a new mission statement in 2017 that was presented to the community in January 2018. The new mission and vision development process was inclusive and worked to build upon the previous mission while recognizing the changing dynamic of the college community. The mission and vision are core to the new strategic plan established in 2018, and together, the mission and plan drive the budget and the actions of the college personnel.

Interactions with Constituencies

Cabinet: President, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, Vice President for Advancement, Vice President for Learning Services, and Executive Assistant to the President

Assessment Committee: Administrative Assistant to Vice President for Advancement, KEYS program manager, Student Leadership, Modern Languages Division Chair, Writing Program Administrator, Student Success Center Coordinator, Science Division Chair, Director of Assessment and Curriculum, Faculty (3), Student (1)

Strategic Planning: Faculty (2), Administrative Assistant to Vice President for Learning Services, Vice President for Advancement, Interim Director of Student Leadership and Activities, and Director for Center for Instructional Excellence

District Governing Board (lunch): Board Members present (4), Board Member on phone (1), Reporter for the Yuma Sun, and Executive Assistant to the President

Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Grants: Director, Instinct 2 Grant; Dean Campus Locations and Academic Resources; Technical Research Analyst; Professor of Family Studies and Psychology; Institutional Grants Coordinator; Office manager, Analytic Specialist; Database Manager & Research Specialist; IRB Chair; and Vice President for Advancement

Criterion 1 and 2: Administrative Assistant for the Vice president for Advancement, Associate Dean of Downtown Center Services, Associate Dean of La Paz County Services, Dean of CTE, Senior Secretary--CAMP, Curriculum Specialist, Financial Aid Director, Director of Marketing & Communications, Workforce Assistant Student Representative, Associate Dean for South Yuma County Services, Vice President for Advancement, Student Success Center Coordinator, Dean Campus Locations & Academic Resources, Vice President for Finance & Administrative Services, Human Resources Specialist, President, and Professor of Chemistry

Criterion 3 and 4: President, Vice President for Advancement, Vice President for Finance & Administrative Services, Dean of Campus Locations & Academic Resources, Professor of HVAC and Division Chair, Director of TRIO programs, Program Specialist (2), Career & Academic Advisor, Director of Transfer Services, Professor of

Economics, Professor of Family Studies and Psychology, Interim Conduct Officer/Director for Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility, Professor of English, Director of Assessment--Program Review--Curriculum--Articulation, Assessment and Program Review Specialist, Division Chair of Modern Languages, and Professor of Administration of Justice

Faculty Open Forum: Full-time Faculty (9) and Adjunct Faculty (1)

Classified Staff Open Forum: Staff and Administrators (43)

Community Forum: 49 attending

Student Forum: 62 attending

Criterion 5: Human Resources Specialist, Grant Specialist, Dean Campus Locations & Academic Resources, Retired Director of Financial Services & Controller, Director of Admissions/Registrar, Faculty, Strategic Content/Social Media Specialist, Director of Facilities Management, Director of Financial Services & Controller, Social Sciences Division Chair, President, Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, Chief Information Officer, Institutional Grants Coordinator, Database Manager & Research Specialist, and Administrative Assistant to the Vice President for Learning Services

Extended Leadership Team: Associate Dean for La Paz County, Associate Dean of Continuing Education, Chief Information Officer, Co-Division Chair for Mathematics, Coordinator of Physical and Wellness Education, Creative Director, Dean of Academic Resources & Campus Locations, Dean of CTE, Director of Admissions and Registrar, Director of Career & Advisement Services, Director of CIE, Director of Communication and Marketing, Director of Diversity-Inclusion-and Accessibility/Interim Student Conduct Officer, Director of Facilities Management, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Financial Services/Controller, Director of Health Care Programs, Director of Institutional Advancement, Director of Purchasing, Director of Risk Management, Director of Testing Services, Director of Transfer Services, Director of TRIO Programs, Director of Television Services, Division Chair for Communications, Division Chair for Science, Division Chair of Business & CIS, Division Chair of Modern Languages, Division Chair for Social Science, Interim Director of Housing, Interim Director of Student Leadership and Activities, Director of Rad Tech, Police Corporal, Administrative Secretary to Campus Police, Graphic Designer, President, Director of CAMP, Fire Director, EMS Director, and Dual Credit/Early College Program Manager

Additional Documents

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[IT Ethics form](#)

[Board Conflict of Interest policy](#)

[Transfer Credit policy](#)

[Sample MOU for Dual Credit](#)

[Course Outlines](#)

[Credit Hour policy](#)

[Faculty Credential Files](#)

[Course Outlines and Syllabuses](#)

[College Catalog](#)

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

Arizona Western College has gone through a recent strategic planning process that included an extensive review and revision of the mission, along with the development of vision and value statements. The process was inclusive and involved many stakeholder groups, including community members, students, faculty, and staff at many locations. As noted through the team questions to several involved with the mission revision process, the college needed to update the language in order to reflect their actual commitment to students and to the communities served. The District Governing Board approved the new mission and vision statements, and the statements were introduced to the public in January of 2018. As noted in the strategic plan and supporting documents, the college has defined the mission as the guidepost for the future, and four guiding principles were adopted as core to guiding future planning and actions by the faculty and staff. The team members were all impressed by the transparency and inclusive nature of the process which was clearly lead by the relatively new president, just in his third year at the college.

The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

A review of the evidence provided in the Assurance Argument and supplemented by the website and catalog substantiate the claim that AWC operates as a mission driven college and delivers a range of educational programs to meet the needs of a diverse student body. Although the college is providing curriculum and degree opportunities at several sites and through a variety of delivery methods, the

academic programs are consistent with the mission and are reflective of the educational goals/needs for students/community.

AWC offers evidence that the support services match the college mission and provide students with a full range of services throughout the recruitment, enrollment, and completion process. These services include advisement, financial aid, career services, veterans' services, tutoring, and disability support services as well as programs for special populations. The college also seeks to actively engage students through community involvement, clubs, and athletics.

The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

Arizona Western College aligns the mission with the planning process as demonstrated through the adopted 2018 Strategic Plan, newly completed. The college annually reviews budget and resource allocations to ensure congruity with the mission, vision, and values, and several groups interviewed described the budget process as "plan driven," a generally new process for the college. Through the use of a variety of committees and subcommittees, the college is addressing goals within the Strategic Plan in an inclusive and focused manner. Although a newly defined process of inclusion, supported by the new president, is a change in culture, the college now clearly engages stakeholders in the annual budget development and review process. As noted in the Assurance Argument, "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." Several college members interviewed noted that this process is only in its first complete cycle; however, the employee reactions to the process are positive with a demonstrated engagement from personnel in many departments.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

Documentation provided within the assurance system, supplemented by the AWC website and published materials made available throughout the Yuma campus, provides evidence that the mission statement and accompanying vision and values statements are readily available in a variety of formats to students, faculty and staff, as well as the community. The newly revised mission statement process described in the supporting strategic planning materials notes that the college purpose is widely known within the region and state. The college personnel have clearly made a commitment to living the mission and vision through the planning and implementation process. More importantly, the college leadership has defined the mission as the guiding statement for all systematic processes and activities at the institution. The question: "how does this relate to our mission" guides the decision making process as demonstrated in the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

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.

The college mission and supporting statements are readily available to constituents through a variety of publications. Although the mission, vision, and values are the guiding statements for the college, the 2018 Strategic Plan addresses current or newly developed strategic directions: Agility, Technology, Accessibility, and Prosperity. These strategic directions were created through a comprehensive process which included both internal and external constituencies. The plan defines the college focus through 2025 and presents a framework to guide the successful completion of goals related to regional support and student success. Although the goals are in place for the next several

years, college administration noted that the plan was developed to be "fluid and flexible" in order to address unanticipated needs or new directions that would benefit the college mission.

The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

The mission identifies the college commitment to their constituents: "Transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities." Core to this statement is the intentional focus on developing thriving communities within the region. The nature and scope of programs offered at AWC reflects the value of the relationships the college builds with students, staff, and faculty, as well as the diverse communities served throughout the 10,000 square mile service area. Consistent with higher education programs, the mission inherently recognizes the changing diversity within the community and student population as well as the importance of keeping tuition and fees reasonable to ensure open access.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

The demographic composition of the region's community is reflective of a multicultural society, and the college has welcomed this cultural complexity as a value to the college community. AWC notes appropriately in the Assurance Argument that the college "serves diversity of culture and ethnicity as well as diversity of thought and manner of expression." Recognizing this important role in society, AWC has promoted and celebrated the diversity of their students and employees. Roughly 80% of the student body are students of color. In addition, AWC has sought to increase the number of International Students studying on campus as well as the number of AWC students who study abroad. These experiences are mission relevant and enhance the college role in a multicultural society.

The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

A review of the demographics of the student body indicates that the college student population has changed over time. As an Hispanic Serving Institution, AWC joined a project with the Foundations for Student Success in 2017. "The project is exploring equity in college education and gaps in attainment between different groups." (As stated in the Assurance Argument) In addition to this work, the college has sought new relationships with colleges and universities in Mexico. During the team visit with criterion one participants, members present acknowledged the relevance of the mission when considering the constituencies served. Students attending the open forums were quick to note that the services provided to all students were beneficial and promoted student success at all levels. The multicultural composition of the college population was viewed as unique and beneficial to the learning and development process.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

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.

As noted previously, the communities served were invited to forums to provide input to the mission revision and planning processes. College personnel as well as the District Governing Board members noted the challenges with serving roughly 10,000 square miles over two very diverse counties, including tribal lands. Core to the mission and values of the college is serving the community need. During the team meeting with community members and partners, several speakers provided very specific examples related to the value and benefit of the college to the community, both educationally and economically. Clearly, the college believes in the importance of serving the public good and demonstrates this commitment through actions and community involvement.

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.

Arizona Western College focuses effectively on mission, vision, and values as the college assumes responsibility for a clearly defined educational purpose. The college does not generate money for investors or other interests, and the college is not a part of another organization with a "parent" relationship. As a public community college, the purpose is to serve the public good throughout the communities represented by the college region. To do so, the college offers career and technical education, transfer credit programs, and non-credit learning opportunities as well as a variety of community events.

The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

As noted during the community forum held during the team site visit, college partnerships are

valued and appreciated by community members. Speakers from businesses who hire graduates noted the ability for the college to adapt to new industry needs through curriculum and instruction changes. Partner universities noted the benefits of having a presence on the Yuma campus and the ability to serve students planning to transfer prior to their completion of the AWC degree. Public educators noted the significant cost savings to high school dual enrolled students and the value of this opportunity while still attending high school where all the related support systems are in place. These presenters noted that college personnel are at the table when conversations about the economic future of the region occur, and the president was often cited as an important voice for both economic stability and future growth within the region.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Evidence

The strategic planning process was clearly inclusive and worked to affirm the language for the new mission and vision for Arizona Western College. The college was very purposeful in the approach to developing the mission, vision, and values statements in order to ensure transparency and inclusion. College personnel met with community members throughout the region to seek their input and to ensure that the strategic plan would serve the needs of all the diverse communities and business partners, not just the Yuma metropolitan area. This inclusion was clearly appreciated by the governing board as well as community members.

Being proud of the work completed throughout the mission and planning process, the college has articulated openly and consistently the importance of these guide posts to the future of the college. The financial stability, as describe in Criterion 5, allows for flexibility and innovation at the college. In fact, the college established an innovation fund where faculty and staff could apply for dollars to support a new effort that is mission relevant. The Welcome Center was often cited as an example of how this mission relevant funding source has allowed for progressive changes to help support student recruitment and engagement.

As noted through the site team interviews, AWC is clearly mission driven, and all faculty and staff interviewed confirmed this philosophical and practical commitment. The governing board are equally proud and committed to the mission of AWC.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Arizona Western College prides itself on transparency in decision making, new initiatives, and systematic processes. The President, administrators, and departments on campus have regular, open office hours to be available to employees and students. As was apparent throughout the team site visit and consistent with the Assurance Argument, the college has taken great measures to address past concerns by students that the college was not receptive to their concerns nor did they solicit their input. Speaking with employees and students, a true transparent, open culture now exists at AWC, and both groups expressed that they felt concerns and opinions were taken seriously when shared with AWC staff, faculty, and administration. Several provided examples where actions were taken based on this open feedback.

Financial information about the college is readily available on the website, including budget reports, audited financial statements, and fiscal transparency data reports. Prior to the Board approving the annual budget, the budget is made available to the public for inspection, and a public budget hearing is held prior to the final adoption of the budget. The Board also reviews monthly expenditures and other financial information on a monthly basis. Audits for the last four years (FY15 to FY18) have documented no significant findings other than two internal control findings related to Information Technology. The college then took action hiring a new administrator and contracting with a firm in January of 2018 to address the issues for IT findings. The college continues to work on this improvement process. Two compliance findings were also noted relating to failure to approve a new location with the Department of Education and issuance of awards to non-eligible recipients. The college immediately reviewed their financial aid procedures and addressed the findings to be in compliance.

The college has established processes to ensure academic program integrity through curriculum development, course approval, program review, and other assessment processes. Courses are articulated through State Task Forces to ensure AWC students have the same learning outcomes as students at other community colleges in Arizona. AWC also submitted evidence that their students succeed at a higher rate in licensure and certification exams in some of their career and technical

programs, and that transfer students are prepared to enter and complete and baccalaureate institutions. Academic integrity from a student perspective is outlined in 2.E.3 through the Student Code of Conduct document that outlines expectations and consequences for academic dishonesty. The college addresses student records integrity with the Student Record Confidentiality Procedure 545.1 and complies with FERPA requirements.

Employees are governed through a variety of policies and procedures: Employment of Relatives Procedure 401.2, Background Check Examination Procedure 402.5, Code of Ethics for Employees Procedure 403.1, Faculty Appraisal Procedure 440.2, 440.3 Classified Employee Appraisal, and Employee Conduct procedure 462.1. The Procedure Manual indicated a handbook is kept. An Employee guide was located with a revision date of July 2010 which may be somewhat outdated. The college should review and update handbooks and guides on an annual basis to ensure they are up to date with current information, even when much of the information may not change. The value of the review itself has much benefit and ensures currency as well as accuracy. AWC has processes in place for the filing of grievances when fair and ethical standards are not being met. The college reports a less than 1% grievance rate in their human resource data.

Arizona Western College has a Board approved policy manual and administration developed procedure manual. Recently the college began a review of their procedure manual to update as necessary. A review of several policies revealed that all policies state the President will develop a policy. A review of procedures made it appear that some policies are embedded in the procedure manual and some procedures don't necessarily list procedures to be followed: for example the Faculty Appraisal Procedure 440.2. In speaking to staff, they were able to articulate the procedure for faculty evaluations, which is handled by the Center for Instructional Excellence. The college should review its Policy and Procedure Manual to have policies and procedures clearly developed and published in an accurate manner.

AWC has several auxiliary functions such as the bookstore, food service, housing, athletics, and the police force. Food service keeps prices as reasonable as possible, generally operating at a slight loss in order to keep food prices affordable for students. Independent construction personnel work under the direction of an AWC facilities administrator and meet all state and local codes.

The Board is governed by Arizona Statute 15-1445, duties of district governing boards. The Legislature of the State of Arizona has provided the basis for conflict of interest for Board members and is referenced in the Board's bylaws.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Arizona Western College operates a comprehensive website that is accessible and navigable for potential students, current students, area industry partners, employees, and the public at large. In 2016, the website was updated for better mobile viewing and the inclusion of several PDF documents for download, recognizing that many of AWC's students operate with less than optimal Wi-Fi or other internet service. AWC also added a self-service module to its online portal to further assist students with planning and scheduling. A "Parents Guide" section of the website has a wealth of information including academic opportunities, academic resources, campus safety, financial information, housing and dining, health and wellness, orientation, and student support.

The online catalog allows individuals to view current and past catalogs, and catalog addendums. The catalog contains general information; financial aid, scholarships and grants information; student services and activities information; general education philosophy information; academic programs; course information; a detailed faculty listing; and campus maps. Program details, tuition costs, fees, class schedules, admission, and graduation requirements are readily available online and in the catalog. Tuition and fees were easily found and clearly listed for potential and current students.

Arizona Western College offers two information sessions for potential and new students: "Discover AWC" and "Experience AWC". These sessions provide information to potential and new students regarding the various degrees and certificates available at AWC, the importance of placement/test scores, how to build a schedule, how to register for classes, and an introduction to various digital services provided by the college.

The accreditation section of the website is well developed with a significant amount of information available to all respective groups related to the institution's accreditation status and relevant processes. Specialized accreditations such as Nursing, Radiologic Technology, and Automotive are clearly identified in college materials, including on their website.

In addition to the website, Arizona Western College has an active public relations office who publish a vast amount of information about the college through various outlets including television, print, social media, and radio. One publication found easily on campus and prominently displayed in businesses throughout the community was the Registration Guide. This publication provides very useful information to new or current students including a campus map, college checklist, tuition and fees, accessibility information, and advising services.

During the visit, the team affirmed that several AWC employees are very active in the local community and thus the college has a very visible presence in the communities it serves. As noted previously in Criterion 1, college personnel take to heart the college's mission of "Transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities". Community members, faculty, staff, and students referred to AWC as the "hub" of their community.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The Arizona Western College Board consists of five voting members with geographic representation of the college's service area which includes two counties. The Board meets once a month and as necessary.

The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

Board minutes and discussion with Board members indicates that the Board's deliberations consist of discussion and action on the priorities of AWC. Discussions focus on, among other topics, financials, new curriculum, and agreements with external agencies. Board minutes also reflect that the Board regularly receives reports from the President, Student Services, Learning Services, Public Relations and Marketing, Faculty, Classified Employees, and the Student Government in order to facilitate its decision-making abilities. During the meeting with the Board, the team was impressed by the commitment to represent each sector while supporting and maintaining the integrity of Board service to the college.

The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

The President routinely asks personnel from Student Services, Finance, and Advancement and Learning Services to provide a report, update, or spot light for the Board each month at their regular meeting. During discussions with the Board, many noted that significant discussions occur prior to any action in order to ensure they are making decisions that are in the best interest of the students, college, and community served.

The Board considers the interests of not only internal agencies but also external constituencies such as action in February of 2017 to approve a 2.4 million dollar rebate on a secondary bond levy,

making the burden to their local taxpayers half of what it would have been. The decision to affirm the administrative recommendation to reduce dual credit tuition to \$25.00 in order to insure access for all groups is another example.

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 Board follows Arizona State Statute regarding conflicts of interest. In speaking to the Board and administration, conflicts of interest are avoided through a practice of ethical oversight, and the board adheres carefully to the state statute. All approval items are carefully vetted by the President and administration to review for potential conflicts of interest. Each Board member reports any potential conflict and abstains from voting on such items.

The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Policy, Board minutes, Board Bylaws, and comments from Board members clearly indicate that they delegate day-to-day management of the college to the administration and academic matters to the faculty. Board members expressed great confidence in the college President, administration, faculty, and staff to lead the institution and serve the needs of students and the communities. During the team visit, faculty confirmed that they set their own schedule, design their own course content, and that the college is currently working on a shared governance model.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

Arizona Western College has adopted an Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure (625.1) along with a code of conduct which is published in the Faculty Handbook in an effort to ensure “freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.”

Students are also encouraged to explore new ideas and ways of thinking through clubs, student government, the college radio station, and meetings with the president. As detailed in 2.A, the president hosts several town hall meetings throughout the year, and students are asked to attend and present. A process exists to allow students to establish new clubs by creating a club charter, securing a club sponsor who is an AWC staff or faculty member, preparing a constitution, and submitting all documents for review and approval by college personnel.

Faculty members confirmed that they have academic freedom in their classroom related discussing their discipline content areas as well as in terms of collegiate research and the publication of such results.

The college has made great strides in the last two years to break down silos and create an environment where all feel comfortable in voicing their opinions, concerns, and ideas. Faculty, staff, and students shared with the team a recurring theme of inclusion and freedom to express their opinions and ideas. Several groups noted the President's Town Hall meetings are not just a presentation but rather an open discussion where differing ideas and open dialogue are encouraged and valued.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Arizona Western College has relevant policies that guide faculty and students in the pursuit of knowledge and research.

The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.

Research is not a primary focus at Arizona Western College because it is a community college; however, AWC does have an active Institutional Review Board (IRB) to protect the rights of human subjects in research. The IRB administers required training for researchers to ensure all comply with established guidelines. The college has adopted policy and procedure 627.1, Research Involving Human Subjects, that provides guidelines for all research conducted at AWC. Administration and several key personnel monitor and review potential areas of scholarly practice where additional review or approval may be necessary. These processes allow for students to pursue their work with guidance and oversight, ensuring compliance and consistency.

Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

AWC's library is the main provider for information to students on the ethical use of information resources. An online training program, Raise System for Academic Integrity, is also utilized to educate students about the ethical and legal use of materials. Workshops are also held at multiple campus sites for students and faculty, and library staff work together to increase awareness of proper citation applications by discipline and publication purpose.

The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Students are expected to complete their own work, and the Student Code of Conduct has clear guidelines for academic integrity and the consequences for academic dishonesty. Each course syllabus also clearly addresses academic dishonesty and references the Student Code. Students who engage in dishonest academic work are subject to action by the instructor, or potential administration officials. Continual cases of academic dishonesty are referred to the Dean of Students by the faculty

member via an Incident Report process. The Dean then begins the appropriate academic dishonesty process in order to investigate completely and assure consistency and equity in the application of policies.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Evidence

Arizona Western College, through its policies, procedures and processes, assures integrity on the part of its Board members, administration, faculty, staff, and students. AWC presents itself clearly and openly to the students and public and should be commended for their actions intended over the course of the past two years to improve communication and transparency. The Board has broad oversight as demonstrated in their minutes and affirmed through team discussions with the Board. The team was also assured and confident that the Board delegates day-to-day operations to the administration, and the faculty are responsible for all academic matters. Faculty revealed no concerns with academic freedom at the institution, and those who attended various meetings affirmed that this commitment was genuine and meaningful. AWC has a well developed process for reviewing potential research projects both at the administrative level and through the official actions of the IRB.

Meetings conducted on campus with the President, Administration, Faculty, Staff, and Students indicated satisfaction with the integrity of the system as a whole. The team is confident that the college functions ethically and in a responsible manner.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

The 2018-2019 AWC College Catalog in association with its addendum (*updates since the catalog was published*) provides general program requirements (pp. 60-62) along with performance objectives and metrics. Individual associate degrees, certificates, and programs specify objectives and descriptions that are appropriate for associate degree and certificate levels of study. Faculty and administration are responsible for program reviews which are based on a published cycle available on the college's website. Faculty are also responsible for curriculum consistency at other locations, and they provide oversight to all course offerings, with any modifications to either programs or courses going through the Curriculum Committee. Both Nursing and RT have current external accreditations while other programs adhere to industry standards and technical career associations. AWC actively participates in a state-wide articulation taskforce, and evidence of their students' preparation and success after transfer is readily available via the college website.

The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

Learning goals are clearly designed to meet the curricular needs of a community college, and AWC only offers associates degrees and certificates. All AWC Associate degree programs meet higher education standards and are easily transferable within the Arizona University System, and beyond. Students can access courses from transfer universities on-site at the Yuma campus or online, and

students have the additional advantage of easily transferring to one of the three embedded universities with a presence on campus: Northern Arizona University (NAU), Arizona State University (ASU), or University of Arizona (UA).

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's Distance Education Department regularly reviews all online course offerings [new and revised] utilizing an internal rubric to assure compliance with internal standards, and this department also offers support and training to online faculty utilizing a variety of forums, workshops, and individualized training by faculty members or the department group. The college has recently implemented online navigation standards for its Blackboard online course offerings as well having instructors compile a time requirement checklist for all online course activities and assignments. Course offerings in all modalities utilize the same syllabus, text book, and have the same course objectives. AWC closely monitors its ITN (Interactive Television Network) course offerings for quality through equipment training, engagement strategies, and best practices. Dual credit instructors have their credentials reviewed using the same criteria as all other discipline faculty at AWC.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

AWC's General Education program and coursework are appropriate for the college mission and at the associate degree level as evidenced by its combined offering of workforce and transfer degrees and its alignment with statewide initiatives for transferability. Specific degree and course distributions among these areas are guided by the articulation agreements with the Arizona state universities which have a close partnership with the college.

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.

The college's general education component focuses on several areas (including Critical Inquiry, Civic Discourse, Digital Literacy, and Quantitative Analysis), with a writing intensive component for specific degrees. The GE curriculum aligns with the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC). The common GE program adequately prepares the student for transfer, and this success is

illustrated by the tracked, strong academic standards of its students who achieve baccalaureate degrees at Arizona universities. The stated purpose and alignment are clearly delineated through materials available on the web and described in the Assurance Argument.

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.

As described in the Assurance Argument, each year the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) selects one the institutional/ graduate outcomes, on a rotating cycle, by sampling artifacts from selected GE courses for faculty review and analysis. The courses have been reviewed by faculty through curriculum mapping, and the process indicates that learning outcomes are embedded in the course objectives. Enrolled students assigned work is sampled in order to monitor and determine the success level and mastery for the selected objective. Every degree program requires completion of the GE core, while most certificates require an appropriate subset of the entire GE core. The GE course outcome assessment process needs to be more fully implemented and become more in compliance with stated internal assessment practices and policies of the institution. As shared through team interviews with the Director of Assessment and involved faculty, the current assessment process only involves a few faculty and no adjunct faculty are encouraged to contribute to the GE assessment process at this time.

The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

The college actively promotes and celebrates diversity on all its campuses, and these concepts are effectively demonstrated through student clubs and organizations and frequently offered cultural awareness fairs. In addition, various themed events, guest speakers, workshops for both faculty/staff and students, and academic symposiums are available on the campuses and locations. The college clearly celebrates the diversity of its student body, its international student program, and its multicultural region that provides many experiences for students and community members.

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.

As a community college, the mission supports student learning and community engagement; however, opportunities for scholarship and the discovery of knowledge are encouraged and supported by administration. Internships and community partnerships allow students to experience hands-on training and diverse workplace environments. Overall, the faculty and staff create an opportunity for students to discover knowledge appropriate for real-world situations which involves research, cultural awareness, and scholarship.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

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.

The college utilizes 125 full-time and 261 part-time faculty to support the institution's instructional needs with a student to faculty ratio of 19:1 as reported in IPEDS and the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP -85th percentile nationally). All full-time faculty are required to serve on a variety of standing committees, strategic plan objective teams, or other work groups as needed. Full-time faculty are contractually obligated to teach 30 load hours per year with an additional 10 hours per week engaged in: curriculum development, program reviews, or other related academic functions. During the site visit, some faculty noted that some faculty were teaching loads far greater than 30 credit hours per year. Examples provided the team included small classes necessary for degree completion. Administration should ensure that faculty have reasonable loads that allow them time to participate in committee work, planning, and general education assessment.

All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

The visiting team sampled a variety of full-time instructor qualifications via HR records and official

transcripts and found all to be in compliance with the HLC standards (i.e., Masters' degree with 18 credit hours in the subject area . AWC has been granted an extension until 2022 to have all dual enrollment instructional personnel in compliance with these standards. The college has a clearly defined credential review which is included as part of the hiring process.

Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

The faculty evaluation processes are under the oversight of the Center for Instructional Excellence (CIE). All continuing college full-time faculty are evaluated once every two years, after their three-year probationary period, by their respective division chair, utilizing a standardized "Faculty Evaluation" tool.

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.

The CIE oversees the on-boarding of new faculty members with a week-long orientation including training in the college's SIS (Student Information System - Colleague) and online learning environment. After on-boarding, the CIE conducts annual workshops and provides training resources in various areas to improve faculty instructional technique. Additional professional development funds are available within academic divisions and are frequently used by faculty and staff. Many support personnel are available beyond normal hours to conduct training sessions and offer various support to both full-time and part-time faculty members.

Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

The Faculty Handbook policy requires that all full-time faculty hold a minimum of 5 hours per week of consistently scheduled office hours intended to provide student assistance in educational matters. Many AWC full-time and part-time faculty hold additional office hours in AWC's Center for Instructional Excellence to make use of the additional resources available via this space and department.

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.

AWC provides students with consistent support services at each of its locations. The Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, and Parker locations are staffed by full-time academic advisors, financial aid advisors, career advising services, and also offer new student orientation; other locations utilize faculty and fully-trained part-time advisors for these support activities. Most personnel in these various areas are encouraged to participate in nationally recognized organizations and also to utilize the regularly scheduled professional development workshops and training sessions.

The college requires a regularly scheduled assessment and program review for each support service office/department.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

From recruitment and enrollment activities through graduation, AWC students have multiple paths to access the student support services they desire and need. These services include counseling, tutoring, housing, athletics, and financial needs. Based on annual program reviews and national surveys, these support service areas are well-aligned with student needs in terms of satisfaction and engagement. Students reported during the site team visit that the student center was crucial to their learning and development, and through the various services provided, students become engaged in the college culture as well as the academic rigor of their classes.

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.

AWC utilizes the ACCUPLACER and WritePlacer assessment tools to help correctly place entering and continuing students in the appropriate level of coursework. To adjust placement requirements for students, the college continually reviews various cut-scores compared to student success in core courses. Both the mathematics [with additional instruction time] and English developmental sequence have been reviewed and modified within the last few years to better serve their student populations and produce a higher persistence and success rate. Placement testing is consistent across the service area. The Student Success Center [SSC] is an integral support service at the college as evidenced by several student comments obtained by the team in the open student forum and supported by the number of student visits recorded each year for tutoring.

The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

AWC utilizes full-time, well-trained academic advisors at four campus locations and faculty advisors and part-time advisors at all other locations. See also 3.C.5 for further evidence statements elaborating on this topic.

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).

AWC collaboratively developed a new technology plan that is appropriately funded and supported by the institution to improve technology and infrastructure at all campus locations. Within the last two years, a variety of initiatives have been completed with the oversight of the executive team and new CIO. The plan focus is to better support student learning at every location. Additionally, the college has been the recipient of several grants for targeted improvement for some programs. For example the state-of-the-art welding and automotive facilities have been modernized to meet industry standards. A new facility for Public Safety to support Administration of Justice Studies, EMS, and related programs was recently opened. During the Open Faculty Forum, the team heard various statements concerning the high-usage and local community engagement that this facility has promoted.

The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

AWC students are exposed to the ethical and effective use of research and information resources in multiple ways. Library faculty teach research skills in multiple formats, including both stand-alone and paired courses. Students also have opportunities to discover discipline-specific uses of research and information resources for courses in their field of study. Several dedicated support services are also available to students through the website and at campus locations in order promote accurate documentation and the appropriate use of external resources.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

The college provides a multitude of co-curricular programs that directly link to its mission of contributing to the educational experience of the students. Transfer and Career Expos are offered bi-annually at the Yuma campus location and annually at the San Luis Learning Center. During the team's interactions at the student open forum, students noted that they had a broad variety of clubs and campus organizations to meet their needs and interests. Groups of students may start a new club or organization at any time by simply following an approval procedure.

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.

During the Community Open Forum with the visiting team, community members openly expressed the importance of the college to economic development and community growth. It was very clear to each member of the visiting team that the college and various local communities served by AWC, wholly embrace the collaboration between AWC and a large number community organizations and businesses. The community members view the college as a true "partner" for economic development, assisting in fulfilling the HR infrastructure needs of the local areas as well as raising the entire educational level of the communities where they are located. Consistent with the mission, the team learned how the college demonstrates its commitment to quality student learning experiences.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Evidence

Arizona Western College provides programs and courses that meet the needs of the various communities and locations the college services. The service area of AWC is approximately 10,000 square miles and encompasses several different communities and counties. Community members view the college as a true partner in both economic development and educational initiatives. Several community leaders stressed that AWC was very proactive in supporting the necessary human resource infrastructure to meet the community needs. Many commented on how community members meet regularly with the AWC Leadership Team and academic division heads to continually try to improve this essential function in their service areas.

Externally accredited programs measure their success through student pass rates on licensure examinations and industry specific certifications. Transfer programs show a very successful student transfer to four-year institutions comparison that demonstrates students graduating from AWC perform equally or even better than university native students. The college has the right resources (human, structural and technological) to effectively support their academic programs. However, direct evidence of these Assurance Argument assertions were not clearly detailed for the team due to a lack of documentation related to assessment and actual program review completions. A more robust assessment and program review process with liberal arts programs in particular will provide more direct evidence that the institution provides high quality education across all modalities and locations.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

The college has close to 150 academic programs and certificates and approximately 27 administrative departments. A clear program review schedule for academic and non-academic departments exists and during the visit, the team confirmed through several meeting conversations that the non-academic programs are making a significant effort to complete a quality, regularly scheduled program review that assesses processes and focuses on ways to improve services in support of student learning. The Student Services department was a great example of continuous program review and improvement with a focus on putting the needs of the students first.

The team found that most academic divisions do not have a clear commitment to document and submit program reviews using the required formal process. While some academic programs are completing their program review on schedule, the annual list of programs to be reviewed was never complete, always several missing. Although the Assurance Argument identifies a schedule and clearly defined process, many programs reported that they were not completing their reviews in a formal, documented manner. Findings from process assessment and data provided were not being utilized in a systematic way to improve the student learning experience, and at best, an inconsistent process is in place. The college faculty and academic administration must make a stronger commitment to completion of useful program reviews for all academic programs.

The information gleaned from these reviews should be used for improvement, making an overall better learning experience for the students they serve. The team would recommend reviewing and appropriately setting the academic program review cycle to meet the needs of individual programs that have been lax over the last few years, including strategies to remove technology hurdles and set required submission dates/years and required components to help in the continuous improvement processes for academic programs. From the materials submitted and conversations during the visit, the team was not clear as to how program reviews are reviewed or analyzed after submission.

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.

Courses at AWC have procedures in place to ensure that lecture courses, lab courses, apprenticeships, internships, and practicums follow approved guidelines for credit. Courses offered online or via distance follow the same procedures for awarding credit. Faculty confirmed that courses are developed within departments by content area experts and then are reviewed through the college's Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee has a diverse membership including faculty from various divisions, the Vice President of Learning Services, the Director of Assessment, and a faculty member from each of the three Arizona universities. The admissions and registration office maintains all academic records and ensures courses are recorded accurately on student transcripts.

A clear process is in place for the awarding of credit for experiential learning through the college's prior learning assessment process. Once a student files an application for prior learning assessment, their application and information is reviewed by department faculty, the Dean of Career and Technical Education or Vice President of Learning Services, and upon approval is forwarded to the Transfer Services department for notification to the student. The process takes no more than 30 days from the date of application.

The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

AWC reviews all incoming transcripts of students who have been admitted and enrolled in classes at the college. A clear policy and procedure for evaluation of transfer credit has been developed and is listed in the college catalog. Official transcripts must be submitted for review of transfer credit. The entire review process can take up to three weeks from submission to final review.

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.

AWC maintains control and authority over its courses, student learning outcomes, access to resources and faculty qualifications. Courses are developed by the content specialist in various departments and reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. Faculty and the assessment office confirmed that student learning outcomes have been developed for all courses. A review of faculty qualifications reflected that the sample of faculty files were all in compliance with appropriate credentials for the courses they were approved to teach. All faculty files reviewed had official transcripts. The college also appeared to have a good process in place to review faculty credentials with the Division Chair making the first review and recommendation followed by the Vice President of Learning Services completing a second and final review of credentials and tested experience, with significant documentation contained in each file reviewed.

The college maintains written memorandum of understanding and intergovernmental agreements with area high schools signed by both the high school and college governing boards that demonstrate the college has administrative control over dual credit courses. Conversations confirmed that dual credit courses must use the same syllabi, learning outcomes, and materials as used in the same course on campus. All dual credit faculty must meet HLC credentialing requirements. The college does have an approved HLC extension for Dual Credit faculty until the fall of 2022.

The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

AWC has several career and technical education programs that require specialized accreditation, such as Paramedic, Fire Science, Massage Therapy, Nursing, and Radiological Technology. Speaking with faculty from these various programs revealed continuous program review completion to ensure the programs maintain their specialized accreditation. Information about their program accreditations is prominently displayed on the college website.

In addition, the college's Child Development Learning Laboratory is accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

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).

The college works hard to track their graduates whether moving into employment or transfer to a university. Discussions with CTE faculty revealed that the technical programs have good processes in place to track graduates, review and improve programs, and make sure they are meeting the needs of the local and regional employers and students. All Career and Technical Education programs have advisory boards that meet with programs once a semester. CTE faculty also stated that advisory boards play a significant role in their program review.

The college tracks transfer students through ASSIST data, and the college is proud to note that AWC is one of the most successful community colleges in terms of success rates for students transferring from AWC to Arizona State University. Recent data also documented that AWC graduates transferring to universities have a higher GPA than transfer students from other Arizona community colleges.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met With Concerns

Evidence

The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

AWC faculty have established general education outcomes that reflect skills and knowledge students should demonstrate as a part of their learning experience. Each year a different general education outcome is assessed by faculty within the disciplines. In addition to the general education outcomes, each course at the college has student learning outcomes that are clearly listed on the syllabi. Program outcomes have also been established for each program on campus and are approved by all faculty in the program. The college has also recently developed Institutional Learning Outcomes with plans to begin assessing them in the near future. Although the faculty have been trained to use Tk20, a software designed for collecting assessment data and performance, the college reports that the time and effort necessary to use the product has not benefited the process. In fact, many faculty do not participate because of the challenge in dealing with the software. AWC faculty and administration are reviewing alternative platforms to hopefully make the process smoother and less cumbersome.

After a hiatus, the Assessment Committee began meeting again in late fall of 2018. The committee consists of faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Conversations with the committee revealed they are still in the process of developing their role in the assessment process at the college. Faculty and staff had high praise for the work of the Director of Assessment and her office, stating they put a lot of information out for faculty and staff on assessment, offer fun incentives for individuals to complete assessment, bring students to the table for assessment conversations, and provide as much support as possible to faculty and staff in their assessment work. While the team discussions made confirmed that some faculty are working hard on general education assessment activities and closing the loop, many faculty reported that the current process is not being utilized effectively because of the time and effort required. In addition, faculty reported that those not participating are not held accountable for completion of assessment activities through performance reviews or expectations.

Scheduling faculty and administrative time for these activities and discussions could increase participation and help complete the institutional focus on gen ed assessment.

The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

Review of evidence and conversations with various groups showed that non-academic assessment was being completed routinely by the various departments. Since 2013 when non-academic assessment began, 49 non-academic annual assessment plans have been completed including Student Services who was very proud to share that nearly 100% of their programs participate in assessment activities.

Although the assessment plan is intended to involve all full-time faculty throughout the college, faculty and assessment staff stated that less than 10% of full-time faculty are assessing at least one course a year. Establishing clear expectations, providing dedicated time for assessment, and using an alternative platform to Tk20 could help increase the level of involvement.

The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Non-academic groups had great examples of closing the loop with their assessment processes to improve student learning. Through the program review and student outcomes assessment process, CTE faculty and division chairs shared examples of changes to programs to stay current in their fields, provide education needed by employers, and in certain cases, maintain program accreditation. Academic faculty engaging in assessment are improving student learning based on outcomes, but as stated above, only a small number of full-time faculty are participating in the assessment process.

The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

AWC has an assessment office with two full-time staff, including a Director who provides support, information, and encouragement for assessment activities at the college. The Assessment Committee, previously the Assessment Coalition which was formed in 2017, has recently been reconfigured to include staff and students. Although the group reported during the site visit that they are still finding their way in terms of their role in supporting and encouraging assessment at the college, with more direction, this committee could stimulate faculty involvement in liberal arts general education assessment activities. A General Education committee also exists, but their role was not entirely clear to the team. Identifying an alternative assessment platform to Tk20 will help to decrease the workload and increase faculty involvement. As noted with CTE faculty who model effective assessment practices, additional emphasis on the value assessment brings to student success will help the Director accomplish her goals for an inclusive and transparent process.

The college has participated in the Assessment Academy in the past, and the process described in the assurance argument is well defined. Implementing the process requires faculty engagement in terms of value and expectations. It was clear to the team that the Director has worked hard to support assessment, but without any enforcement ability, she is limited to only those willing to participate and wanting to improve the student experience. A more comprehensive approach with clear expectations and a collection platform that works could significantly improve and demonstrate good practice.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

Although Arizona Western College has a process for student learning outcome assessment, involvement by full-time faculty is minimal and virtually non-existent for part-time faculty. In May 2017, the college formed the Assessment Coalition. This group was reconfigured to include staff and students in November 2018 and labeled as the Assessment Committee; however, during interviews with this committee, confusion and a lack of clarity of purpose was evident. In general, faculty reported that very few participated in the defined learning outcome assessment process, although coaching and technical support is available to them.

The team feels that a monitoring during the Year 4 review is necessary to evaluate progress on learning outcomes assessment. The team should find an increased level of faculty involvement and commitment to the process, and see examples where liberal arts faculty have made changes to improve student learning based on general education assessment. The monitoring should confirm that the process is implemented with significant commitment by faculty and administration.

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

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.

AWC sets student retention, persistence, and completion goals in alignment with its peer institutions via the NCCBP. The yearly retention, persistent, and completion rates are rolled into the AWC-10 Year Performance Report and utilized by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Grants (IERG) for informing and assisting the executive team with setting goals and reviewing benchmarks annually.

The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

The IERG collects course, program, and institutional-level retention and completion data that is updated each semester and submitted to various constituencies, including division chairs. The College Fact book is readily available on the website and is utilized to transparently report these data elements and a variety of other key performance indicators to various constituencies and stakeholder groups. IERG also fulfills a variety of ad-hoc requests from faculty and staff for specialized student cohorts, populations within the institution, or a specific program of study.

The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs

to make improvements as warranted by the data.

The college uses retention and completion data to help set priorities and goals through the offices and departments of both the Vice President for Learning Services and the Vice President for Student Services. Data available was also used to advise college committees and departments during the development of the new strategic plan. The outgrowth of this process created embedded action steps and goals within the plan itself.

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.)

AWC collects and reports on a large variety of enrollment, demographic, and student success data through the Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Grants Office. Data is analyzed to provide standard measures and reports. Some examples include the Fact Book and yearly NCCBP reporting. Faculty and Staff spoke highly of IERG's ability to provide requested data and information in a very timely fashion during various group meetings and open forums. Although the staff is relatively small, they affirmed during the criterion discussion that they worked exceptionally well together and valued their role as a part of the college.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

The college has created a culture of assessment in its non-academic units, and this has led to a variety of improvements in support services that work to enhance student learning and success. However, academic area assessment activities are sporadic with only anecdotal links between data and instructional changes in many divisions and academic departments. While dedicated to the education of its students and having good persistence and completion outcomes, AWC does not have a culture of assessment and appears to be pursuing assessment activities as an institutional obligation only. Considering the past work with the Assessment Academy and the dedication of the Director of Assessment, the lack of progress and commitment is disappointing and unexpected. When actually documented and submitted, their responsibility for continuous improvement of student learning can have many potential benefits; however, considering the changing landscape of higher education, the AWC effort is lax and incomplete at best for many programs and disciplines.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Arizona Western College has adapted fiscally with state financial support being almost non-existent. The college in the past two years has improved its CFI, eliminated three of the five information technology audit findings, and will more-than-likely eliminate the remaining two audit findings in fiscal year 2019, as noted in the fiscal year 2018 audit. The college is currently implementing plans to address the two financial assistance cluster issues, (timely location notification and financial aid staff training) in fiscal year 2019. The college has dedicated resources to address the issues with the hiring of an individual for the newly created CIO position, a new Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services, and presidential focus and support along with diligent administration planning.

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.

With the appointment of a new president in 2016, significant effort has been undertaken to ensure communication, transparency and planning are occurring at all levels to effectively support the institution and inform constituents. The review team found substantial evidence in student, faculty, staff, and community open sessions that affirmed institutional morale, passion for the college mission, and communication has significantly improved in the past several years. Previous reviews of the technology plan indicated changes were needed. Information technology resources have been restructured with a million dollars added to the existing budget for technology improvements. The review team learned that remote campuses are in need of enhancements and larger spaces, and the college is currently analyzing future space needs and is building a plan to address those needs.

The college faculty and staff are very passionate about the college and their work on behalf of the students. In general, the review team heard evidence from college personnel that they felt supported by the college. They have training opportunities to ensure they are able to serve in their current role and sessions to understand their focus on supporting students and the community. Administration was very vocal throughout the sessions about their support and appreciation of the faculty and staff.

The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, responses, and opportunities.

Students, faculty, and staff demonstrated throughout the sessions an understanding of the newly developed mission and vision statements and how they apply to each of their constituencies. The consensus was they felt connected to the mission and vision because they helped formulate the statements.

The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

The team found that staff were provided job training and professional development. Many noted the commitment by the college to ensure they were the best at their individual jobs.

When meeting in the sessions, a large majority of the groups across division lines identified themselves as active in institutional planning and budgeting, and they have adequate resources and training to be effective at their position. Administration is working with the college body to create a new shared governance model. The president has no idea what the model will look like; he is leaving the design up to the faculty and staff to develop over the course of the next year. Campus leadership is working hard to ensure decision transparency, provide active communications to foster institutional quality improvements, and promote effectiveness at all levels of the organization. The team found consensus among all of the participants in sessions attended.

The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Budgeting and personnel have been organized to support the objectives and initiatives of the strategic plan. New in the past fiscal year was a pilot program initiated to tie budget directly into the strategic planning process. For fiscal year 2020, all budget lines will be tied to the plan. Yearend budget vs. actual effectiveness review will be conducted as part of fiscal program review.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

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.

Arizona Western College's District Governing Board is an elected group that represents the two county, 10,000 square mile service area in Southwestern Arizona. In the team's session with Board, the members were very aware of the college's demographics and role within the communities the college serves. In addition, the board takes their responsibilities seriously with a focus on meeting student and community needs. All were sensitive to the college's ability to positively influence the region and state economies. They frequently visit the campuses and their represented areas. The president is evaluated by the board and is delegated to set institutional goals and plans as confirmed by the team's meeting with the board.

The Board of Trustees meets regularly. Board agendas and meeting notes are published on the college's web site (<http://www.azwestern.edu/district-governing-board>).

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.

AWC has a number of ad hoc and standing committees that provide direction to the college and the senior leadership. The president sponsors a number of open "town hall" sessions where all are invited to communicate college concerns and learn more about campus plans and activities. He also has open office hours where anyone can discuss any topic. Although the college does not have a strong "shared governance" model, the president and faculty are focused on developing a leadership strategy that is inclusive and meets the needs of the college.

Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

The college has a very student centrist focus. Plans, reviews, budgeting, and communication are concentrated on improving the academic environment. Two of the four strategies in the 2025 Strategic Plan adopted in 2018 focus on “eliminating the cultural, financial, time, and place barriers to education” and to “grow and sustain academic programs that leverage our competencies, fuel economic growth, and position graduates for prosperity.” In discussions with the board, faculty, staff, administration, and community, the review team felt the college has a strong commitment to student learning and understands the short and long term benefits to the area. The college has support programs for under-prepared students, migrant students, financially challenged students, and special needs students. These programs work with students, faculty, and support services to help define policy and processes that benefit student learning efforts.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

Arizona Western College allocates resources according to its budget, academic, and strategic planning initiatives. A new strategic plan has been developed and is being used to drive the college forward. The review team observed that the strategic plan is embedded into the forward planning of the institution. New to this next fiscal year, which is currently in the planning stage, is that all budget requests will be tied to the strategic plan mission and objectives. The four Strategic Directions of the 2025 Strategic Plan, including:

- **AGILITY** – 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 that leverage our competencies, fuel economic growth and position graduates for prosperity

These four directions are used as building blocks for project and budget requests. As an example of linking projects, it was determined a significant student need was identified that students needed better wireless access. A project committee was formed to address the student need with academic and technical support. The college is working to add additional wireless support to all of their locations.

The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

The college faculty, staff, and administration offered many examples of how information is gathered to support institutional decision making and planning. All Campus Open Meetings, standing committees, president open office hours, president site visits, and division and subdivision meetings contribute data and information for assessment and action. College board agendas and minutes, as well as financial information, is presented on the college web site.

The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

Revenue and expense models are presented to college budget managers to create a budgeting model. New to this upcoming budget cycle, all budget lines must be tied to a strategic objective. The college piloted the program for last year's budget development. The purpose is clearly to address the needs of the college as a whole and not in individual parts. In these discussions and decisions, benefit to student learning and meeting community needs are always paramount to the process.

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.

Budget development is done through a well-defined process that permeates the college culture. Several faculty and staff noted in the open sessions that the budget process and budget monitoring is done in a transparent method. Overall, college departments this reviewer spoke with agreed that they have a shared responsibility and do help to ensure financial resources are prioritized and cooperatively used.

Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

With the mission, vision, and values process combined with the strategic planning process, AWC has worked to anticipate needs and future changes in order to plan and prepare the college to meet the needs of an ever changing population. The technology example noted previously would be one example, and the new CIO noted several areas where incremental and progressive changes are planned to improve computer access and wireless access throughout all locations.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

Arizona Western College's Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Grants utilizes a number of tools to document and publish college performance data. Information and data regarding college standard reports, the Institutional Research Plan, fact books, institutional performance data, employee satisfaction surveys, peer comparisons, and workforce Information are published on the institution website.

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.

The college surveys students to collect feedback for course and faculty evaluations. CCSSE and SSI data are used to help in decision making and to better understand student needs. In addition, the college performs a graduate follow-up survey of all graduates asking about employment status, current employer, and whether employment is within a field related to their program of study. The college regularly reviews student satisfaction data for online and distance education. Compiled information is disseminated to faculty and chairs to review trends and areas for improvement.

The college recently went through a strenuous strategic planning process that helped the institution understand itself. The process provided a unified direction to the college and helped set standards for assessment, customer services levels, and performance metrics. The college uses the strategic plan to center its operations on the mission and vision. This effort has influenced all of the college's departments on how they connect service, budget, expectations, and quality to strategic objectives.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

As noted throughout the review, the college has devoted much time and energy over the last three years to develop a meaningful mission that is a guidepost for the future of the college. The process was clearly inclusive and transparent with much input from all levels of the organization as well as the community constituents served. The process led the college to also develop a new strategic plan that identifies four directions for the next five to seven years, perhaps longer. During the site team visit, several administrators and faculty noted that the plan may be designed to guide the college to 2025, but the plan was also designed to be "fluid" and easily adaptable to an ever changing environment.

The college has also balanced finances so that new initiatives can be funded and supported, especially when shown to benefit students. The Welcome Center was often cited during the visit as an example where innovation dollars addressed a need to serve the community as well as new and returning students. Responding to challenges and identifying opportunities is clearly a part of the college culture and the vision for the future.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.D	Core Component 1.D	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.E	Core Component 3.E	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met With Concerns
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.D	Core Component 5.D	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Interim Report(s) Required

Due Date

5/1/2023

Report Focus

Although Arizona Western College has a process for student learning outcome assessment, involvement by full-time faculty is minimal and virtually non-existent for part-time faculty. In May 2017, the college formed the Assessment Coalition. This group was reconfigured to include staff and students in November 2018 and labeled as the Assessment Committee; however, during interviews with this committee, confusion and a lack of clarity of purpose was evident. In general, faculty reported that very few participated in the defined learning outcome assessment process, although coaching and technical support is available to them.

The team feels that a monitoring during the Year 4 review is necessary to evaluate progress on learning outcomes assessment. The team should find an increased level of faculty involvement and commitment to the process, and see examples where liberal arts faculty have made changes to improve student learning based on general education assessment. The monitoring should confirm that the process is implemented with significant commitment by faculty and administration.

Conclusion

With the leadership of the new president, now nearing the completion of his third year, Arizona Western College has revised and developed quality mission, vision, and values statements. The process was impressive in terms of inclusion and transparency, and the administration intentionally traveled to populated locations to solicit feedback and involvement throughout the process. These activities spurred the development of the new Strategic Plan which intentionally aligns with the mission and drives the budget planning process. The college has worked hard to become fiscally sound and clearly viable for the future. They have accomplished this while providing quality learning experiences for students and engaging actively with community economic development.

The college faculty work on learning outcomes assessment has not progressed to actually close the loop or define improvements. As reported throughout the visit, few faculty participate which weakens the process and the ultimate outcome. On the other hand, support areas and CTE programs have embraced assessment, and program review, and have made changes based on their data informed findings. They could serve as a model for liberal arts faculty and for those areas where program review and assessment are not valued.

AWC continues to serve the needs of the community and the diverse population effectively. The community involvement and appreciation for the college is quite evident and to be commended. The students are also well served by caring advisors and support systems designed to help them be successful. Faculty are dedicated, and the Board is committed to meeting the needs of students and the region. Arizona Western College has accomplished much through the leadership team's work.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met With Concerns

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose



Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

This worksheet is to be completed by a Federal Compliance reviewer or by the peer review team that conduct the on-site visit. If a Federal Compliance reviewer completes the form, the reviewer will evaluate the materials in advance of the visit and refer any issues to the team for further exploration and confirmation. The team chair will confirm that the team has reviewed the Federal Compliance reviewer's findings, make any necessary adjustments to the worksheet following the on-site visit, and submit the worksheet as part of the team's final report.

The Federal Compliance reviewer or the team should review each item identified in the *Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions* (FCFI) and document their findings in the appropriate spaces below. Peer reviewers are expected to supply a rationale for each section of the Federal Compliance Evaluation. Refer to the [Federal Compliance Overview](#) for information about applicable HLC policies and explanations of each requirement.

Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in the appropriate parts of the team report. If the team recommends monitoring on a Federal Compliance Requirement in the form of a report or focused visit, the recommendation should be included in the Federal Compliance monitoring sections below and added to the appropriate section of the team report.

Submission Instructions

Federal Compliance reviewer: Email this worksheet and the *Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours* in an editable format to the team chair. The team chair's email address is provided in the Assurance System.

Team chair: Send the draft of this worksheet and the *Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours* to the HLC staff liaison for review and then to the institution for corrections of errors of fact. Submit the final worksheets to HLC at finalreports@hlcommission.org.

Institution under review: Arizona Western College

Please indicate who completed this worksheet:

- Evaluation team
- Federal Compliance reviewer

To be completed by the evaluation team chair if a Federal Compliance reviewer conducted this part of the evaluation:

Name: Bill Lamb

I confirm that the evaluation team reviewed the findings provided in this worksheet.

Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition

(See FCFI Questions 1–3 and Appendix A)

1. Complete the [Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours](#). Submit the completed worksheet with this form.
 - Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level (see the institution's Appendix A if necessary). The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:
 - Associate's degrees = 60 hours
 - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours
 - Master's or other degrees beyond the bachelor's = At least 30 hours beyond the bachelor's degree
 - Note that 1 quarter hour = 0.67 semester hour.
 - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.
 - Review any differences in tuition reported for different programs and the rationale provided for such differences.
2. Check the response that reflects the evaluation team or Federal Compliance reviewer's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Credit hours required for the Associates degrees varies between 60 and 64 credit hours per the Catalog.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

(See FCFI Questions 4–7 and Appendixes B and C)

1. Verify that the institution has documented a process for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints, as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.
 - Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints, its complaints policy and procedure, and the history of complaints received and resolved since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC.
 - Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.
 - Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into improvements in services or in teaching and learning.
 - Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.
 - Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.
2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

After centralizing non-academic complaints with Student Services, Arizona Western College implemented Maxient in 2018 to further facilitate the process of responding to complaints.

Student Grievance Policy and Procedures are available on the website and elsewhere and present the processes for resolving grievances, including instructional grievances. The institution presents a chart detailing the number of grievances by year since 2012. A clear and consistent process for centralizing academic complaints and learning from them across the institution may be in place, but is not presented. It may be of value for the institution to ensure that such is in place.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Publication of Transfer Policies

(See FCFI Questions 8–10 and Appendixes D–F)

1. Verify that the institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies should contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.
 - Review the institution’s transfer policies.
 - Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and for specific programs and how the institution publicly discloses information about those articulation agreements.
 - Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its website) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.
 - Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. The information the institution provides to students should explain any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution (1) accepts credits from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; (2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements; (3) both offers and accepts credits with the institution(s) in the articulation agreement; and (4) what specific credits articulate through the agreement (e.g., general education only; pre-professional nursing courses only; etc.). Note that the institution need not make public the entire articulation agreement, but it needs to make public to students relevant information about these agreements so that they can better plan their education.
 - Verify that the institution has an appropriate process to align the disclosed transfer policies with the criteria and procedures used by the institution in making transfer decisions.
2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Transfer policies for transferring credits to and from Western Arizona are readily available and clearly explained on the website and in the Catalog.

Transfer Partnerships (articulation agreements) are readily available through the Transfer Services web site. There is an “aztransfer course equivalency guide” that helps students to determine how specific courses transfer to the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and Northern Arizona University. Other partnerships are disclosed on the website, as well as in the catalog.

The process for making transfer decisions is consistent with the policies, and is implemented by the Transfer Services Office. Prior Learning Assessment policies and procedures are clearly defined.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

(See FCFI Questions 11–16 and Appendix G)

1. Confirm that the institution verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided through distance or correspondence education. Confirm that it appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students, and that the method of verification makes reasonable efforts to protect students' privacy.
 - Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.
 - Check that any costs related to verification (e.g., fees associated with test proctoring) and charged directly to students are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance or correspondence courses.
2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Students use their unique AWC ID and username.

Students pay an additional \$25 technology fee for each web course, as stated on the class schedule.

Grades are only visible to the student logging in.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Title IV Program Responsibilities

(See FCFI Questions 17–24 and Appendixes H–Q)

1. This requirement has several components the institution must address.
 - The team should verify that the following requirements are met:
 - **General Program Requirements.** The institution has provided HLC with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities.
 - **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** The institution has provided HLC with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion 5 if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)
 - **Default Rates.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its three-year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note that for 2012 and thereafter, institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact the HLC staff.
 - **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.
 - **Student Right to Know/Equity in Athletics.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion 2, Core Component 2.A if the team determines that the disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)

- **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook and online. Note that HLC does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance unless required to do so by state or federal regulations but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.
 - **Contractual Relationships.** The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic programs and evidence of its compliance with HLC policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require HLC approval and has not received HLC approval, the team must require that the institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Substantive Change Application for Programs Offered Through Contractual Arrangements on HLC’s website for more information.)
 - **Consortial Relationships.** The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic programs and evidence of its compliance with HLC policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require HLC approval and has not received HLC approval, the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Substantive Change Application for Programs Offered Through Consortial Arrangements on HLC’s website for more information.)
- Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.
 - Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution’s compliance or whether the institution’s auditor has raised any issues in the A-133 about the institution’s compliance, and also look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.
 - If the institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the Federal Compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with the corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.
 - If issues have been raised concerning the institution’s compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution’s ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Components 2.A and 2.B*).
2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

The institution meets HLC’s requirements.

- The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

A program review was conducted by the Department of education in 2016. While the Program Review Report included a number of citations, the Department, in the Final Program determination dated June 2, 2017 determined that all the findings had been resolved and that the program review was closed with no further action required.

The Department's did not provide any communication to AWC reviews in response to the District's composite ratios and financial audits for FY 2016 or 2017. Letters were exchanged regarding the FY 2015 composite rations, but no action was taken by the Department.

Default rates at AWC fluctuate and appear slightly high. AWC has taken steps to maintain a low CDR with a higher repayment rate. These steps include increased student counseling, working with Inceptia, and building closer relationships between students and borrowers.

Campus crime policies, reporting, and statistics are readily accessible on the web site.

An Equity in Athletics Disclosure is available on the web site as are student right to know, and graduation and transfer out rates.

While the Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal form is readily available, the institution may want to consider including a section in the catalog and on the website clearly defining Satisfactory Academic Progress, using that term. While satisfactory academic progress is described in the catalog it is not clearly labeled as such. The attendance policies for classroom and online attendance are in the catalog, as well as in individual syllabi. While the policy states that students are expected to attend every class of a course, no consequences for missing classes other than "no show" are stated.

The institution reports no contractual or consortial relationships.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Required Information for Students and the Public

(See FCFI Questions 25–27 and Appendixes R and S)

1. Verify that the institution publishes accurate, timely and appropriate information on institutional programs, fees, policies and related required information. Verify that the institution provides this required information in the course catalog and student handbook and on its website.
2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Policies, procedures, programs, tuition, and fees are easily accessible on the website. Most are either in the catalog and if not are readily accessed from the catalog. The student handbook is available on the website although in a format that may be difficult to read, and while links and phone numbers are provided it may be of value for WAC to consider another format for the web.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

(See FCFI Questions 28–31 and Appendixes T and U)

1. Verify that the institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with HLC and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.
 - Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with HLC to determine whether the information it provides is accurate, complete and appropriately formatted and contains HLC's web address.
 - Review the institution's disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.
 - Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, website and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate, timely and appropriate information to current and prospective students about its programs, locations and policies.
 - Verify that the institution correctly displays the Mark of Affiliation on its website.

2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

An extensive explanation, including a video, of AWC’s relationship with HLC is provided on the website and is easily found. Criteria are referenced in the video, narrative is provided, and the HLC website is as well. The Mark of Affiliation is clearly visible. Copies of documents provided are accurate.

Relationships with accrediting bodies other than HLC are listed on the website, although not easily found. Some are referenced in the catalog, and a search of the web site for “accreditation” leads to some of them, but not all. Handbooks are sometimes referenced as sources for further information, but not all handbooks are available from the website.

NACYE, ACEN, and NATEF accreditation are examples of those found through a search of the AWC website, but links are not provided to the agencies. It is recommended that all accreditations be easily available in one place, with relevant links.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Review of Student Outcome Data

(See FCFI Questions 32–35 and Appendix V)

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether they are appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs the institution offers and the students it serves.
 - Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about planning, academic program review, assessment of student learning, consideration of institutional effectiveness and other topics.
 - Review the institution’s explanation of its use of information from the College Scorecard, including student retention and completion and the loan repayment rate.

2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

The Annual Assessment Reports , readily available online, describe processes and assessment activities in a great deal of detail. The 2017 Strategic Visions Outcomes Report provides further metrics and indicates that AWC is monitoring institutional effectiveness. Gainful employment information is provided via the website.

IPEDS data can be easily accessed through the website, and while the information from the College Scorecard is readily available as well, the search engine does not link to it. AWC does not appear to directly reference using the College Scorecard data as such. Narrative directly speaking to the use of the Scorecard is not provided, although there is much that speaks to the use of data such as that provided by the Scorecard, including the Strategic Vision Outcomes Report.

While it appears that individual units at AWC use appropriate data to make decisions, it is less clear that this data is used across the institution. Results from one department may well inform another. Proactively ensuring this type of information crosses any institutional boundaries may be of value.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Publication of Student Outcome Data

(See FCFI Questions 36–38)

1. Verify that the institution makes student outcome data available and easily accessible to the public. Data may be provided at the institutional or departmental level or both, but the institution must disclose student outcome data that address the broad variety of its programs.
 - Verify that student outcome data are made available to the public on the institution’s website—for instance, linked to from the institution’s home page, included within the top three levels of the website or easily found through a search of related terms on the website—and are clearly labeled as such.

- Determine whether the publication of these data accurately reflects the range of programs at the institution.
2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Institutional reports are readily available, but not obviously identified as Student Outcomes and the link to them is under the Faculty/Staff tab. Annual assessment reports are also available on the web, and basic outcomes data are available through a search of “outcomes.” It is recommended that a link be added to the “quicklinks” section of the webpage perhaps titled “Student Outcomes Data” that leads to the IR and other pages already in existence, thereby providing straightforward and easily understood data and/or links for the public. All necessary data is currently available, but requires too much digging on the part of the public to make it useful.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Standing With State and Other Accrediting Agencies

(See FCFI Questions 39–40 and Appendixes W and X)

1. Verify that the institution discloses accurately to the public and HLC its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditors and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

The team should consider any potential implications for accreditation by HLC of a sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or of loss of authorization in any state.

Note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the assurance section of the team report and provide its rationale for recommending HLC status in light of this action.

- Review the list of relationships the institution has with all other accreditors and state governing or coordinating bodies, along with the evaluation reports, action letters and interim monitoring plans issued by each accrediting agency.
 - Verify that the institution's standing with state agencies and accrediting bodies is appropriately disclosed to students.
 - Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the HLC staff liaison immediately.
2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Letters provided reflect good standing, although in a letter dated November 7, 2017 JRCERT expressed concern about: Objective 5.4

- Analyzes and shares student learning outcome data and program effectiveness data to foster continuous program improvement.
(Provide assurance the program's most recent student learning outcomes and program effectiveness data continues to be analyzed and shared with communities of interest to assist the program with continuous programmatic improvement.)

Additional monitoring, if any:

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

(FCFI Questions 41–43 and Appendix Y)

1. Verify that the institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third-party comments. The team should evaluate any comments received and complete any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments.

Note: If the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comments relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the appropriate section of its report in the Assurance System.

- Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including copies of the institution’s notices, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.
 - Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.
2. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Postcards were sent out, there is much attention drawn to the visit on the website, and numerous constituencies received the notice of opportunity to comment.

Social media and newspaper announcements were used as well.

The team received a number of responses that clearly indicated that the college had reached out to partners in the community and encouraged them to respond as public comments. The team reviewed and discussed in total all comments received.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Competency-Based Programs Including Direct Assessment Programs/Faculty-Student Engagement

(See FCFI Questions 44–47)

1. Verify that students and faculty in any direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution have regular and substantive interactions: the faculty and students communicate on some regular basis that is at least equivalent to contact in a traditional classroom, and that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about critical thinking, analytical skills, and written and oral communication abilities, as well as about core ideas, important theories, current knowledge, etc. (Also, confirm that the institution has explained the credit hour equivalencies for these programs in the credit hour sections of the Federal Compliance Filing.)
 - Review the list of direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution.

- Determine whether the institution has effective methods for ensuring that faculty in these programs regularly communicate and interact with students about the subject matter of the course.
 - Determine whether the institution has effective methods for ensuring that faculty and students in these programs interact about key skills and ideas in the students' mastery of tasks to assure competency.
2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

N/A

Additional monitoring, if any:

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team

Provide a list of materials reviewed here:

All appendices and forms provided with the filing

Numerous pages from the web site, including:

Student Right to Know

Formal Student Grievance Form

2018 - 2019 Student Handbook

Student Grievance Procedure Policy 551 as well as 551.1 and 551.2

Transfer Services: Web site, catalog, aztransfer, prior learning assessment document, articulation agreements (web site and catalog).

Institutional research

Student Right to Know

Accreditation sites for:

JR CERT

NCCER

CAAHEP
NATEF
Arizona State Board of Nursing
ACEN
College Scorecard



Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours

Institution Under Review: Arizona Western College

Review the *Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours*, including all supplemental materials. Applicable sections and supplements are referenced in the corresponding sections and questions below.

Part 1. Institutional Calendar, Term Length and Type of Credit

Instructions

Review Section 1 of Appendix A. Verify that the institution has calendar and term lengths within the range of good practice in higher education.

Responses

A. Answer the Following Question

1. Are the institution's calendar and term lengths, including non-standard terms, within the range of good practice in higher education? Do they contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

Yes No

Comments:

AWC is a semester based institution, the standard course length is 16 weeks, compressed course length is either 8 or 12 weeks, and the summer course length is either 5 or 10 weeks. There are also 4-week classes. "Open entry/open exit" courses are referenced, but insufficient information is provided. The seat time standard is for 800 minutes and all instructional modalities must equal this requirement in terms of rigor and student work.

B. Recommend HLC Follow-Up, If Appropriate

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's calendar and term length practices?

Yes No

Rationale:

Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date:

Part 2. Policy and Practices on Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

Review Sections 2–4 of the *Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours*, including supplemental materials as noted below. In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps. The outcomes of the team’s review should be reflected in its responses below.

1. **Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded.** Review the *Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses* (Supplement A1 to the *Worksheet for Institutions*) completed by the institution, which provides an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats.
2. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution (see Supplements B1 and B2 to *Worksheet for Institutions*, as applicable).
 - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14–16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The descriptions in the catalog should reflect courses that are appropriately rigorous and have collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.
 - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)
 - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode and types of academic activities.
 - Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. HLC procedure also permits this approach.

3. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course (see Supplement B3 to *Worksheet for Institutions*). Pay particular attention to alternatively structured or other courses completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor that have particularly high credit hour assignments.
4. Sampling. Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.
 - For the programs sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several courses, identify the contact hours for each course, and review expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.
 - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.
 - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.
 - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.
5. **Direct Assessment or Competency-Based Programs.** Review the information provided by the institution regarding any direct assessment or competency-based programs that it offers, with regard to the learning objectives, policies and procedures for credit allocation, and processes for review and improvement in these programs.
6. **Policy on Credit Hours and Total Credit Hour Generation.** With reference to the institutional policies on the assignment of credit provided in Supplement A2 to *Worksheet for Institutions*, consider the following questions:
 - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?
 - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?
 - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the time frame allotted for the course?
 - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public

institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

- If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?
 - Do the number of credits taken by typical undergraduate and graduate students, as well as the number of students earning more than the typical number of credits, fall within the range of good practice in higher education?
7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:
- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and provides evidence of implementation.
 - If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or a single department, division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (a monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.
 - If the team identifies systematic noncompliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify the HLC staff immediately and work with staff members to design appropriate follow-up activities. HLC shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team

Logistics Supply Chain Management (A.A.S.)

Masonry (certificate)

Massage Therapy (A.A.S.)

Mathematics (A.A.S.)

Media Arts (A.A.)

Networking (certificate)

Music (A.A.)

Nursing (A.A.S.)

Physics (A.S.)

Psychology/Sociology (A.A.)
Retail Management (certificate)
Spanish (A.A.)
Theatre (A.A.S.)
LMT 115 Clinical Experience 1
BUA 100 Survey of Business
ANS 130 – Livestock Production Management
CIS 72 – Basic Word Processing

GPH 171 – Introduction to Meteorology

BIO 156 - Biology for Allied Health/GE

SOC 101 - Introduction to Sociology

RCT 235 – Cross Sectional Anatomy

NTR 201 – Nutrition

PEM 101 – Directed Laboratory Experience

ASL 101- American Sign Language 1

ASL 102 – American Sign Language 2

AUT 209 – Auto Engine Performance and Diagnosis

ECE 125 – Dramatic Play

ANT 100 – Introduction to Anthropology

PER 105 – Workplace Wellness

AWC 104 – Career Exploration

AJS 193 - Victimology

WLD 224 – Technical Specialized Welding Process

CET 250 – Public Land Surveying Systems

PHI 105 – Introduction to Ethics/GE

BDC 140 - Announcing and Performance 2

CHM 236 – Organic Chemistry II

CHW 220 - Field Experience

CIS 092 - MS Windows

CSC 252 – Computer Organization

CUL 144 – Menu Planning

EDU 231 – Art In The Elementary School

B. Answer the Following Questions

1. Institutional Policies on Credit Hours

- a. Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

Yes No

Comments:

The policy, as reflected in the catalog, syllabi, and schedule, appears for face to face 16 week courses; however the Procedural Manual provides a clear definition for awarding credit hours that does take into account online learning, compressed courses, or open entry/open exit courses (see 2.2 "Delivery methods of learning"). Given the different delivery formats it may be helpful for the institution to clarify how the credit hour definition applies to each modality in publications that are more easily accessible.

- b. Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

Yes No

Comments:

The procedure describes clearly the Credit Hour Standards as well as the Credit Hour allocation in terms of lecture, lab, recitation, and so on. As noted previously, section 2.2 describes how the credit hour standard is applied to alternative methods of learning, including online, television, and so on.

- c. For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the time frame and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

Yes No

Comments:

The college applies a standard of 800 minutes of instructional time equates to one credit hour. Per the definition stated in the Procedure Manual, "one semester unit of credit is equal to a minimum of three hours of work per week for a semester."

- d. Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes No

Comments:

The procedure standard reflects the federal definition

2. Application of Policies

- a. Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes No

Comments:

Course syllabi shown on the college website are general outlines that provide consistent course descriptions and student learning outcomes. Faculty distribute course outlines—sometimes called syllabi in the title—to students as the course guide. AWC typically intends the course syllabus on the website to be generic while the course outline contains the information in the syllabus as well as instructional expectations, timelines, delivery modalities, and so on.

- b. Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

Yes No

Comments:

Course descriptions and outcomes are clearly listed in the syllabi. All appear appropriate. Program descriptions in the catalog appear appropriate as well.

- c. If the institution offers any alternative-delivery or compressed-format courses or programs, are the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

Yes No

Comments:

Course syllabi reviewed by the site team were reflective of 16-week face-to-face courses, online courses, and compressed term courses. All were consistent in terms of course objectives and descriptions.

- d. If the institution offers alternative-delivery or compressed-format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonable for students to fulfill in the time allocated, such that the allocation of credit is justified?

Yes No

Comments:

The college provided the team sample syllabi for courses from all delivery types, and all were appropriate and consistent in terms of outcomes and course rigor.

- e. Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes No

Comments:

The policy is consistently applied to all instructional modalities.

C. Recommend HLC Follow-up, If Appropriate

Review the responses provided in this worksheet. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign HLC follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

Yes No

Rationale:

Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date:

D. Systematic Noncompliance in One or More Educational Programs With HLC Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

Did the team find systematic noncompliance in one or more education programs with HLC policies regarding the credit hour?

Yes No

Identify the findings:

Rationale:

Part 3. Clock Hours

Instructions

Review Section 5 of *Worksheet for Institutions*, including Supplements A3–A6. Before completing the worksheet below, answer the following question:

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours or programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

Yes No

If the answer is “Yes,” complete the “Worksheet on Clock Hours.”

Note: This worksheet is not intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.

Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (for which an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or

quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock hour programs might include teacher education, nursing or other programs in licensed fields.

Federal regulations require that these programs follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution's overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, the accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction so long as the student's work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8):

1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction

1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour includes at least 20 semester hours.

Worksheet on Clock Hours

A. Answer the Following Questions

1. Does the institution's credit-to-clock-hour formula match the federal formula?

Yes No

Comments:

2. If the credit-to-clock-hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class.

3. Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

Yes No

Comments:

4. Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes No

Comments:

B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit-to-clock-hour conversion?

Yes No

C. Recommend HLC Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

Yes No

Rationale:

Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date:

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:	Arizona Western College, AZ
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Open Pathway Comprehensive Evaluation
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	The institution was granted an extension until September 1, 2022 to become compliant to the faculty qualification requirement. HLC will review that the institution is in compliance with the faculty qualification requirement at the comprehensive evaluation following the extension date. Visit to include Federal Compliance reviewer: Dr. Peter Bemski.
DATES OF REVIEW:	2/4/2019 - 2/5/2019
<input type="checkbox"/> No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements	

Accreditation Status

Nature of Institution

Control: Public

Recommended Change: No change

Degrees Awarded: Associates

Recommended Change: No change

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2008 - 2009

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2018 - 2019

Recommended Change: 2028-29

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.

Recommended Change: No change



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Additional Location:

Prior HLC approval required.

Recommended Change: No change

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change: No change

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway

Open Pathway

Recommended Change: Eligible to Choose

Upcoming Events

Monitoring

Upcoming Events

None

Recommended Change: Embedded report on assessment of student learning required at mid-cycle review in Year 4.

Institutional Data

Educational Programs

Undergraduate

Certificate	70	_____
Associate Degrees	88	_____
Baccalaureate Degrees	0	_____

Graduate

Master's Degrees	0	_____
Specialist Degrees	0	_____
Doctoral Degrees	0	_____

Extended Operations

Branch Campuses

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

None

Recommended Change:

Additional Locations

Entrepreneurial Center, 1351 S. Redondo Center Drive, Yuma, AZ, 85365 - Active

La Paz Learning Center, 1109 S. Geronimo Avenue, Parker, AZ, 85344 - Active

Massage Therapy Center, 2451 South Avenue A, Yuma, AZ, 85364 - Active

San Luis Learning Center, 1340 N 8th Avenue, San Luis, AZ, 85349 - Active

San Luis Technology Institute, 1135 N. Main Street, San Luis, AZ, 85349 - Active

Somerton Center, 1011 N. Somerton Avenue, Somerton, AZ, 85350 - Active

Recommended Change:

Correspondence Education

None

Recommended Change:

Distance Delivery

13.1202 - Elementary Education and Teaching, Associate, AA in Education

24.0102 - General Studies, Associate, Associate in General Studies

43.0103 - Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Administration, Associate, Associate in Administration of Justice

50.0706 - Intermedia/Multimedia, Associate, AA in Media Arts

52.0101 - Business/Commerce, General, Associate, Associate - 52.0101 in Business

Contractual Arrangements

None

Recommended Change:

Consortial Arrangements

None

Recommended Change:
