



# North Idaho College

## Mid-Cycle Evaluation Report

Presented to  
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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North Idaho College  
1000 West Garden Avenue  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814  
[www.nic.edu](http://www.nic.edu)

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## List of Definitions and Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACT	College Readiness Assessment
APA	American Psychological Association
ASE	Automotive Service Excellence
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CCM/KPI	Common Campus Measure (NIC) or Key Performance Indicators (Idaho State). The terms may be used interchangeably.
COMPASS	College Placement Exam
GEM	General Education Matriculation
IE	Institutional Effectiveness
IO	Institutional Optimization
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
MCE	Mid-Cycle Evaluation
MLA	Modern Language Association
NATEF	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation
NIC	North Idaho College
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
SAT	College Admission Exam
SLOA	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TSA	Technical Skills Assessment
VFA	Voluntary Framework of Accountability
WPA	Council of Writing Program Administrators

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## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate the progress North Idaho College has made toward institutional planning, student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA), and evidence of mission fulfillment. After a brief institutional overview of North Idaho College and the college's Response to Recommendation 1 from the Year Seven Evaluation, the report addresses the questions from the Commission's Mid-Cycle Evaluation (MCE) Report Guidelines. Part I of this self-study includes an overview of the college's institutional assessment plan. Part II includes representative examples of assessment processes that demonstrate alignment with the mission and core themes. Part III includes an evaluative overview of the process and future work to accomplish in preparation for the college's 2020 Year Seven Evaluation.

## Brief Institutional Overview

Founded in 1933, North Idaho College (NIC or "the college") is a comprehensive two-year community college located in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The college serves a five-county area located within the Idaho Panhandle region—spanning more than 7,000 square miles and containing nearly 225,000 residents, almost 14 percent of the state's population. NIC is one of only three community colleges in Idaho, each of which serves a large geographical portion of the rural state. Northern Idaho is the only region of the state without a four-year resident college, underscoring NIC's importance as a regional provider for higher education.

NIC's programs reach the five northern counties of Idaho: Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone Counties. In addition to services on its main campus in Coeur d'Alene, NIC programs are offered in four Kootenai County locations at the Workforce Training Center, Howard Street, Atlas Building, and the Aerospace Center of Excellence; three county outreach centers located in the cities of Bonners Ferry, Kellogg, and Sandpoint; and the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Education Center in Plummer, Idaho. Courses at the outreach centers are delivered by interactive videoconferencing, over the Internet, and in face-to-face class sessions.

NIC offers associate degrees in 44 transfer programs and associate of applied science degrees and certificates in 42 career and technical education programs. In fall 2015, NIC served 5,546 students across all its academic programs, representing 3,510 full-time equivalent students. Also, in the 2014-2015 school year, 651 students were enrolled in adult basic education courses, and more than 4,600 students were enrolled in non-credit community education and workforce training courses.

NIC was first accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU or "the Commission") in 1950. Under the new standards, NIC completed a Year One Report in 2011 and a comprehensive Year Seven Report and Evaluation in spring 2013. In July 2013, the Commission reaffirmed NIC's institutional accreditation. The college began its first full seven-year accreditation cycle with its Year One Report in 2014.

## Response to Recommendations

NIC's April 2013 Year Seven Evaluation resulted in five recommendations. The Commission asked the college to respond to the recommendations using the following timeline:

- Recommendation 1 in the Spring 2016 Year Three report (now MCE Report);
- Recommendation 2 in the Spring 2014 Year One report as an updated response to Standard One;

- Recommendation 3 in a Spring 2018 Ad Hoc report;
- Recommendations 4 and 5 in a Spring 2014 Ad Hoc report.

Recommendations 2, 4, and 5 were addressed spring 2014 and met. Recommendation 1 pertains to institutional planning and is included herein since it is relevant to the criteria for this report. *See Appendix A: Response to Recommendation 1 – Institutional Planning.*

## **Part I: Institutional Assessment Plan**

### **Planning Introduction**

Informed and guided by standards 1, 3, 4, and 5, NIC engages in evidence-based assessment of its institutional and student learning outcomes, and is striving to better express what it means to fulfill its mission. The narrative in Part I is intended to describe the college's efforts to align its core themes with other college planning and assessment processes by answering the following questions:

- 1) Describe/explain your process of assessing mission fulfillment. Who is involved in the assessment? Is the Board of Trustees involved?
- 2) Are your core themes and objectives still valid? and
- 3) Is the institution satisfied that the core themes and indicators selected are providing sufficient evidence to assess mission fulfillment and sustainability? If not, what changes are you contemplating?

NIC's mission achievement is evaluated through strategic planning and the accreditation process. Strategic planning is designed to establish long-range priorities and goals to support the mission and ensure that employees and stakeholders are working toward those goals. Accreditation is a critical element of how NIC documents mission fulfillment and the quality of its programs and services. The college is working to tie these two separate but related processes more closely to the allocation of resources and continues to work toward a systematic way to strengthen the core themes to reflect better assessment results and our definition of mission fulfillment.

Since the 2013 Year Seven Evaluation, the college has worked hard to refine its planning processes. A significant dimension of strategic planning is a college-wide evaluation process, Institutional Optimization (IO), launched in the spring of 2014. Based on the Program Prioritization model developed by Dickeson (2010), the college undertook a comprehensive process of institutional review intended to help clarify the institution's purpose and align academic program and service priorities with resource allocation. With the endorsement of the president and his cabinet, the vice president for Instruction organized a working group to lead the systematic collection of data on, and analysis of all campus programs. At the time of this report, all 150 IO reports have been completed and reviewed. The results of this internal review by the President's Cabinet is being used to guide the development of the FY17 budget and to review and revise the college's master plans beginning spring 2016 (strategic, facilities/technology, and enrollment/educational plan coordination). The board of trustees has been well informed about this process since its inception, has received regular updates on the effort, and will receive a summative report that will inform the institutional master plans. *More detailed information about Institutional Optimization is described in Appendix A - NIC's Response to Recommendation 1.*

NIC's five core values, Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity, provide context for the strategic plan objectives and also serve as



the accreditation core themes. Planning and gathering evidence for the strategic plan and the core themes occurs at the institutional level through four related but distinct mechanisms: 1) Institutional Research and the Common Campus Measures Committee, 2) the Accreditation Executive Committee and the Core Theme Team, 3) Departmental and Divisional Review and Planning, and 4) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment. Figure 1 depicts the four interrelated mechanisms for gathering evidence and the institutional assessment structure at NIC. The structure and mechanisms are described in more detail below.

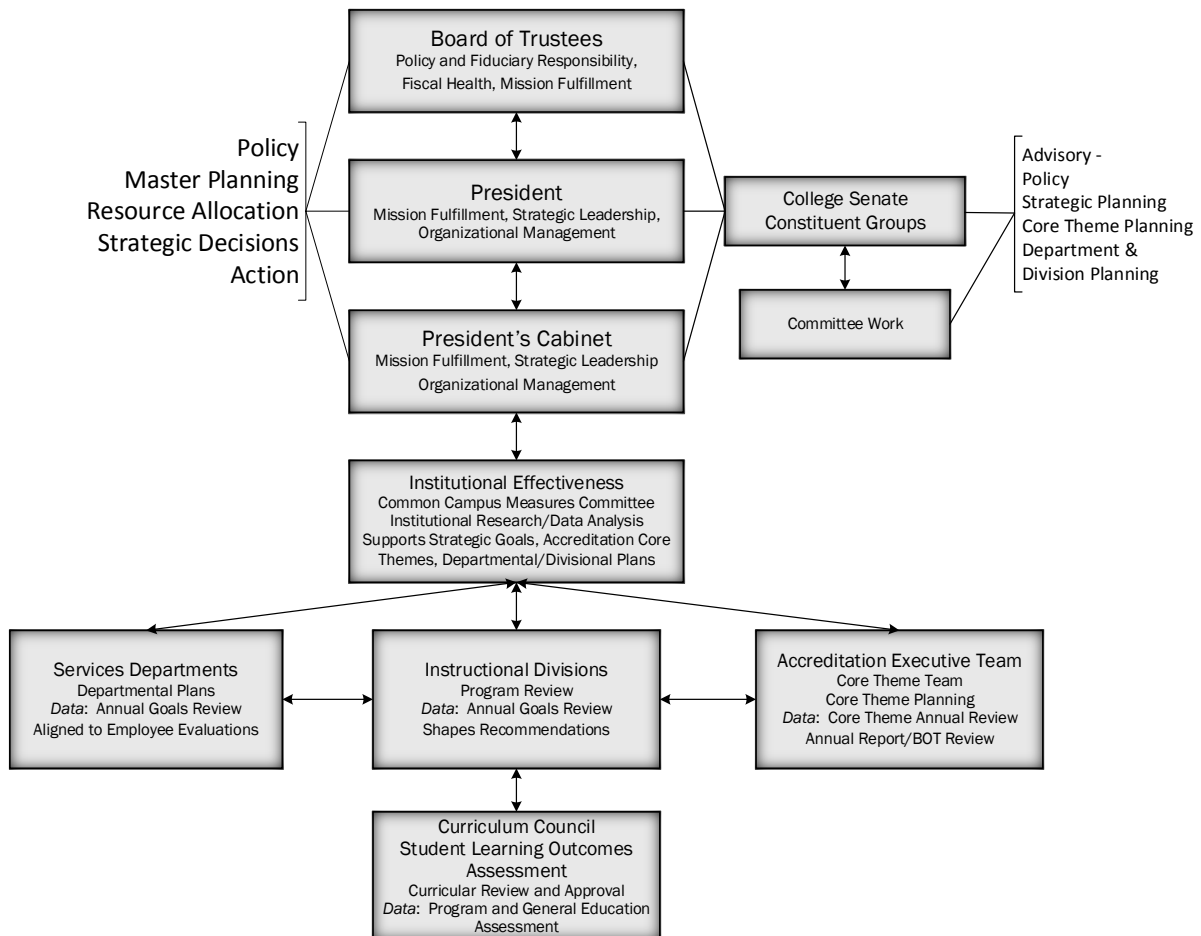


Figure 1 The institutional assessment structure and data sources.

The first mechanism for gathering evidence is Institutional Research and the Common Campus Measures Committee. The Student Services data and information analyst, the coordinator of assessment and accreditation, the director of Institutional Effectiveness (IE), and the senior administrative assistant to IE collaborate to develop and update institutional data sets referred to as the Common Campus Measures (CCMs). The work is managed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The measures are in a SharePoint list that can be found on the [IE Team Site](#). The CCMs inform the strategic plan, the core themes, program review, budget planning, and other assessment processes and have been online and available to NIC administration and the Management Team since 2012. Starting in June 2013, the original CCM Committee began meeting to create an ‘information toolbox’ that would be easily accessible. As a result, a designated folder on the NIC DataMart Report Server called Management Reports was created and now includes key reports available to all campus users. The CCM Committee

has since been redesigned to be more about the processes required to keep the CCMs updated and current. The committee now meets on a regular basis to review the CCMs. The use of NIC's IE Team Site has provided access to the CCMs and the DataMart Report Server has provided a collaboration environment that makes institutional reports and survey data available to all users.

The second, the Accreditation Executive Committee and the Core Theme Team assist with core theme planning, development and application. The Accreditation Executive Committee was created in 2010 when the new accreditation standards were implemented. The Accreditation Executive Committee is comprised of the vice presidents, dean of General Studies, director of Institutional Effectiveness, executive assistant to the president, and coordinator of assessment and accreditation. The Core Theme Team was created in 2015 to plan and assist with the core theme data to ensure it is appropriate, current, and is gathered and evaluated on an annual basis. The team is made up of campus constituents who hold responsibility for particular measures included in the core themes. The Core Theme Team provides recommendations for and analysis of data to the CCM Committee, and acts as a liaison to departments and divisions. The Core Theme Team's work is reviewed by the Accreditation Executive Committee and the President's Management Team. The President's Management Team is comprised of the President's Cabinet, all department directors, and all instructional deans and division chairs (*see Appendix B - Core Theme Team and Accreditation Executive Committee*).

The third mechanism, departmental and divisional plans, has been used to guide institutional planning and resource allocation for many years. Departmental plans in non-instructional services are reviewed annually. The departmental plans include initiatives and measures that support institutional and departmental goals. These initiatives are prioritized within the department and at the institutional level by the President's Cabinet. Priorities are then used to develop annual budgets and to guide long-term resource planning. Many of these initiatives involve multiple departments, providing a means for cross-departmental planning. Instructional program review occurs on a five-year rotation cycle. The analysis is performed by external faculty evaluators who represent similar fields and disciplines. Faculty members within the program prepare the reports in collaboration with their division chair and dean. The program review process is a critical factor in initiating change for instructional programs across campus. Historically, instructional program review has been used to guide long-term instructional programming priorities in many divisions, but has not been used in all divisions to consistently guide annual planning and budgeting processes. To create a method of annual reporting in instruction, the college established a core theme measure to implement annual program reports. These reports are under development. *Examples of instructional program review reports and departmental plans are available on the [Accreditation SharePoint Team Site](#).*

Finally, the Curriculum Council and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOA Committee), along with the instructional division chairs, deans, and vice president, facilitate SLOA at the course, program, and degree level. The Curriculum Council, led by faculty who are the voting members, with staff support from Instruction and Student Services, ensures that student learning outcomes are created and that the curriculum is appropriate, well-aligned, and rigorous. The SLOA Committee supports assessment processes in the divisions. The SLOA Coordinator serves on the Accreditation Executive Team and leads the Core Theme Team. The SLOA Committee is made up of faculty from each instructional division on campus, a faculty librarian, and the director of Institutional Effectiveness. The deans serve as ex-officio members of the committee. A three-year SLOA Plan was developed in 2009. In 2013, Idaho implemented a statewide General Education Reform initiative and NIC revised the SLOA plan accordingly.

SLOA has been in place for many years, and the results of these processes have been used to make improvements to curriculum, teaching pedagogy, and student learning. The concept of consistently and formally using SLOA results to guide planning is relatively new and will take more time to develop and implement. Further description of General Education Reform and SLOA work is included in Part II of this report. *The 2016-2020 SLOA Plan is attached as Appendix C.*

These planning teams and reporting mechanisms are designed to integrate the core themes with planning. Some have been in place for many years and some have been newly developed. All of the teams are responsible for identifying methods of assessing institutional and student performance, gathering and analyzing data, and making recommendations for improvements to management and senior administrators. Members of the President's Management Team and the President's Cabinet analyze multiple data sets and utilize discussions across all levels of the institution in the development of the annual budget. The board of trustees maintains final control over the establishment of the institutional budget. The college is progressing toward consistently using data to guide resource allocation, planning and decision-making. *More detailed discussion about institutional planning is presented in Appendix A - NIC's Response to Recommendation 1.*

## **Assessment of Mission Fulfillment**

In spring 2011, the NIC Board of Trustees directed the college to establish a Long-Range Visioning and Planning Committee to review the mission, vision, and values for the college, and to create a new strategic plan. This review coincided with the transition to NWCCU's revised standards. The committee recommended, and the board approved, the following mission, vision, and values statements for the college.

*Mission:* North Idaho College meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and the northern Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

*Vision:* As a comprehensive community college, North Idaho College strives to provide accessible, affordable, quality learning opportunities. North Idaho College endeavors to be an innovative, flexible leader recognized as a center of educational, cultural, economic, and civic activities by the communities it serves.

### *Values:*

**Student Success:** A vibrant, lifelong learning environment that engages students as partners in achieving educational goals to enhance their quality of life.

**Educational Excellence:** High academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes.

**Community Engagement:** Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs.

**Stewardship:** Economic and environmental sustainability through leadership, awareness, and responsiveness to changing community resources.

**Diversity:** A learning environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all individuals and encourages cultural competency.

NIC demonstrates achievement of mission fulfillment by demonstrating an acceptable level of performance of its core themes, both individually and collectively. The mean of three years of data is used as a baseline, where available. NIC uses data from a variety of reporting sources including IPEDS, internal measures, state longitudinal data, and most recently, the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA). The measures were developed over time by Accreditation Core Theme Steering Committees, in consultation with staff, faculty, management, and executive leadership. Most recently, the 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee worked with the Accreditation Executive Committee to further define the measures (*See Appendix D - 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee*). Each measure is rated on a scale of 1 to 3 by comparing the current three-year mean to the expectation: 3 = meets expectations, 2 = progressing, or 1 = does not meet expectations. Each core theme is evaluated using the mean data for each measure compared against the expectation, and then the mean score of all measures for each outcome, objective, and core theme. The following scale is used:

- 2.3-3.0 = Meets Expectations
- 1.1-2.2 = Consistently Progressing
- 1.0 = Does Not Meet Expectations

The college is achieving its mission when the mean for all core themes shows the college is either “consistently progressing” or “meeting expectations.” A core theme that is not meeting expectations or progressing indicates actions the college needs to take to better fulfill its mission. The measures used for accreditation are reviewed each year to ensure applicability and to ensure proper expectations are set. For the first time in spring 2016, the core themes were formally evaluated, published, and presented to the NIC Board of Trustees. *The five core themes, objectives, outcomes, measures, baseline data, and expectations are attached as Appendix E – 2016 Core Theme Report.*

### **Core Theme Viability and Changes**

NIC’s core themes have evolved since 2010, when the campus participated in the selection of its original core themes: Student Success, Educational Excellence, and Community Engagement. Between 2010 and 2013, the college underwent extensive changes in senior leadership. NIC then completed the full year seven comprehensive evaluation in 2013 in a highly compressed timeline. As noted by the peer evaluators, these extensive and overlapping changes created confusion about the relationship between NIC’s core themes, values, and strategic goals as represented in the report. In response to the evaluation, the college renamed its core themes in its 2014 Year One Report in an attempt to better align the core themes, values, and strategic goals. Subsequently, with the help of the 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee, the college has now adopted its five values as its core themes: Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity. The five core themes also frame the strategic plan and departmental and divisional planning goals.

Collectively, the core themes objectives and measures are deemed sufficient to assess mission fulfillment. Assessment of mission fulfillment is of course ongoing through collection, review, and analysis of data relative to benchmarks. NIC will continue to develop baseline data and expectations over the next two years as appropriate. In some cases, additional measures may be needed to reflect comprehensive achievement of the outcome. During the academic year 2016-2017, the college will focus on further integrating learning outcomes and assessment and program review results to ensure the results are sufficient to inform decision making.

To date, the core theme measures have been annually updated and reviewed. In 2016, an annual Core Theme Report was formally implemented and provided to the board of trustees and

campus as part of the MCE process. *See Appendix E – 2016 Core Theme Report.* Moving forward, a regular review will be done, in part, through the annual Core Theme Report prepared fall semester for the President’s Cabinet and Management Team. These decision makers will then make recommendations to each operational area responsible for a measure. Operational areas will be responsible for suggesting changes and for strengthening measures as necessary. The annual report cycle will facilitate the use of assessment information in planning and resource allocation. The recommendations will be incorporated into the budgeting cycle for that year. Changes to measures will be vetted by the Accreditation Executive Committee and the Core Theme Team. The core theme scoring information will be available at the beginning of the budget cycle, and again when strategic, board and President’s Cabinet planning occurs. The college recognizes the need to continuously utilize an annual evaluation of its mission and to enhance the campus-wide understanding of the role of planning, assessment, and improvement in decision making. *Table 2 in Appendix A illustrates the Institutional Continuous Planning Cycle and schedule of reports.*

## **Part II: Using Core Themes to Evaluate Mission Fulfillment**

Part II of this report highlights two examples of student learning outcomes assessment that illustrate how the college is using assessment to evaluate achievement of core themes and mission fulfillment. The two examples are 1) The General Education Writing Program Assessment by the English Department, and 2) Career and Technical Education Program Assessment in the Automotive Technology program. These examples are model programs that emphasize the alignment between the core themes, objectives, measures, and outcomes that lead to mission fulfillment. As requested by the Commission, for each example the analysis will answer the following questions:

- Are your indicators, for the selected examples, proving to be meaningful? Do you have too many indicators or too few?
- What has the institution learned and what changes are contemplated? What has been your progress to date using the data? Do the data tell you what you are looking for?
- How are data collected, analyzed, and utilized and the findings communicated to constituents?

### **Program Example 1: General Education Writing Program Assessment – English Department**

The goal of general education at NIC is to provide all students with learning experiences to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for productive and meaningful lives and to be contributing members of society. Historically, these learning experiences were expressed as a framework of nine abilities: Critical/Creative Thinking and Problem Solving; Communication; Mathematical, Scientific, and Symbolic Reasoning; Historical, Cultural, Environmental, and Global Awareness; Aesthetic Response; Social Responsibility/Citizenship; Information Literacy; Valuing/Ethical Reasoning; and Wellness.

In 2013, Idaho initiated a statewide General Education Reform. General Education Matriculation (GEM) Reform involved disciplinary groups of faculty from all Idaho public higher education institutions who met and then wrote competencies for six agreed-upon areas of general education. The faculty disciplinary teams also developed shared rubrics for course and program assessment of GEM competencies. In 2014 and 2015, all courses currently in the general education curriculum were reviewed and aligned to the new GEM competencies and approved by the GEM Council and Curriculum Council. As a result of the statewide GEM

Review, effective fall 2015, the college has a new framework for general education that draws from and embeds the original nine abilities. The GEM Competencies are Written Communication, Oral Communication, Mathematical Ways of Knowing, Scientific Ways of Knowing, Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing, and Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing. In addition, the reform provided for institutionally designated general education areas, which NIC defined as competencies for Wellness and Integrative Inquiry. Collectively, the GEM and institutional competencies are the basis for assessing NIC's general education program. *Examples of GEM Course proposals are included on the [Accreditation SharePoint Team Site](#).*

## Writing Assessment Plan

**Core Theme 2:** Educational Excellence

**Objective 2.1:** Students will develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success

**Outcome:** Students attain the expected learning outcomes of courses and programs

**Measure:** Student Learning Outcomes Assessment goals are met annually

One of the Educational Excellence Core Theme measures is “student learning outcomes assessment goals are met annually.” The core theme measure was developed to ensure that systematic assessment activities are progressing in all of the divisions. The following description of assessment in the Writing Program indicates how NIC is capable of utilizing data to improve student learning. This example also reflects the effort to shape meaningful assessment practice across a period of change in the general education curriculum. The writing program is an exemplary model of successful and mature assessment activities.

The English Department's writing program began developing a departmental outcomes assessment plan in 1999 as a result of the Program Review process. This plan began taking shape by researching and reading best practices and led to regular division-wide discussions and retreats to review models of writing program assessment. Faculty developed rubrics for rating student writing, and composed a shared statement of “assumptions” about the expected outcomes.

Throughout this entire outcomes assessment process, the division has formulated and asked a set of guiding questions:

1. Are students who complete the writing program meeting the outcomes?
2. Do these outcomes match the General Education Abilities (now, the GEM Competencies) to which our courses link? If so, how well? If not, how can we adjust them?
3. How are instructors assessing whether students meet these course outcomes? Are instructors assessing this at all (other than with grades)?
4. How can we unify the English courses across the board so that, despite our different teaching approaches to the material, students can leave our writing course sequence (099, 101, and 102) and say “yes, I achieved, with varying degrees of competency, all these listed outcomes?”

### How are data collected, analyzed, and communicated?

During the 2006–2013 period, the department worked to create a uniform “across-the-board” entrance essay for all sections of English 102, the second required composition course, that holistically identified how well students demonstrate the outcomes that they should have achieved having a) completed the required introductory English 101 or b) by placing out of prior

English courses due to ACT, COMPASS, or SAT scores. This entrance essay served as a broad “pre-course” measure of the range of student ability at the start of 102, and also as a writing sample that is kept on hand through the semester. The department next created a uniform “across-the-board” exit essay for English 102 sections that indicated how well students were achieving the required course outcomes, which was administered during the final weeks of the course. This work has led to more consistency in all sections of English 102, in instructor course design, in the assignments used to help students meet the course outcomes, and in writing assignment sequences. These changes are due in large part to the embedded assessment process.

In 2013, the department shifted its focus on assessment to English 101 classes and created a new 101 rubric tied closely to the GEM Competencies for Written Communication. Like the 102 course, the 101 assessment is embedded through a synthesis assignment given near or at the end of the semester. During fall of 2014 and spring of 2015, the department began collecting an array of four to five of these synthesis papers from each full- and part-time instructor’s English 101 class. Using the new common rubric all instructors provided examples of a 4, 3, 2, 1, and a 0 score to the assistant chairs of the English Department. The department normed a full range of these essays during the fall 2015 department retreat and found that they had an acceptable level of interrater reliability. The department is following this process again for all 101 instructors after fall 2015 to collect additional data on how successfully NIC students are meeting the outcomes of English 101.

Since that initial program review, the English Department has formed committees that have reviewed each course: English 099, English 101, and English 102. The department has collected a variety of data on students. First-day writing examples are used to evaluate students’ entry level skills. Common rubrics are used and norming sessions occur. Entry and exit essays are used and random samples are taken. Data is collected on a formal basis, housed by the appropriate assistant chair, and then distributed for department assessment purposes only. A report, written at the end of each academic year, serves as a guide or future directions for improvements to outcomes and instruction. As assessment data is gathered, it is analyzed and discussed extensively as a mechanism for identifying strengths and challenges and as a means of implementing positive changes in the writing courses and in the writing outcomes with which students leave NIC.

### **What has been learned? What do the data tell?**

Suggested changes to the outcomes or instruction continue to be a natural outgrowth of the department’s assessment process. Here is a brief description of some of these changes: all of the classes in the composition sequence have undergone outcomes revision as a direct result of departmental assessment practices and discussion. In English 099, the faculty added a full-length work of nonfiction to the class curriculum as a result of assessment discussions. In English 101, the faculty added in a unified “purpose of education” unit in all sections and created a faculty-generated list of readings related to this topic. The department also aligned to the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) standards for college level writing in English 101 throughout the assessment discussions. In English 102, as a direct result of assessment processes, faculty have aligned their approaches to information literacy instruction and have made efforts to work more closely with the faculty at Molstead Library, which recently expanded its instruction services, to foster information literacy collaboration. The faculty have sought for and achieved greater cohesion and more uniformity in approaches to teaching source-based writing (integrating quotations from other works) and in approaches to standards for documentation (both MLA and APA formats). All of these examples “close the loop” of

assessment, because the resulting data has an influence on teaching practices and tells the college how well our students are learning writing concepts and achieving the course outcomes.

The meetings that the department has conducted thus far in this outcomes assessment effort have led to lively discussion and debate about NIC's English 102, English 101, and English 099 classroom curriculum and practices. The norming data tells the faculty whether they are in the same neighborhood regarding grading and scoring practices. The formal results from the English 102 exit essays and the English 101 synthesis assignment have similarly influenced the ways the department and the faculty plan classes in order to have students get the most out of their experience in terms of achieving the course outcomes.

The English Department at NIC has systematically used data to modify curriculum, measure student achievement, and promote ongoing examination of teaching and learning. It has also, in collaboration with the library, advanced information literacy. The improvements made provide an excellent example of how SLOA can be used to strengthen the curriculum and student learning. *The most recent exit and entrance essay results and a discussion of the English Department's assessment practices are attached as Appendix F – English Department Assessment Report and Timeline.*

### **Are the indicators meaningful? Are there too many? Too few?**

The writing program has solid measures for English 101 and 102 and thus indicates that in this critical required component of general education, the college has a replicable model for ongoing, embedded course assessment of student learning. Additional measures in this area should, however, be developed, which may include pass rates for 101 and for 102, and indicators of student proficiency in writing in other NIC courses and contexts.

It is difficult to find institutional measures that specifically encompass and evidence all of the student learning that occurs at NIC. SLOA processes should encompass all points in the curriculum. The instructional divisions and the SLOA Committee have chosen to develop a SLOA Plan that includes a set of institutional student learning outcomes goals, and the actions intended to move the campus toward accomplishing those goals. The accomplishment of these actions is measured annually using a Likert-type scale. The three-year mean of the percentage of annual goals achieved is then used as the Educational Excellence Core Theme measure. Thus, although a single measure is used in the core theme, it encompasses NIC's institutional-level assessment goals. *The revised SLOA Plan, outlining instructional assessment goals, is attached as Appendix C.*

### **Program Example 2: Career and Technical Education Assessment in the Automotive Technology Program**

The goal of NIC's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs is to provide rigorous, blended college-preparatory and career-oriented instruction that leads to a certificate or degree, and that enables graduates to gain employment in the field upon program completion. SLOA in NIC's CTE programs serves many important purposes. While the primary focus of assessment is the demonstration of proficiency in skills aligned to industry standards, assessment is also used to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum, teaching practices, and specific and targeted support services such as tutoring and program design. Collectively, these assessments provide the data for helping to ensure curricular currency, faculty preparation and instructional improvements.



## Automotive Program Assessment Plan

**Core Theme 1:** Student Success

**Objective 1.2:** Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals

**Outcome:** Students achieve their educational goals

**Measure:** Career Program Completers, percentage employed in related field

**Core Theme 2:** Educational Excellence

**Objective 2.2:** Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success.

**Outcome:** Students attain the expected learning outcomes of courses and programs

**Measure:** CTE Technical Skills Assessment (TSAs) results indicate students perform at or above the State mean.

Two core theme measures are used to assess the success of NIC's CTE programs. These two measures are the Student Success Core Theme measure "Career program completers, the percentage employed in related field" and the Educational Excellence Core Theme measure "CTE Technical Skills Assessment (TSA) results indicate successful pass rates." The following description of assessment in the Automotive Technology program indicates how NIC utilizes these data to evidence student success and learning in CTE.

The Automotive Technology program at NIC consists of a one-year intermediate technical certificate, a two-year advanced technical certificate, and an associate of applied science degree. The program is designed to prepare students for employment as entry-level technicians in the automotive repair industry. All ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) areas are taught through the use of lecture, mock-ups, and actual customer vehicle repair. The Automotive Technology program has been accredited by the National Automotive Technician's Education Foundation (NATEF) since 1999. The NATEF accreditation requires that a program meet twelve standards 1) Purpose, 2) Administration, 3) Learning Resources, 4) Finances, 5) Student Services, 6) Advisory Committee, 7) Instruction, 8) Equipment, 9) Facilities, 10) Instructional Faculty, 11) Work-Based Learning, and 12) Learning. A task list developed by the ASE serves as the basis for a NATEF accredited program. NATEF serves as a way to examine the structure, resources and quality of NIC's Automotive Technology program with the goal to improve the quality of training and education. An advisory committee made up of regional industry representatives including business owners, technicians, and parts and service managers from dealerships and independent shops act as guides for the curriculum.

The program undergoes a program review by NATEF every five years and by its local Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) at 2 ½ year intervals. The evaluation teams examine the program structure, resources, and quality of the education and training offered by the program against NATEF standards. These standards reflect the skills and knowledge that students must master to be successful in the industry. The TAC (made up of regional representatives) also reviews curriculum and makes program recommendations during semi-annual meetings. To prepare automotive students for career readiness, the program assessments align with the NATEF learning standards that include health and safety practices, specific industry practices, workplace readiness standards, academic standards, and digital literacy/technical application standards. The program relies on feedback from its TAC, curriculum maps, and task listings to track student achievement, as follows:

- ASE subject task lists tied to NATEF standards. Subject areas include worksheets, mock-up tasks, and actual customer vehicle repair/practical labs.

- Lab performance using a combination of job sheets and customer work orders, and lab packets. Students are evaluated on the completion of repair orders that document customer concerns; the cause of malfunction, correction, and parts installed/billed; and a narrative of the repair process.
- Individual competency profiles and tasks through Student Skills Inventory packets. The Student Skills Inventory states the objective for the instruction and cross-references to appropriate worksheets, practical lab exercises, or textbook information. An instructor evaluates the exercises to ensure the student demonstrated industry-level competency.
- Students demonstrate competency through mock-up and actual customer vehicle repairs, practical lab exercises, and student-led demonstrations.
  - Students are responsible for maintaining a personal skills inventory
  - Skills inventories are evaluated against an industry standard of performance and are reviewed at the end of each lab course with the instructor.
  - Student skills inventories and level of performance are a component of the student's summative employment portfolio.
- Written tests developed to align to ASE test format in preparation for industry certification.
- Industry Technical Skills Assessment (TSA) at the end of the program.

### **How are data collected, analyzed, and communicated?**

Each division collects CTE assessment and placement data annually. TSA exam results are analyzed by the dean, the division chair, the program faculty, and the TAC. As required, the results are reported annually to the Idaho State Division of Professional-Technical Education. NIC's CTE faculty design ongoing assessments aligned to program competencies and ultimately to the capstone program outcomes. The job placement measure provides evidence of the end goal of CTE programs—successful employment in a position in the field of study. The Automotive Technology program has a strong program advisory committee that regularly participates in curriculum review. The assessment results inform the curriculum and help faculty to maintain current and rigorous programs of study (see “what has been learned,” below). Assessment results are also communicated in the program review evaluation reports, and to academic leadership for planning purposes and resource allocation.

### **What has been learned? What do the data tell?**

The results from the Automotive Technology program are positive for these two measures. The state approved TSA for this program is the ASE-NATEF Skills Standards Exam in Engine Repair, Brakes, Electrical, and Manual Drive Trains. In 2013 and 2014, the student pass rate on all four ASE skill area assessments was 100 percent. The results did indicate there was room for improvement in manual drivetrain repair (average aggregate of 77 percent). As a result, the instructors refined the course outline to align better with current industry trends, they adopted a more proactive approach to the content delivery by using videos and mock-ups to illustrate better repair procedure principles, and made additional learning resources available in an online format (Blackboard) to students. The results of these changes will be measured in the collection of this year's data.

The overall percentage of students employed in industry-related fields has varied over the past few years. This measure reflects aggregated data for the entire institution. The 2013 percentage for all programs equaled 50.25 percent. The expectation of this measure is to achieve 65 percent for all programs. For the Automotive Technology program in 2014, out of 12 program completers, 83 percent were employed in a related field or continued their education. The overall program completion rate is high (FY 13=98 percent; FY 14 = 98percent; and FY 15 = 96 percent); however, tracking students beyond completion remains a challenge. The measure of

placement is widely used and is a strong indicator of student and program success. Although instructors do know that placement in industry-related employment is strong, student survey response rates are low and the methods for tracking and maintaining this data need to be improved.

### **Are the indicators meaningful? Are there too many? Too few?**

The Automotive Technology program measures are meaningful. TSA capstone exams and job placement measures are a common critical component used to evaluate program success across all of NIC's CTE programs. TSA capstone exam results are an indicator of workplace preparedness and are vital to NIC's mission. Placement of students in related employment is a measure of both student and program success that is used by all CTE programs in Idaho and nationally. Both of these measures help NIC to see whether specific CTE programs are preparing students for career success. The accomplishment of these assessment activities are collected, evaluated, and reported annually within the CTE divisions and are then reflected in the NIC's core theme evaluation and reported to the Idaho State Division of Professional-Technical Education.

The data for the Automotive Technology program indicates that students have achieved their educational outcomes. However, this MCE has caused the college to take a closer look at the strength of the data and methods of data collection for CTE programs. As indicated in Part I of this report, NIC will continue to develop the core theme measures and better methods of collecting data over the next several years.

## **Part III: Moving Forward to Year Seven**

Completing the MCE Report has clarified the progress the college has made in the areas of planning and assessment and revealed areas of positive improvement and areas where the college needs to do more to evidence mission fulfillment. Although great progress has been made to develop an institutional assessment structure, the college must continue to focus on several areas for improvement to ensure continuous progress toward its year seven goals. NIC has identified the following areas to improve between now and the Year Seven Evaluation in 2020.

### **Institutional Planning and Assessment**

The college embarked on an ambitious comprehensive review of all of its programs and services through Institutional Optimization (IO) to inform the next phase of strategic, facilities/technology, and educational planning. This comprehensive institutional planning process is underway at the time of this MCE report. NIC has taken several steps toward integrating the core themes and measures into its planning processes. The mission and core themes framed the IO questions and all programs used common data sets to prepare their reports, and underwent common analysis. The results from IO will allow the college to more closely tie planning and budgeting. Also, the IO results have revealed several other possibilities for improvement that will serve the college into the future. First, some institutional data sets may need to be revised or further defined. Second, many areas on campus are relatively unfamiliar with examining their program outcomes as evidenced in the reports. Participation in this outcomes-based process will provide results that can help the college strengthen future program goals and measures, resulting in improved outcomes. Following the IO recommendations and the review of all institutional master plans (*See Appendix A, Table 1: "Make the Plan"*), the college will transition to its newly revised continuous planning cycle (*See Appendix A, Table 2: Continuous Planning Cycle*). The college will have three years to fine-tune its planning and evaluation processes and complete its first, full seven-year cycle in 2020.

### **Evaluation of Mission Fulfillment**

NIC completed its first seven-year accreditation cycle in three years amidst many other institutional changes. Acceptance of the institutional core theme planning and assessment process has grown, although there may still be a lack of understanding of the meaning of the core themes at some levels. Assessment of mission fulfillment occurs annually and is accomplished through evaluation of all core theme measures. The mean of three years of baseline data is compared to the expectation for each measure, and then the mean score is calculated for all measures, outcomes, objectives, and the core theme. The college is achieving mission fulfillment when the mean score for all core themes combined shows the college is “consistently progressing” or “meeting expectations.” This method of assessment is clear and concise and is widely understood by college leadership; it is perhaps less understood by all college constituents. The college will work on broadening understanding of evaluating mission fulfillment.

### **Departmental and Divisional Planning and Reporting**

Annual area reporting occurs and provides a method for ongoing evaluation of programs. In services, the annual review of departmental plans and goals is well established, but there is a need to identify and focus on program outcomes. In the instructional areas, the five-year program review process is rigorous and well-established. However, division annual reports have not been formalized or fully integrated into planning and resource allocation. Implementing formal annual reports in instruction is under development. The college will continue to strengthen all program outcomes, to develop better methods for collecting evidence of successful outcomes, and to tie departmental and divisional planning processes to the core themes.

### **Core Theme Viability**

The baseline data for each measure is calculated by averaging the prior three years of results. For the quantitative measures, an expectation is set. These measures capture incremental improvement or erosion. The qualitative descriptive measures, although useful, still need work to verify what “meeting target” means. Development of many of these measures will continue. The core theme measures have been annually updated and reviewed. However, the annual Core Theme Report was implemented for the first time this year. As indicated in Parts I and II, it is anticipated that additional measures may be needed to reflect achievement of some core theme outcomes and better mechanisms for data collection in some areas must be developed and implemented.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

As mentioned previously, a three-year SLOA Plan was developed in 2009, updated in 2012, and revised in 2015, as a result of the statewide GEM reform initiative and to include CTE and program-level assessment goals. Two model examples of program assessment were provided in this report. The long standing and ongoing assessment activities for written communication, information literacy, mathematics, oral communication, and scientific reasoning continue and where appropriate are being reframed. Assessment practices in the CTE programs are well-established, solid and will continue. While many programs exhibit the same methods of assessment, work must continue on the existing SLOA foundation to strengthen student assessment processes in all divisions. Changes and improvements to teaching methods and curriculum will continue to be made using SLOA data. Over the next four years, the college will also work on using this data more fully at the institutional level to guide program planning and resource allocation. *See the examples of recent SLOA Assessment Reports on the [Accreditation SharePoint Team Site](#).*

## **Conclusion**

Changes have been implemented to associate the core themes with all planning. The process is evolving, and the mechanisms for data collection are in place in most areas. NIC has established a successful method of evaluating mission fulfillment, and steady progress has been made toward formalizing annual evaluation. At a higher level, although the core themes are well supported, the data collection and results must be fed back into institutional planning in an established way to ensure priority and resources are available to sustain programs. In preparation for the Year Seven Evaluation in 2020, the college will continue to work on making the complex view of mission fulfillment based on the core themes widely understood by all.

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## Response to Recommendation 1

**Recommendation 1:** While evidence of effort is apparent, the reviewers recommend the institution fully engage in integrated, comprehensive planning that offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies and is informed by the collection of clearly-defined data used to evaluate mission fulfillment. Such planning should include budget and capital projections that inform resource allocation and support core theme progress. It is also recommended that, through the planning process, the institution ensure the creation of appropriate learning environments for all programs (including those at off-campus locations), wherever offered and however delivered, in order to effectively support student learning (Standard 1.B.1, Standard 1.B.2, Standard 2.C.1, Standard 2.D.1, Standard 2.F.2, Standard 2.F.5, and Standard 3.A).

### Institutional Response to Recommendation 1:

In spring 2013, after the Year Seven evaluation, the college started to plan an approach to revise strategic and budget planning processes, to align resource allocation with the strategic plan and to integrate the core themes into planning processes. The initial action taken was to implement an institutional review of all college programs and services, Institutional Optimization (IO). The two-year IO process was completed spring 2016 and resulted in recommendations to guide the master plan review that is underway at the time of this report.

### Master Planning

**Institutional Optimization.** The Institutional Optimization process was initiated in the fall of 2013 as an opportunity to conduct an institutional self-evaluation using the Program Prioritization Framework developed by Dickeson (2010). The committee assembled to explore the possibility of an institutional self-evaluation. The committee reviewed background information on program prioritization and discussion and justification for how the process might benefit North Idaho College. Based on the discussion and deliberation of the committee, it was decided to continue to pursue a process of self-evaluation of all programs and services.

During Spring Semester 2014, additional planning meetings were held, interest in the initiative increased and the process thereafter was described as Institutional Optimization (IO). The committee, which had representation from across campus, determined a steering committee was needed with an even greater representation of the various programs to ensure the success of the process. IO was motivated by a desire to raise the college's ability to provide distinguished educational programs and to provide support to all the students it serves. Led by a core committee under the vice president for Instruction, by Fall Semester 2014, a steering committee of approximately 28 staff, faculty, and administrators began meeting to develop a plan to implement Institutional Optimization.

By Spring Semester 2015, the campus community was presented with a timeline for the IO process. All programs (defined as "any program, process, or activity that utilizes resources from NIC") would be required to submit a report by October 30, 2015. The committee continued to develop templates, data tables, and scoring rubrics. Preliminary documents were provided as guidance in June; the final templates were distributed near the beginning of September 2015. College wide, 151 reports were submitted for review. The reports were divided into two major categories; instruction (81) and campus services (70). Approximately 80 staff, faculty, and administrators were trained to be reviewers. Rubrics developed by the core team and steering committee were used as a basis to score each report. Each report was reviewed by three

different reviewers. The reports were assigned in a manner to prevent bias; an individual who worked in maintenance, for example, would not be assigned any of the reports from that area.

IO was a highly participatory process that actively involved a wide cross-section of campus in data collection, review and analysis. The process created both a considerable dialog on campus and concern about how the results may be used and potential fiscal impacts. IO has provided valuable results to inform more data-based planning decisions. The templates, rubrics and other planning documents are available on the [Accreditation Team Site library](#).

The recommendations from the IO process will be used to guide a review of the master plans. The Accreditation Executive Team outlined a timeline for master planning review, and a revised institutional planning cycle. In March/April 2016, the master planning review will commence. The review process will continue through spring 2017 and then transition to a continuous institutional planning cycle. *The steps for making the plan are outlined in Table 1, below.*

*Table 1. Master Planning: Make the Plan*

Master Planning: "Make the Plan"		
March/April	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of Common Campus Measures (CCMs) / Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Strategic Outcome Measures from prior fiscal year</li> <li>- Review of Core Theme components and measures</li> </ul>
August	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional Planning and Visioning Retreat</li> <li>- Development/revision of Campus Strategic Goals/Metrics</li> </ul>
Sept/Oct	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update of Departmental Plans/Departmental Goals in support of institutional Strategic Initiatives/Plans</li> </ul>
Oct/Nov	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional Review of Divisional Plans and Goals; Review and support of Budget Initiatives that align with Strategic Plan/Initiatives</li> <li>- Review of alignment to ensure support of Core Themes</li> </ul>
March/April	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget Development - Tied with Strategic Plan and built in support of Departmental/Divisional Plans and aligned to Budget Initiatives</li> </ul>
May/June	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employee Appraisals - Establishment of goals for employees for the upcoming year in support of the Strategic Plan and aligned Departmental/Divisional Goals</li> </ul>

## Continuous Planning

Currently, the annual planning process begins in summer with the board and President’s Cabinet retreats, followed by instructional and departmental retreats. During each retreat, the participants review achievements for the previous year and the latest relevant institutional data. Guided by the strategic priorities for the current year, each team identifies its strategic approaches for the year to support the core theme objectives and the strategic plan. The revised continuous planning cycle now incorporates annual review of the core themes and aligns the budget planning to the review of institutional plans. *The continuous planning cycle is outlined in Table 2, below.*

**Operational and Core Theme Planning.** The strategic plan provides operational direction and support for the core theme objectives and college mission. Each year, using the core theme objectives and the strategic plan goals, the college identifies priorities based on the previous year’s achievements and projected needs. Divisions, programs, and departments use these priorities to guide their planning. In addition to the annual strategic planning and budget planning cycles, during the year, administrative units, college-wide committees, and individual divisions, programs, and departments meet weekly, biweekly, or monthly, to address



operational issues, and select or implement action plans that support the college’s core theme objectives and strategic goals.

**Integration of Planning and Budgeting.** Divisions and departments follow the same planning cycle. Each division or department updates or revises its strategic actions during the departmental/divisional planning processes. These plans must also align with the college’s core theme objectives, when appropriate. As part of this process, each division and department reviews and records its achievements and creates action plans for future improvements.

**Input from Constituencies.** Faculty, staff, and administrators provide input and feedback through the various planning processes, through governance processes, and through committee work.

*Table 2. The Continuous Planning Cycle*

Continuous Cycle: “Measure Success, Review the Progress & Adjust the Plan”		
July	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Board/President’s Cabinet Annual Planning Retreats</li> <li>- Employee review of goals and outcomes - aligned with the Employee Appraisal Process</li> <li>- Review performance outcomes from fiscal year - tie back to impact from Departmental/Divisional Goals/Employee Goals</li> <li>- Publish Campus Measures related to Strategic Plan CCM/KPI Outcomes</li> </ul>
August	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment and analysis of Core Theme Outcomes, measure progress, verify relevance of objectives and adjust as needed</li> <li>- Instructional and Services Retreats</li> <li>- Review of CCM/KPIs for the immediately prior FY End by President’s Cabinet</li> <li>- Utilize outcomes to affect changes to Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
Sept/Oct	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of Departmental/Divisional Measures against plan/adjust plan as needed</li> <li>- Develop Budget needs for next phase of plan in support of Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
Oct/Nov	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional assessment of outcomes (CCMs/KPIs) based on Institutional and Departmental/Divisional Plans</li> <li>- Development of Campus Budget Initiatives to support year 2 of Strategic Plan</li> <li>- Review Core Themes and ensure outcomes align to plans</li> <li>- Prepare Annual Core Theme Report</li> </ul>
March/April	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget Development - tied to year 2 of Strategic Plan and Departmental/Divisional Goals</li> </ul>
May/June	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employee Appraisals - Review of performance and goals against KPI/CCM outcomes for year 1</li> <li>- Set employee goals in alignment with initiatives for Year 2</li> </ul>

**Planning for Appropriate Learning Environments.** The college has undertaken a full inventory of instructional space to document the current status and use of space, and to establish baseline documentation. The inventory process was initiated by Facilities Operations for budgeting and investment purposes, as well as to integrate accurate data with the recent implementation of the new 25Live scheduling software. In addition, the Institutional Optimization process included a rating of all campus facilities by the end-users. The data will allow the college to accurately track utilization and, in turn, allocate resources more appropriately. These inputs are being used to inform an updated facilities plan as part of the

larger master planning review the college is undertaking in spring 2016. The facilities plan will incorporate standards for all learning environments that will impact deferred maintenance and remodeling plans, technology enhancements, and instructional furniture guidelines, as well as guide the allocation of resources to other areas such as security, parking, and building access, and future capital investment. The updated facilities plan will include all existing facilities and also incorporate the learning environments in the new Career and Technical Education Facility coming in fall 2016, the Student Wellness and Recreation Center coming in fall 2017, and the Collaborative Education Facility coming in fall 2018.

Since the 2013 evaluation, the outreach center learning environments have been brought in line and are now consistent with all campus learning environments. In 2014, the college restructured outreach center leadership. The restructuring has provided for deeper dialogue and input regarding center needs. Oversight of the centers is now under the dean of Career, Technical, and Workforce Education, and a new regional manager position has oversight of the two northern centers. The dean, regional manager, and staff from all outreach centers meet weekly to discuss outreach operations and planning. The meetings are held by telephone conference one week, followed by a face-to-face meeting the following week. More recently, the face-to-face meetings were placed on a rotating schedule with meetings taking place at all locations. The meetings include career and technical education division chairs, advisors, faculty, and support staff, as needed. Additionally, the dean meets monthly with Student Services leadership to integrate service needs into the weekly discussions. This structure has created stronger communication and a higher level of representation in outreach decision making.

Several upgrades have been made to help improve delivery of services and courses to the outreach centers. The Internet Video Conferencing (IVC) network has been upgraded, providing greater connectivity that allows for improved IVC delivery. In addition, the college recently implemented data scanners to track the amount of traffic and types of services utilized at the centers. All center users scan a card and indicate their reason for using the center (e.g. attending a course or program, Adult Basic Education, student services/advising, testing, community education, etc.). This tracking method has allowed the college to gather not only the volume of users, but also to identify needs that are unique to the community. For example, the college discovered that a high percentage of the traffic at the Bonners Ferry Center is related to Adult Basic Education. As a result, the college has made an Adult Basic Education instructor available for extended hours at this center. The college will continue to monitor the center usage and has incorporated a measure focused on center improvements in the Community Engagement core theme.

### **Summary of Actions Taken to Improve Institutional Planning and Assessment**

Since fall 2013, the college has taken the following actions to improve institutional planning and to align the core themes with those plans:

- Fall 2013: Reviewed, renamed, and revised the core themes, objectives, and measures in response to recommendations from the Year Seven evaluation.
- Fall 2013: Initial planning for a campus wide evaluation of all programs and services (later referred to as Institutional Optimization) (IO).
- Spring 2014: Submitted the Year One report with revisions to the Core Themes.
- Spring 2014: Further expanded IO creating an institutional steering committee (evaluation of all instructional and non-instructional programs).

- Spring 2014: Convened an Accreditation Steering Committee to prepare for the spring 2016 mid-cycle report.
- Spring 2014: Began to develop the statewide General Education Reform (GEM) initiative in collaboration with other Idaho institutions.
- Fall 2014: Continued to develop IO. The process is described in more detail in this response, above.
- Fall 2014: Continued to develop the GEM initiative by developing templates and rubrics for NIC course review. The process is described in detail in this response, below.
- Spring 2015: Performed a complete review of all NIC Core General Education Courses (GEM review).
- Spring 2015: Finalized the process, templates, and rubrics for Institutional Optimization. Began to prepare the campus for data gathering and report preparation.
- Spring 2015: Core Themes adopted using the five institutional values that also frame the strategic plan. Additional revisions to the Core Themes: 1) baseline data established and gathered where available; 2) revisions to the objectives and outcomes, and 3) revision to the process of evaluating mission fulfillment to incorporate a level for progression using a Likert-type scale.
- Spring 2015: Drafted a method for annual evaluation of Core Themes. Reviewed and updated all available data.
- Fall 2015: Institutional Optimization reports completed by October; all reports reviewed by December.
- Fall 2015: Institutional review of planning cycle and planning calendar. See Table 1: Make the Plan; and Table 2: Implement the Plan, above.
- Fall 2015: SLOA Committee reviews plan to incorporate the new GEM Core. Began to discuss a solution to facilitate multi-level analysis of SLOA data.
- Spring 2016: SLOA Plan finalized and approved.
- Spring 2016: First formal Core Theme Report completed and provided to the Board of Trustees.
- Spring 2016: Institutional Optimization report analysis and recommendations in January and February 2016, at the time of this MCE report.

## **Summary of Structure and Assignments**

In 2010 the college established an accreditation team with representation from across the college. This team used extensive input from the college community to develop the core themes, objectives, outcomes, and measures. The board of trustees approved the college's mission and the core themes in 2011. Since that time, as described in the MCE Report, the core themes have evolved such that the core themes, college values and mission are aligned. The most recent core themes (the five college values) will be reviewed by the board with this report. Below is a brief description of planning committee structure and assignments. An in-depth description of the committee structure and responsibilities is included in Part I of the MCE Report.

**Institutional Research and the Common Campus Measures Committee:** IE staff and the CCM Committee support and assist all programs, leadership, committees, and teams in ongoing data collection and data analysis.

**Accreditation Executive Committee and the Core Theme Team:** The Executive Committee monitors the college's accreditation process, progress toward achievement of the core themes, and status of mission fulfillment. The committee provides support for the development of some measures and coordinates the accreditation self-evaluation reports and visits. The Core Theme Team consists of members that represent different areas of the college and hold responsibility for specific core theme measures. The team collects data, reviews data, and makes recommendations for revisions to the core theme objectives, outcomes, and measures. The team works with the accreditation coordinator to prepare the annual Core Theme Report.

**Departmental and Divisional Teams/Program Review:** Programs in instruction, and departments in Student Services and other administrative services review annual goals, provide data, and make recommendations for budgeting and program improvements. Annual goals are tied to the core theme outcomes and to strategic goals.

**Curriculum Council and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee:** These committees work closely with the instructional divisions to ensure that student learning outcomes are created and assessed at multiple levels, and that the results of these data are used to guide planning and improvements.

**President's Cabinet and Management Team:** The cabinet is comprised of the college president, vice presidents, Development Department executive director, the chief information officer, and the director of athletics. This group reviews and assesses the overall achievement of institutional objectives and outcomes including the master plans, core themes, and mission fulfillment, and develops the budget for presentation and approval by the board of trustees. The Management Team acts as a communication conduit and provides awareness raising and comprehensive training for all planning and budgeting processes.

## Conclusion

Recommendation 1 asked that the college fully engage in integrated, comprehensive planning that offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies and is informed by the collection of clearly-defined data used to evaluate mission fulfillment. Recommendation 1 also asked that the college plan for appropriate learning environments, including those at off-campus locations. The college has made significant progress toward these goals. In FY16, the college developed the institutional budget using the core themes to inform resource allocation and instituted a broad-based review of resources across the college community. Examples of budget assumptions and the presentation to the board of trustees and campus are available in an [Accreditation SharePoint Team Site](#). Furthermore, the college has continued progress by engaging all constituents in the Institutional Optimization (IO) process. Congruent with the submission of the MCE Report, the recommendations resulting from the IO process are complete and being used to inform resource allocation for the FY17 budget. The college is using those recommendations to engage in a review of all institutional master plans beginning this spring. As indicated in the MCE report, although the college has work to do to align all planning processes, and to fully "close the loop" on mission achievement, a plan is in place for accomplishing these goals over the next three years.

## 2016 Accreditation Core Theme Team

Member	Title
Ann Lewis	Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Karen Ruppel	Faculty Coordinator, Assessment and Accreditation
Larry Briggs	Dean of General Studies
Christy Doyle	Dean of Health Professions and Nursing
Kassie Silvas	Dean of Career, Technical and Workforce Education
Marie Price	Director of Workforce Training and Community Education
Rayelle Anderson	Executive Director, Foundation and Development
Erin Norvell	Director of Human Resources
Kylene Lloyd	Student Services Data & Information Analyst
Stacy Hudson	Director of Communications and Marketing
Heather Erikson	Assistant Director of Student Development/Diversity Council Executive Committee Representative
Steve McGroarty	Financial Services – Auxiliary Enterprises
Steve Smith	Manager of User Services, Information Technology
Bill McElver	Manager, Physical Plan - Facilities Operations
Kym Browning	Conference and Events Coordinator
Sarah Garcia	Controller – Business Office

## Accreditation Executive Committee

Member	Title
Lita Burns	Vice President for Instruction
Graydon Stanley	Vice President for Student Services
Chris Martin	Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs
Mark Browning	Vice President for Communications and Governmental Relations
Larry Briggs	Dean of General Studies
Shannon Goodrich	Senior Executive Assistant, President's Office
Ann Lewis	Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Karen Ruppel	Faculty Coordinator, Assessment and Accreditation



# **North Idaho College**

**Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan  
2015 -2020**

## Purpose

The purpose of the North Idaho College Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plan is twofold: first, to assess the degree to which the educational outcomes of the college's instructional programs and courses are being met; and second, to provide guidance for assessment processes that will assist the college in meeting its overall institutional mission.

## Scope of the Plan

NIC's SLOA Plan includes:

1. General education outcomes assessment in general studies courses (GEM),
2. Student learning outcomes assessment in Career and Technical Education, and
3. Student learning outcomes assessment at the program level.

## Assessment of Student Learning

The North Idaho College assessment plan supports the following components as identified by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities:

- The plan is responsive to the college's mission and its needs
- The plan is integrated into overall institutional evaluation
- The plan is based upon regular and continuous assessment of the disciplines and fields or occupations for which programs prepare students
- Faculty has a central role in planning and evaluating
- Expected learning outcomes are clearly identified and published for degree and certificate programs
- Regular assessment occurs that demonstrates student achievement of these outcomes
- The institution provides evidence of assessment activities that lead to the improvement of teaching and learning

## Mission

North Idaho College meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and the northern Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

## Vision

As a comprehensive community college, North Idaho College strives to provide accessible, affordable, quality learning opportunities. North Idaho College endeavors to be an innovative, flexible leader recognized as a center of educational, cultural, economic, and civic activities by the communities it serves.

## Values (Core Themes)

North Idaho College is dedicated to these core values which guide its decisions and actions.

**Student Success:** A vibrant, lifelong learning environment that engages students as partners in achieving educational goals to enhance their quality of life.

**Educational Excellence:** High academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes.

**Community Engagement:** Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs.

**Stewardship:** Economic and environmental sustainability through leadership, awareness, and responsiveness to changing community resources.

**Diversity:** A learning environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all individuals and encourages cultural competency.

## Accreditation Core Theme Objectives

### Theme 1 - Student Success

Objective 1.1: Provide regional access to quality education and training.

Objective 1.2: Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals.

### Theme 2 - Educational Excellence

Objective 2.1: Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning.

Objective 2.2: Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success.

### Theme 3: Community Engagement

Objective 3.1: Maintain and expand strong regional partnerships to ensure appropriate and quality programming.

Objective 3.2: Provide leadership and act as a partner within the community.

### Theme 5: Stewardship

Objective 4.1: Use college resources effectively and efficiently to deliver educational programs.

Objective 4.2: Ensure sustainability of financial and physical resources.

### Theme 4: Diversity

Objective 5.1: Create an inclusive campus climate conducive to student success.

Objective 5.2: Foster awareness of diversity through education and campus events.

## SLOA Committee Charge

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee is responsible for promoting college wide awareness of student academic achievement in general education, and program- and course-level assessment activities. The committee determines to what extent the assessment of student learning outcomes offers an opportunity for improving student learning and achievement. Specifically, the committee develops and implements an instructional assessment plan in consultation with the vice president for instruction, deans, director of institutional effectiveness, division chairs, and faculty. This plan is consistent with the college mission, recommends a timeline for implementation, and identifies assessment activities, instructional outcomes, and reporting needs. It is the responsibility of faculty to develop, perform, and manage ongoing assessment to ensure the quality of NIC's programs and courses and to enhance the learning environment.

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee consists of a faculty coordinator appointed by the vice president for instruction, and at least one faculty member from each instructional division selected by the division chair and approved by the division faculty, deans, and vice president for instruction. The faculty representatives serve at least three-year terms. The vice president for instruction; dean of general studies; dean of career, technical, and workforce education; and director of institutional effectiveness serve as ex-officio members of the committee.

## 2015-2020 SLOA Committee Goals

- Assist all divisions with program assessment.
- Assist with annual program reports; compile, interpret, and publish results.
- Help define assessments/instruments to measure General Education course outcomes (GEM).
- Assist with selecting/designing faculty learning events.
- Contribute to institutional long-term planning through the accreditation process.



## General Education

Effective fall 2015, the college has a new framework for general education that draws from and embeds NIC's original nine abilities. In 2013, Idaho initiated a statewide General Education Reform. GEM (General Education Matriculation) Reform involved disciplinary groups of faculty from all Idaho public higher education institutions who met and then wrote competencies for six agreed upon areas of general education. The faculty disciplinary teams also developed shared rubrics for course and program assessment of GEM competencies. In addition, the reform provided for institutionally designated general education areas. These competencies are the basis for assessing our general education program.

Idaho GEM:

- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Mathematical Ways of Knowing
- Scientific Ways of Knowing
- Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing
- Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing

Institutionally designated:

- Wellness
- Integrative Inquiry

## Program Review

Program review is an important element of the educational assessment plan. Each instructional program at NIC goes through the program review process on a five-year cycle, following a rotation schedule published by the Office of Instruction. The "programs" have been identified by deans, division chairs and faculty using criteria that result in groupings that best lend themselves to answering questions about program goals, program effectiveness, and program design. All NIC programs use a common program review template. Programs are reviewed by external faculty evaluators who represent similar fields and disciplines. Faculty members of the program play a primary role in the completion of program review reports. The entire program faculty has a voice in creating the program review report, which makes the document a realistic and accurate portrayal of the health and vitality of the program. The external evaluators provide their impressions of how well the program is running, how successful it is in meeting its goals, and make any recommendations that they see for areas that require improvement or change. These recommendations are given to the members of each program in a follow-up meeting, thus creating a series of action items for improvements to that program. The program review process at NIC keeps programs healthy, flexible, and responsive to changing demands.

## Methods and Criteria for Assessing Outcomes

*Institutional-level Assessment:* At the institutional level, assessment of student outcomes is conducted college wide using a variety of instruments and surveys:

- Annual Job Placement and Employer Surveys for Career and Technical programs
- Instructional Program Reviews on a five-year rotation
- Student Course and Instructor Evaluations every semester for non-tenured faculty; every three years for tenured faculty members
- Student progression measures, from developmental to college level
- Completion and transfer measures
- Annual Student Satisfaction Survey

*Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:* Assessment documentation is part of the program review process. The program review template includes Section 7.0 – Assessment. Section 7.0 asks each program/department to:

1. Define its outcomes
2. Discuss assessment methods
3. Interpret the data
4. Use the data to create actions for improvement as necessary

Faculty, division chairs, and deans, in collaboration with the SLOA Committee, identify criteria and methods to assess student outcomes. The following outlines current practices:

1. General Education (GEM) core courses (see attached action plan)
2. Program-level assessment (see attached action plan)
3. Course- and program-level current practices
  - Common outcomes (where appropriate)
  - Common syllabus template (all courses)
  - Specialized or programmatic knowledge and skills (licensure, certifications, programmatic accreditation)
  - Technical Skills Assessments for all Career-Technical programs
  - Performance assessments in some areas
  - Student interviews/focus groups
  - Assessment action plans through program review
  - Common course assessments (in some disciplines)
  - Common rubrics (in some disciplines)

*Assessment Cohorts and Schedule:*

- Developmental programs annually assess students completing course sequences and/or passing developmental exams key to progressing to college-level courses.
- Career and Technical Education Programs assess students completing degrees and certificates annually through Technical Skills Assessments (TSAs), certifications, surveys, interviews, and program outcomes through capstone projects, performance assessments, and exams.
- General Studies disciplines supporting GEM currently assess each semester (work in progress in some areas). Ultimately, assessments will be scheduled based upon results, curriculum improvements, and perceived need but will occur at least every three years.
- Transfer programs assess students through faculty-designed exams, performance assessments, licensure exams, focus groups, surveys, service learning, and capstone projects. Collection of data occurs through the program review process on a five-year rotation schedule with annual updates to assessment action plans currently under development.

## **Use of Data for Improvement**

General Education assessment is evolving and efforts are underway to pilot instruments. Results are used to review course and program-level outcomes, course descriptions, and course content, and make improvements.

Academic departments at North Idaho College began formally reporting the results of their assessment activities during 2008/2009 using a new program review and evaluation process. The outcomes assessment component of the Program Review process asks all departments to update plans annually for assessing student learning, when appropriate, and to analyze assessment data to determine strengths, challenges, and identify areas for improvement. The results of Program Review are

incorporated into individual department planning processes, which are tied to the college's mission and the planning and budgeting processes.

Institutional results are analyzed through the accreditation core theme objectives and expectations and the strategic plan goals and performance measures. The results are analyzed by administrators, managers, deans, chairs, faculty, and staff. Institutional results are used to guide institutional changes and strategic initiatives.

### **Communication of Results**

Assessment plans, methods/instruments, results and reports are posted to the SLOA SharePoint site, and the NIC Office of Institutional Effectiveness team site. The faculty coordinator for SLOA/Gen Ed in collaboration with the vice president for instruction, deans, and division chairs prepares summary SLOA reports and compiles and publishes General Education Assessment reports. The director of institutional effectiveness prepares annual reports for the Office of Instruction, board of trustees, and State Board of Education.

## 2015-2020 SLOA Action Plan

### Core Theme Objectives and Measures Aligned to Action Plan

Educational Excellence Objective 2.1: Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning

Measure: All instructional programs submit annual summary reports documenting program improvements as a result of assessment

Educational Excellence Objective 2.2: Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success

Measure: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Goals are met annually

Measure: CTE Technical Skills Assessment (TSAs) results indicate successful pass rates.

### Goals:

- Create understanding and build a culture of assessment
- Develop and implement assessments at the program level
- Continue existing, and develop and implement new assessments at the GEM level

Build Understanding/Culture	Responsibility	Completion Date
Define Assessment at NIC - Survey all divisions on faculty perceptions of student learning outcomes assessment; use results to help further the assessment plan and to guide campus wide conversation on assessment	SLOA Committee	Fall 2015
Develop Faculty Professional Development Events - Make it relevant - Make it meaningful - Inspire/create enthusiasm	SLOA Committee	Spring 2017 Spring 2019 (continuing every two years)

Formalize Program-level Assessment	Responsibility	Completion Date
- Comprehensive review of General Studies Program Outcomes	GS Divisions	December 2016
- Formalize Annual Program Reports (program goals tied to assessment goals)	All Divisions	Spring 2017
- Develop Division Assessment Plans	All Divisions	Spring 2017
- Develop improved methods of data collection for CTE programs (employment in related field; TSA results)	CTE Divisions	Spring 2017
- Assist with development of program-level assessments	All Divisions	Through Spring 2020

Develop and Implement GEM Assessments	Responsibility	Completion Date
- Curriculum mapping: map all GEM course outcomes to GEM Competencies	All Divisions	Spring 2015
- Identify course-level assessments aligned to GEM Competencies	All Divisions	Spring 2015
- Provide evidence of GEM Core Completion	Institutional Effectiveness	Spring 2017
- Written Communication - continue	English Department	Annual
- Information Literacy (continue on rotation)	English Department	Every 3 Years Spring 2018
- Oral Communication (review and modify)	Communication Department	Spring 2017
- Mathematics (review)	Mathematics Department	Spring 2017
- Scientific Ways of Knowing (CAAP SR Exam)	Natural Sciences Division	Spring 2018
- Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing (Develop)	Humanities and Fine Arts Divisions	Spring 2018
- Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing (Develop)	Social and Behavioral Science Division	Spring 2018
- Wellness (Develop)	Faculty	Spring 2019
- Integrative Inquiry (Develop)	Faculty	Spring 2019

Each action for the goals is rated on a scale of 1 to 3: 3 = Action Met, 2 = Consistently Progressing, or 1 = Not Attempted. The mean score of all actions is calculated and the percentage is used to evaluate the core theme measure: “*student learning outcomes assessment goals are met annually.*” The expectation is that at least 80 percent of SLOA goals are consistently progressing or met. The goals are evaluated annually.

## 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee

Member	Title
Alan Lamb	Division Chair, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Ann Lewis	Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Christine Callison	Regional Outreach Center Manager, Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry
Colleen Ward	Senior Administrative Assistant, Physical Education and Resort/Recreation Management Division
Heather Erikson	Assistant Director of Student Development
Hiedi Schrader	Senior Administrative Assistant, Facilities Operations
Kecia Siegel	Coordinator, Veteran's Services, Registrar's Office
Kylene Lloyd	Student Services Data & Information Analyst
Karen Ruppel	Faculty Coordinator, Assessment and Accreditation
Peggy Schnell	Apprenticeship Coordinator, Workforce Training and Community Education
Sandra Jacquot	Assistant Controller, Business Office
Shannon Goodrich	Senior Executive Assistant, President's Office
Steve Smith	Manager of User Services – Information Technology

# North Idaho College 2016 Annual Core Theme Report

## Mission

North Idaho College meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and the northern Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

## Core Themes (College Values)

*Student Success:* A vibrant, lifelong learning environment that engages students as partners in achieving educational goals to enhance their quality of life.

*Educational Excellence:* High academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes.

*Community Engagement:* Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs.

*Stewardship:* Economic and environmental sustainability through leadership, awareness, and responsiveness to changing community resources.

*Diversity:* A learning environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all individuals and encourages cultural competency.

## Measuring Achievement

NIC achieves mission fulfillment by demonstrating an acceptable level of performance of its core themes, both individually and collectively. The mean of three or four years of data is used as a baseline. NIC uses data from a variety of reporting sources including IPEDS, internal measures, state longitudinal data, and most recently, the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA). The measures were developed over time by Accreditation Core Theme Steering Committees, in consultation with staff, faculty, management and executive leadership.

The method chosen for measuring the core themes and mission fulfillment allows for a view of achievement at each level. A score is calculated for each measure, outcome, objective, and core theme culminating in a mean score for all core themes (mission fulfillment). This allows the college to easily identify strengths and weaknesses in specific areas and to align resources to needs.

Each measure is rated on a scale of 1 to 3 by comparing the current three- or four-year mean to the expectation. The same rating is used for all mean scores.

2.3-3.0 = Meets Expectations  
1.1-2.2 = Consistently Progressing  
1.0 = Does Not Meet Expectations

## 2016 Mission Fulfillment Summary

NIC has defined mission fulfillment based on an established threshold: The college will achieve mission fulfillment when the mean for all core themes shows the college is “consistently progressing” or “meeting expectations.”

In 2016, three of the five core themes were scored. Mission Fulfillment equaled a mean score of 2.47 (Meets Expectations).

Each core theme is defined as attained when the mean score for all objectives are progressing or met. In 2016, the core themes were achieved as follows:

Student Success	2.20	Consistently Progressing
Educational Excellence	2.66	Meets Expectations
Community Engagement	0.00	not evaluated
Stewardship	2.79	Meets Expectations
Diversity	0.00	not evaluated

The report was prepared using only the measures where baseline data is available. Two of the core themes need further development before fully evaluating.

**Core Theme 1: Student Success. Score: 2.20 (Consistently Progressing)**

Objective 1.1: Provide regional access to quality education and training. Score: 2.25

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Education is available in NIC's five-county service area through multiple modes of delivery Score: 2.25	Unduplicated headcount of credit students as a percentage of NIC's total service area population.	3.93%	037	3.75% (4-year average AY12 to AY15)	3.60%	3
	Unduplicated headcount of non-credit students as a percentage of NIC's total service area population.	3.22%	038	2.33% (4-year average AY12 to AY15)	3%	1
	Distance learning proportion of credit hours	18.04%	015	25.1% Fall 2014 (1.83% over prior year)	Increase annually by 2% for a total of 25% (maintain)	3
	Dual Credit participation rates - unduplicated annual headcount	861	017	924 (4-year average AY12 to AY15) (11.4% of total headcount)	Increase annually by 2% until 25% of total student population is achieved	2

Objective 1.2: Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals. Score: 2.16

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Retention and progression rates increase Score: 1.33	First-time, full-time, student retention rates	54%	025	54% (3-year average Fall 11C to Fall 13C)	63%	1
	First-time, part-time, student retention rates	37%	026	37% (3-year average Fall 11C to Fall 13C)	45%	1
	% of classes completed with a C or better	72%	108	73% (4-year average Fall 11 to Fall 14)	75%	2
Students achieve their educational goals Score: 3.0	Cohort of new students:	Fall 2006 Cohort		Fall 2008 Cohort		
	% awarded a degree or certificate	20.8%	109	25.6%	Increase average of awards and transfer annually	3
	% with no award but transferred to 2 or 4 yr institution	26%	127	27.7%		
	% still enrolled	5.7%	128	2.8%		
% of students that left the institution (six year cohort outcomes, VFA)	47.5%	129	43.9%			
Percentage of students who complete the General Education Certificate			133	Certificate created and approved; new core begins Fall 2015; tracking begins Spring 2016	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
Career Program Completers, percentage of total respondents employed in related field		Changed	007			



**Core Theme 2: Educational Excellence. Score: 2.66 (Meets Expectations)**

Objective 2.1: Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning. Score: 3.0

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
NIC maintains quality educational courses and programs Score: 3.0	– Total number of employers (out of total respondents) who indicate satisfaction with overall preparation of CTE completers	98.33%	062	96.0% (AY 2013)	80% of employers indicate satisfaction with preparation of completers	3
	– All instructional programs submit annual summary reports documenting program improvements as a result of assessment		055	New 2014 (under development)	Twenty percent of total programs per year over five years until fully implemented	
	– Percentage of student evaluations of community education courses reflect a satisfaction rating of above average.	85%	054	93% (AY14)	85% of total number score a satisfaction rating of above average	3
Faculty and staff development opportunities are available to support educational improvements Score: 3.0	– Development resources are disbursed through a competitive and peer-reviewed process annually	\$82,000	115	\$82,000	Maintain or increase funding levels	3
	– Overall employee satisfaction with support for professional development		116	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after data is gathered	
	– Positive impacts as a result of professional development		118	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after data is gathered	

Objective 2.2: Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success. Score: 2.33

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Students attain the expected learning outcomes of courses and programs Score: 2.66	– Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Goals are met annually	75%	114	72.3% 3-year average FY12-FY14	80% percent or more of annual assessment goals are consistently met over 3-yr plan	2
	– Licensure pass rates at or above national pass rates	85%	091	97.7% or above for all programs for which data is available (2015)	Maintain at 85% or above	3
	– CTE Technical Skills Assessment (TSAs) results indicate successful pass rates.		160	97.8% 3-year average FY12-FY14	Maintain within a 5% margin of 97%	3
Students experience an engaging and supportive campus environment Score: 2.0	– Support for Learners (level of contact, social support, financial support, counseling, advising) (CCSSE)		165	44.8% 3-year average FY 13-FY15	Maintain or improve average of 50% or greater when compared to cohort institutions	2
	– Student-Faculty Interaction/Advisor Interaction (communication, feedback, activities outside of class) (CCSSE)		162	51.7% 3-year average FY 13-FY15		

**Core Theme 3: Community Engagement. Score: Not enough measures established to evaluate**

Objective 3.1: Maintain and expand strong regional partnerships to ensure appropriate and quality programming.

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
NIC meets community programming needs	– Existing articulation agreements are current		119	Inventory Completed 2014	Maintain current list	
	– Number of times annually NIC delivers education as result of input/interactions with regional economic development entities and businesses		167	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	– Percentage of new programs considered “high demand” based upon data from local industry, independent forecasting agencies, and Department of Labor	83% 2011 to 2013	120	Not calculated	90%	

Objective 3.2: Provide leadership and act as a partner within the community.

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
NIC has a strong presence in its communities	– The number of committee/boards in which college members engage e.g. external advisory boards; community, educational, and business boards/committees	51 identified in 2011 to 2012	136	New method of collection 2016	Maintain	
	– Results of annual community needs assessment indicates satisfaction with NIC when correlated to five-year environmental scan		137	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	– Number of community events NIC sponsors		138	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	– Engagement of students in NIC or community sponsored events		139	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	– Outreach center courses and services meet community needs		175	New 2015; tracking software implemented	Identify the availability and scope of outreach courses/services; document improvements	

**Core Theme 4: Stewardship. Score: 2.79 (Meets Expectations)**

Objective 4.1: Use college resources effectively and efficiently to deliver educational programs. Score: 2.83

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Institutional resources enhance or expand educational capacity Score: 3.0	– Net instructional square feet per FTE					
	– Dollars secured through the Development Department via private donations and grants	\$5.2 million FY 13	042	\$8.2 million FY 15	\$2 million	3
	– Tuition and fees for full-time, first-time, in-district students (full academic year)	72.7% 13-14	130	72.7% 14-15	Maintain rank in the lowest 40% against comparator institutions	3
	– Tuition revenue as percentage of total revenue		172	28.09% FY13 31.91% FY14 30.01% FY15	Total tuition revenue does not exceed 37.5% of revenue	3
Affordable education is available to students Score: 2.66	– Percentage of eligible students who receive financial assistance					
	– Financial Aid (Federal grants only) – Scholarships (Foundation, GIA, scholarships)	62% 13.58% FY 12 to 13	113 131	67.77% 17.63% FY 12 to FY14	65% 20%	2

Objective 4.2: Ensure sustainability of financial and physical resources. Score: 2.75

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Public funds are used judiciously and in accordance with public finance standards Score: 3.0	– Composite Financial Indicator Score		169	FY 2014: 6.11 FY 2015: 6.64	Maintain at least 4.5 Composite Score	3
	– Auxiliary services generate sufficient revenue to cover direct costs of operations		170	Net Revenue: \$328,889 FY 13 \$129,742 FY 14 \$196,663 FY 15	Annual direct costs maintained	3
	– Efficiency measures and energy upgrades result in dollars saved	Changed	141	12.5% overall decrease in utilities expenditures over 7 year period in (FY15 compared to FY08). Savings=\$302,398	Sustain or increase percentage over 7 year period	3
The college provides appropriate technical and physical infrastructure Score: 2.5	– Year-to-year deferred maintenance		171	\$206,592 FY 14 \$275,213 FY 15	Investment of at least \$225,000 per year	2
	– College wide replacement schedule for personal computers ERS A Schedule – 42 months ERS B Schedule – 48 months	A = 94.64%	075	A = 93.98% B = 98.85% 2014-2015	Maintain 94% or above	3

**Core Theme 5: Diversity.** Score: *Not enough measures established to evaluate*

Objective 5.1: Create an inclusive campus climate conducive to student success.

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
NIC's campus is accessible, inclusive and respectful for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of students enrolled from diverse populations (diverse student population based on race/ethnicity)</li> </ul>	82% White 4% Hispanic 3% Native American 1% Asian 1% African American 9% unknown FY 2013	105	Service Region: 89% White 4% Hispanic 3% Native American 1% Asian 1% African American 3% unknown FY 2014	Maintain a diverse or more diverse population than that of the population within NIC's service region. Service Region data – Source: US Census Bureau, as of July 1, 2014	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students surveyed perceive NIC encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (CCSSE)</li> </ul>		106	37.7% compared to National Average of 52.7% (2014)	Increase by 2% annually until the national average is met or exceeded	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students surveyed perceive NIC provides an inclusive, respectful and safe environment (CCSSE)</li> </ul>		123	Question developed in 2016; 2017 next round	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty/staff surveyed perceive NIC provides an inclusive, respectful and safe environment</li> </ul>		124	New 2015	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First-time, full-time degree-seeking diverse students (population based on race/ethnicity) will complete their degrees/certificates within 150% of stated time at a similar rate to that of total population of first-time, full-time degree-seeking students.</li> </ul>		125	Cohort = 19.5% Diverse Sub-cohort =11.8% Fall 2011	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is gathered	
Diverse populations complete their degrees or certificates						

Objective 5.2: Foster awareness of diversity through education and campus events.

Outcome	Measures	2014 Year 1 Report	CCM	Current Baseline	Expectation	2016 Score
Students, employees, and community members realize the value of diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campus community indicates understanding of multicultural/diverse perspectives on diversity events survey.</li> </ul>		173	Establish a baseline in 2016	Expectation will be defined in 2017	
Curricular opportunities exist for multiculturalism, pluralism, equity, and diversity learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of new or revised courses infusing diversity concepts into the curriculum</li> </ul>		174	Establish a baseline through inventory of curriculum council new/revised courses for 2015/2016	Increase the number of courses	

## **Data Analysis and Planning**

NIC's core themes have evolved since 2010. In 2010, the campus participated in the selection of its original core themes: Student Success, Educational Excellence, and Community Engagement. Three years later NIC was required to complete the full seven-year comprehensive evaluation. Since that time, the core themes have been revised. In 2015, the Core Theme Team and a variety of institutional constituent groups worked to identify and confirm the current core themes adopted from the five institutional values: Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity. Between June 2014 and June 2015, the Core Theme Team, as well as vice presidents and area directors, managers, deans, and chairs, reviewed the core themes and measures, making changes to strengthen the measures and expectations.

Core Theme Team members responsible for each indicator gather, review and analyze the supporting data, along with appropriate leadership in their area. The Core Theme Team, working with the Accreditation Executive Team, identifies the key data figures within the core themes when institutional effectiveness data is not used. In several instances, gathering further baseline data, refinement of expectations, as well as further development of measures will continue over the next two years. At this point, the validity of the core themes and objectives are deemed sufficient to assess mission fulfillment, but until the college has time to complete three years of data for every indicator, the core theme validity cannot be fully verified.

This report is the first annual review of the core themes completed in February 2016. The college expects to continue to refine the core theme review process and this report, and will fully utilize the annual evaluation of its mission into the future. Once the baseline data for all measures is complete, the annual report will include further analysis and planning recommendations for each core theme. The results from this report are presented annually to the NIC Board of Trustees.

# North Idaho College English Department Spring 2014 Report on Outcomes Assessment

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## **I. Narrative of 2013 Outcomes Assessment Process**

### **Fall 2013 Outcomes Assessment and Professional Practices Workshop**

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the NIC English Department met for our annual retreat to discuss upcoming changes to the assessment process and to complete the last cycle of scoring for the English 102 essays. Laurie Olson-Horswill led the discussions, giving history of the 102 assessment process and reminding the group that the focus here is on what we teach and how students learn: we are not just interested in a data-producing exercise alone.

### **The positive outcomes that have resulted from our English 102 assessment cycle (2007—2013) are as follows:**

- There is now more consistency across all sections of English 102: consistency in instructor curriculum, in the assignments used to help students meet the course outcomes, and in writing assignment sequences. We feel that this consistency is due in large part to our embedded assessment process.
- The Lead Faculty mentor positions (for 099, 101, and 102) that we piloted for the first time in spring 2012 also play a significant role in helping achieve this English 102 consistency. These Lead Faculty regularly communicate with part-time instructors to collaborate on curriculum planning, assignment creation, and to discuss the outcomes of these courses as a whole, and the system has had positive impacts both on the aligning of 102 course content as well as on the collegiality and communication within the department.
- The annual assessment retreats give us good opportunity to share ideas about our classes, to compare assessment results in our norming and scoring sessions, and to discuss pedagogy. This is one of the most valuable results of our home-grown assessment process: a strong, collaborative focus on teaching and learning.
- We have also recently updated our English 102 course description and have had discussions about changing the assessment from the timed Exit Essay to the final researched argumentative essay in all English 102 classes, applying our Exit Essay rubric to this assignment. We feel confident enough about what we're teaching in the class now that we know the outcomes and rubric match up to these longer assignments. We can, and likely

eventually will, still norm selected English 102 longer research essays in the future, in order to continue measuring student learning outcomes of this course, but we'll likely not collect random samples for scoring because of the time required to read these lengthy essays.

Norming selected 102 essays and scores from instructors on these longer research essays, though, could work to create a different type of assessment that may be even more relevant.

### **We then began our last norming/scoring session with the most recent English 102 Entrance and Exit Essays (from Fall 2012/Spring of 2013).**

Norming: First, we normed a sample of Entrance Essays and then Exit Essays on two separate Exit Essay topics: these consisted of student responses to articles on Nature Deficit Disorder and the trend of indulgent parenting/spoiled children. The results of the norming showed that, once again, our faculty are in range with one another in using the rubrics to score the essays.

Scoring and Results: Next, we moved into the scoring portion of the Assessment workshop. Each faculty member spent time reading and scoring about 20 essays each. The results of our final 102 cycle of assessment can be seen in the attached graphs, which were compiled by Laurie Olson-Horswill. Our decision to return to a formerly successful Exit Essay Prompt brought out improvements to student performance on the exercise. 65% of the essays ended up passing the Exit Essay in a strong bell curve for the whole year, with the average score of 3. This 65% pass rate, though, included two different Exit Essay prompts: one on spoiled American children and one on nature deficit disorder. When Laurie separated out the two Exit Essay prompts to determine if students had more success with one over the other, she found out that this was, in fact, the case. 71% of the students passed using the nature deficit prompt; 58% passed using the spoiled children prompt. Perhaps even more interestingly, that 71% pass rate was identical to the results from 2009, when we used the same nature deficit disorder topic and prompt. These results confirmed our suspicion that the ways we changed our Exit Essay topics from semester to semester had an impact on the students' performance.

101 Assessment Pilot: After lunch, we began a lengthy discussion of the new assessment process for English 101. During spring 2013 the department finalized a new course description and end-of-semester English 101 rubric that meets our course outcomes. In addition, this rubric was related directly to the state-level composition rubrics for English 101 created that year and finalized recently. Our task, then, was to create an assignment that the rubric would best evaluate. The discussion covered multiple topics, but the group as a whole felt that the essay need not be a common writing assignment or a timed essay, but that it must be flexible enough so that it can work for all the 101 courses we are offering online, in the high schools, and those courses offered by part-time instructors. We agreed that we need a home-grown, authentic assessment: not a standardized one.

General consensus, as well, was that we have the assessment assignment take place in the last two weeks of the course. The 101 instructors in the room then went around and described their various approaches to "capstone" assignments that could possibly inspire our general 101 assessment. The approaches were varied: some of the assignments mentioned were longer literary analysis papers, profiles of community members, visual text analysis papers, summary-response assignments, source-based short arguments, and synthesis papers. Some were also based on the common

“purpose of education” unit, but since this unit’s placement in the course varies by instructor and often occurs first, we thought we should not mandate it to be at the end of the semester.

## **Spring 2014 English 101 Assessment Pilot Process**

After the discussion at the department retreat, Laurie Olson-Horswill met with the English 101 instructors to make final decisions on the Spring 2014 101 assessment pilot. The group decided on the process described below:

### The Assignment:

- The final essay in English 101 will focus on “synthesis.” The essay will be thesis-driven, will include at least two texts, and will result in at least 1000 words (or 3-4 pages).
- A range of assignments could fit these expectations, including (but not limited to) a literary analysis, an argumentative essay, or a purpose of education essay. The assignment could vary while the outcomes would be the same. Instructors will have appropriate flexibility in determining what kind of essay meets the outcomes and criteria described by the rubric.

### The Pilot 101 Assessment:

- In the spring, anyone who wants to pilot this project is welcome. Instructors participating in the pilot will use our new department rubric to score the essays they have designated. They will provide the scores to the department along with copies of four essays chosen to represent what they see as a range of scores from one to four. With this process, we will be able to analyze more than a random sample of scores and then will discuss/norm essays at our department retreat. Five full-time instructors volunteered to participate in this process: Erin Davis, Amy Flint, Jonathan Frey, Willene Goodwin, and Liza Wilcox. For instructors not participating, we suggested that they test the rubric less formally by using it when evaluating their own final essays.
- At this early point, we are assuming we will apply the rubric in a reasonably similar way, but since the pilot will test the rubric and assignment, we may need to make adjustments. The determination of students’ writing skills will happen in our broader department discussions.
- Instructors will be able to convert the rubric’s scores on these essays into the points or grades they specify for their own classes. This process, as a result, should not create more work for instructors except in submitting the scores and copies of essays.
- In future, we may be able to collect random samples of essays rather than the example ranges, but for now this plan seemed more useful.



## Other English Department Assessment-Related Updates

### **114 1-credit writing lab sections:**

We also are continuing to pilot a series of 1-credit writing lab sections (numbered 114) to coincide with some instructors' English 101 and English 102 courses. These 1-credit courses are meant to help students receive more assistance in areas where they have difficulty.

### **Lead Faculty Mentors:**

The lead faculty mentors for English 099, 101, and 102 continue to work with part-time faculty to answer any questions they might have about the courses, to help them plan their courses, and to ensure that there is good consistency to the courses across the board. Feedback from part-time instructors about the success of this mentor program has been positive, with many citing it as further evidence of the English Department's success at integrating adjuncts into the context of the broader department.

As is evident from the significant work and planning described above, our department continues to be active in the discussion and revision of our composition curriculum, always mindful of how writing assessment can help us make the curricular decisions that will best serve our students. We use writing assessment at the program level to help us unify our course content, and we are constantly and consistently discussing and refining our course outcomes. This constant emphasis on and work with our composition course outcomes also helps us maintain a diversity in our different approaches to teaching the courses, because while we all take different approaches to teaching our classes, and while many of us use different texts to do so, we always make sure that we are helping students achieve the outcomes for our specific courses.

Our department workshops where we get together and discuss assessment and score the essays are also opportunities for professional development, and they continue to help unify the department. Full- and part-time instructors alike take part in these discussions about student writing, and we all enjoy the chance to get together to talk about our teaching, our curriculum, our assignments and our approaches to assessing writing. We have all agreed in these workshops that our discussions about what makes "good writing" and our expectations for students are more important than the data itself. The numbers just give us a starting place for the conversation about teaching and learning.

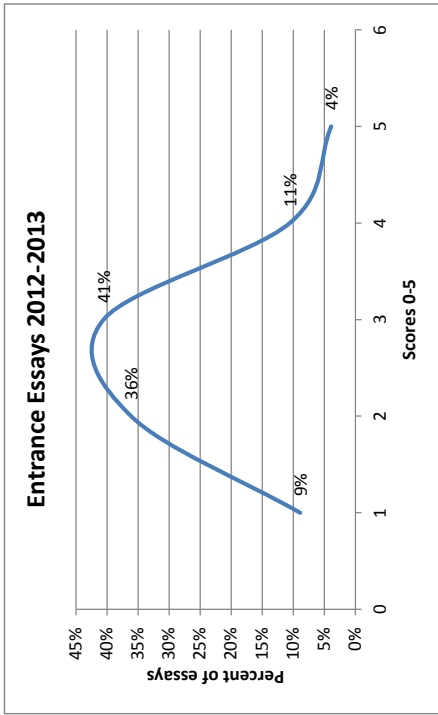
**North Idaho College English Department Assessment  
2014 Final Entrance and Exit Essay Results from 2012-2013**

**Entrance Essays**

		<b>N=180</b>
<b>Passing</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Failing</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>81</b>

<b>Scores</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N=180</b>
1	9%	16
2	36%	65
3	41%	73
4	11%	19
5	4%	7

<b>Average</b>	2.8
<b>Mode</b>	3
<b>Median</b>	3
<b>St. Dev.</b>	0.86

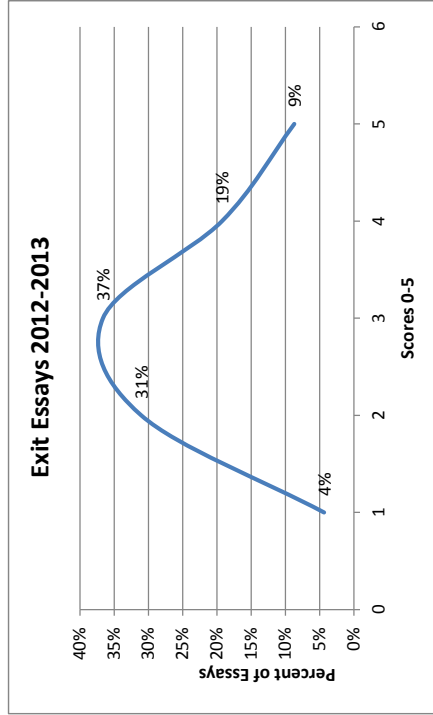


**Exit Essays**

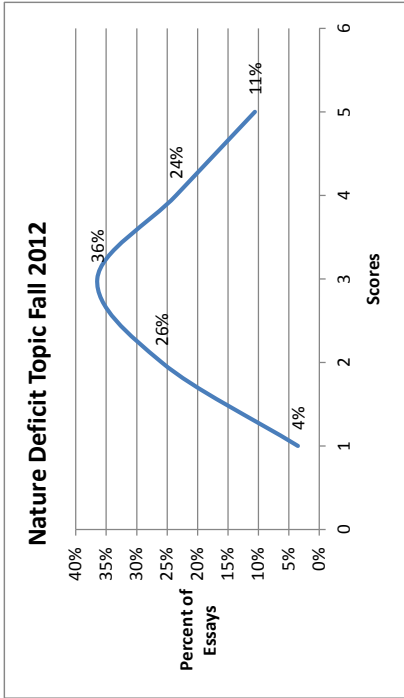
		<b>N=161</b>
<b>Passing</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Failing</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>57</b>

<b>Scores</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N=161</b>
1	4%	7
2	31%	50
3	37%	59
4	19%	31
5	9%	14

<b>Average</b>	3.1
<b>Mode</b>	3
<b>Median</b>	3
<b>St. Dev.</b>	0.88

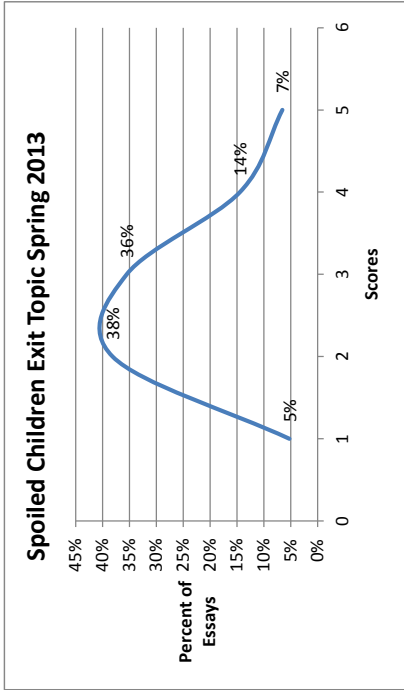


COMPARISON OF EXIT ESSAYS FOR FINAL 2012-2013 YEAR VS. NATURE DEFICIT TOPIC IN SPRING 2009



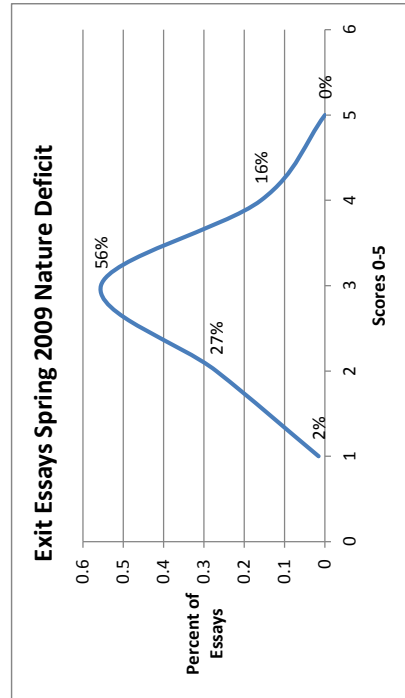
N=	85
Passing:	71%
Failing:	29%
Average:	3.23

Score	N	%
1	3	3.5%
2	22	25.9%
3	31	36.5%
4	20	23.5%
5	9	10.6%



N=	76
Passing:	58%
Failing:	42%
Average:	2.98

Score	N	%
1	4	5.3%
2	29	38.2%
3	27	35.5%
4	11	14.5%
5	5	6.6%



N=	63
Passing	71.4%
Failing	28.6%
Average	3.2

Score	N	%
1	1	1.6%
2	17	27.0%
3	35	55.6%
4	10	15.9%
5	0	0.0%

## English Department Expanded Timeline – 2006 through 2016 (major points of discussion each year):

Following is a summary of the English Division’s process and discussions since the assessment plan became formalized in Fall 2006:

- **(Fall 2006-Spring 07):** We created assessment rubrics for the Entrance and Exit Essays that tie in with both regional and national trends in writing assessment.
- **(Spring 07):** Each instructor pulled 3 (randomly) assigned student samples from both their Entrance and Exit Essays.
- **(Fall 07-Spring 08):** The first norming session took place using the spring, 2007 entrance essay samples to conduct the norming. We first discussed the entrance essay rubric (created last spring in our meetings) and re-familiarized ourselves with its content. The main question we kept in mind, as we scored these essays according to the rubric, is whether or not the students seem adequately prepared for English 102 by taking English 101 (or by placing out of prior courses with the COMPASS, ACT, or SAT). Discussion followed and included possible course content revisions, clarification of aspects of the rubric, weaknesses and strengths in the entrance essay prompt, skills that may require more emphasis in English 101, possible addition of reading comprehension emphasis in English 101, and starting concepts covered in English 102. In all, this Outcomes Assessment led to the types of conversations that it is truly intended to lead us towards: “closing the loop” of assessment, clarifying how these results influence the choices we make as teachers, as graders, and as course curriculum planners.
- **(Fall 2008—Spring 09):** We continued our discussion from the previous retreat on what skills beginning students in English 102 needed to have (really, that’s also a discussion of what skills they need to acquire in English 101, or that they should have if they have tested out of 101). Again, we discussed the exit essay rubric as we went through this process, and how some essays can be tricky to score: they may have wonderful style and graceful language, but not integrate secondary material or have a works cited page; they may have perfect citation and documentation but lack a clear argument. Some instructors feel that an essay missing any element of the rubric should equate an automatic 2 or 1 score; others feel that if an essay is well-written but lacks a works cited page, the score should still be 3 (generally competent but lacking in some areas). This sort of difference highlights the difficulty of using a rubric in its purest, most literal sense, and is a difficulty we have returned to in our conversations each year. We also noted that, now that our classes have switched to a 2-day per week schedule (and now that we have more hybrid classes) we have changed the amount of time allowed for students on the Exit Essay itself from 50 to 75 minutes. We discussed the process of teaching the exit essay and how important it is to have a ‘unified front’ about its worth in the classroom. Students will not take this exercise seriously if they think that it’s not ‘worth’ anything in terms of their grade. Many 102 instructors attach participation points to the Exit Essay to make sure that students see it as an important exercise.

- **(Fall 09—Spring 10):** Perhaps the main difference in our Exit Essay scoring process and discussion was the new inclusion, on our score sheets, of the ‘reason for failure’ for any Exit Essays receiving less than a 3 on our rubric. These reasons available for us to choose include **development of details, thesis focus, reference to reading, organization, mechanics, and topic focus.**

The results from this new dimension to our assessment data will show us not only that students have failed according to our rubric, but will also give us the primary reasons for *why* they failed. That knowledge can help us as we interpret the data and continue to “close the loop” of assessment by looking back at our courses and our curriculum to see what, if anything, needs to be changed or adjusted to help students better meet our outcomes.

We discussed, again, the process of teaching the exit essay and how important it is to have a ‘unified front’ about its worth in the classroom. Students will not take this exercise seriously if they think that it’s not ‘worth’ anything in terms of their grade. Many 102 instructors attach participation points to the Exit Essay to make sure that students see it as an important exercise.

We mulled over ways to possibly tighten up our scoring rubric for Exit Essays: to look at 3s and 2s, at the differences between these scores (some of the essays we read fall right on the line between the two) and to decide if a 3 is an accurate description for what we deem ‘minimally competent’ for a student exiting English 102.

- **(Fall 10—Spring 11):** We discussed, in detail, the English 101 ‘Student As Consumer’ unit that a core group of instructors began piloting in the fall of 2010. Instructors Carl Curtis, Erin Davis, Dan Erlacher, and Molly Michaud worked through the summer of 2010 to collect readings that dealt with the shifting attitudes towards education, attitudes which increasingly reflect a consumer mentality, that have begun permeating the academy in the past few years. Each participating instructor presented their methods for weaving this unit into their classes and showed some results of the new content, both in terms of student writing and class discussions. The results were overwhelmingly positive, both in terms of the quality of discussion and the quality and critical thinking in the writing about this theme: the plan is to widen out the number of English 101 instructors assigning this unit next year.
- **(Fall 11—Spring 12):** We reiterated the fact that our Entrance Essay is *not* a ‘pre-test.’ It is merely a reflection of the skills that we believe students should have as they enter English 102, whether they have come up through the program in English 099 and English 101, or placed out of those courses by their test scores. The comparison of our Entrance and Exit Essay data should not be viewed in a ‘pre’ and ‘post’ test context. A true ‘pre’ test would involve having students write the exit essay assignment at the beginning of the semester. The time that such a process would take is prohibitive.

- **(Fall 12—Spring 13):** First, we began moving forward on discussing an English 101 assessment instrument, and we have had several discussions and subsequent meetings on how this instrument might appear.

The reasons for developing this assessment for 101 are various, including the following:

- More part-time instructors teaching the class
- Dual enrollment classes in the high school needing to teach to our outcomes
- Need for “authentic” assessment to arise from what we actually teach and from what students learn

Department faculty discussing the issue of a 101 assessment agree that there are a number of options for creating a ‘home-grown’ assessment tool in these classes, including an incorporation of it into the Purpose of Education unit that all 101 sections integrate into curriculum. The resulting essay from the assessment could replace an assignment in the class, too, rather than becoming an additional assignment. Faculty plan to develop similar rubrics to the 102 Entrance Essay rubric, which originated in English 101 from our past Competency exam. After this, English 102 classes might even give up the official “Entrance” essay at the start of that class, since this 101 essay would more accurately assess 101 outcomes. They would retain the usual diagnostic entrance essay that we use in all classes to determine students’ skill levels; it would just not be collected and evaluated by the department.

Another result of these discussions has been to review the 101 curriculum in more depth. In a widening conversation about “what is college level writing,” following directly from our assessment discussions, we have begun to reconsider our English 101 outcomes. If our outcomes change, they will impact the rubric that we develop for an English 101 assessment, and they may affect English 102 entrance skills and curriculum. This process reflects the application of meaningful assessment as we reflect on students’ writing skills at all levels.

- **(Fall 13—Spring 14):** 101 Assessment Pilot: This year, we began a lengthy discussion of the new assessment process for English 101. During spring 2013 the department finalized a new course description and end-of-semester English 101 rubric that meets our course outcomes. In addition, this rubric was related directly to the state-level composition rubrics for English 101 created that year and finalized recently. Our task, then, was to create an assignment that the rubric would best evaluate. The discussion covered multiple topics, but the group as a whole felt that the essay need not be a common writing assignment or a timed essay, but that it must be flexible enough so that it can work for all the 101 courses we are offering online, in the high schools, and those courses offered by part-time instructors. We agreed that we need a home-grown, authentic assessment: not a standardized one.
- **(Fall 14—Spring 15):** During fall of 2014 and spring of 2015, we have been collecting an array of four to five papers from each instructor’s English 101 class (part-time and full-time). Everyone is asked to score their students’ assignments using the rubric we

have previously worked on in past semesters. Afterwards, all instructors send along examples of a 4, 3, 2, 1 and a 0 score (if there were any zero scores).

- **(Fall 15—Spring 16):** The body of faculty who teach in our writing program gathered together to norm sample English 101 synthesis essays. We are collecting all English 101 instructors' scores for all their student synthesis essays at the end of fall semester to have a large data snapshot of how successfully our 101 students are meeting the course outcomes.