Introduction

The community college is such a significant component of higher education in the United States because it addresses directly the educational needs of the community in which it is located. In the case of WNC that community comprises 18,000 square miles and eight municipalities. Quite a challenge. However, as daunting as that challenge is, WNC has been true to its mission and continues to provide quality educational opportunities to more than 5,000 students a semester.

The primary mission of the College is to hire the very best people to fulfill the promise of the mission and to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. This WNC has done in terms of its human, physical, and financial resources. It must be noted, however, that due to continuing budget shortfalls, the College has not been able to maintain the same degree of fiscal support as it has in the past.

Courses and programs are carefully designed and evaluated, again in terms of the mission and goals of the college. Although no college, not even the community college, can be all things to all people, WNC serves exceptionally well the needs of multiple constituencies, offering a variety of degrees, certificates and special programs. And every year the college does a better and better job of assessing teaching and learning in an attempt to continually improve its offerings.

Particularly attractive to students about WNC is not only its reasonable costs but more significantly its focus on teaching and meeting their individual educational needs. What always comes first, whether one is academic faculty, administrative faculty, classified employee, or administration, is the student. Like all of the best community colleges, WNC is devoted to instruction and service. In sum, then, though there are numerous faculty who pursue scholarly activities, teaching is primary, and all who serve students at WNC never lose sight of that objective.

2.A.1 Resources

Western Nevada College is committed to providing the human, physical, and financial resources to support its educational programs and to facilitate student achievement of program objectives.

WNC’s human resource base comprises administrative faculty, academic faculty, and classified staff. The instructional faculty are organized into five Divisions for the purpose of academic programming and delivery. (See Standard Six.)

WNC’s faculty is highly educated and accessible. Because class sizes are relatively small, faculty are able to interact more with students both in the classroom and out. Faculty maintain a minimum of five office hours per week devoted exclusively to student advisement.

<Table 2.1: Average class sizes over five years—overall and/or by discipline>

Due to the economic slowdown from 2007 to the present, the College has had to leave some full-time faculty positions open, rely more on part-time faculty, increase class sizes, and reassign some duties and assign some extra ones. In spite of these adjustments, the College has continued to offer quality instruction. (See Standard Four.)

<Table 2.2: All Vacant Academic Faculty Positions>
WNC continually strives to improve the physical resources. For example, on the Carson City campus, the Jack C. Davis Observatory opened in 2003; the Joe Dini, Jr. Library and Student Center went into operation in 2004; and the first pitch was thrown at the John L. Harvey baseball field in 2006. In addition, the Bristlecone Building, the oldest building on the Carson City campus, has been remodeled and now houses a new art gallery. Parking on the Carson campus has also been expanded. On the Fallon campus, the library underwent an extensive remodel. In addition, college-wide ADA renovations are underway at the three main instructional sites. (See Standard Eight.)

The College provides quality educational services at all of the campuses and rural instructional centers through a variety of delivery systems. For example, interactive video and Web technologies enable students throughout the seven-county service area to access higher education and pursue a degree or certificate program in their own community.

As a public institution, WNC relies primarily on the Nevada Legislature and NHSE for its financial resources. State of Nevada legislatively-approved appropriations have consistently constituted approximately 87 percent of the institution’s total budget. WNC demonstrates its strong commitment to funding educational programs by expending approximately 54 percent of its total State-funded budget on instruction and academic support. However, due to the economic slowdown, the College has experienced a series of mandated budget reductions. As a result, the College has been forced to stretch its financial resources.

The College has also successfully instituted and conducted private fund-raising activities to complement and supplement State of Nevada appropriations through the operation and efforts of the WNC Foundation. The Foundation engages in fund-raising activities in the service area of the institution, and it has also established a very successful Employee Giving program. The Foundation exists to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Western Nevada by developing friends and funds for the support of WNC's educational, cultural, and service goals. (See Standard Seven.) (Appendix 2.1) (2.A.1)

2.A.2 Program Goals

The goals of the educational programs offered by WNC are developed, approved, and systematically evaluated according to established institutional policies and procedures compatible with the mission of the college, in particular that the college inspire student success “through opportunities that cultivate creativity, intellectual growth, and technological excellence.” These program goals are envisioned and articulated by faculty, administrators, and community partners (e.g. Fallon Advisory Committee) in response to community needs.

Once the goals of an educational program are developed or revised, it is the responsibility of the College’s Curriculum Committee to review and ultimately approve them. (Exhibits 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5) (2.A.2)

2.A.3 Program Design

All degrees and certificates demonstrate a coherent design that is consistent with academic standards and appropriate pedagogy. For example, students are encouraged to start a program sequence with
entry level classes, then proceed to the upper level classes. This approach provides a sound foundation which enhances student success. And if full-time students follow the sequence, it is possible for them to earn their degree within two years.

Degrees and Certificates are developed through a collaborative process, which includes faculty, administration, and students. The appropriate breadth and depth of programs are assured as a result of this collaboration. Faculty develop the programs; the Curriculum Committee, in some cases also advisory boards, review them; student success is assessed; and every five years the program is systematically reviewed.

Program development is overseen by the College Curriculum Committee. An integral component of program development is the “New Curriculum Program Proposal Form,” which establishes clear, systematic guidelines for proposing a new program. In certain disciplines advisory committees also review the proposal and offer input and evaluation. In developing new programs, it is imperative that these programs further the mission of the college.

Synthesis of learning is assured in a number of ways. For example, some programs are broad-based, with different subject areas within a discipline. For these programs, synthesis of learning is addressed by the following student learning outcome: “know the subject matter appropriate to the emphasis of the degree or certificate.” Other programs have a specific course or courses that address “synthesis of learning.” For example, the Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management requires three capstone courses. Other programs require an internship.

Each program coordinator is required to develop an annual assessment plan at the conclusion of the spring semester, and to write an annual assessment report. Both the assessment plan and report are forwarded to PARC.

Most faculty require student use of library resources, including reference assistance, print collections, and full-text research database collections, to complete assignments. (2.A.3)

Appendix 2.1: annual assessment plans and reports
Appendix 2.1: academic program reviews
Exhibit: new curriculum proposal form
Exhibit : policy on assessment and review

2.A.4 Degree Designators

All degree designators are consistent with program content. For example, the designator “AS in Mathematics” is used for an Associate of Science degree in Mathematics that will place students on career tracks either as a university mathematics major or as preparation for a different career, e.g., teaching or engineering.

Most programs have published Mission Statements and Student Learning Outcomes in the WNC Academic Program Guide, the WNC Catalog, and on the College website. Program Student Learning Outcomes are mostly content specific. For example, students in the AS in Mathematics program will:

- understand the content of calculus and differential equations.
• be able to apply the content of calculus and differential equations at the appropriate level in mathematics, science and engineering courses.

For each program, the content to be covered is clearly identified with a list of required courses (see *WNC Academic Program Guide*). Additionally, most courses have course outlines that are published online. All course outlines include a course description, course objectives, and linkage of courses to appropriate programs.

Intellectual skills, creative capabilities, and methods of inquiry have normally been addressed by general education Student Learning Outcomes. As an example, general education “SLOs” three and four expect students to:

• have problem solving, creative, and critical thinking skills.
• have effective and efficient learning skills, including the location and evaluation of information.

Career preparation competencies to be mastered, when appropriate, are listed in the *WNC Academic Program Guide*, where they are listed as student learning outcomes for those programs. For example, upon completion of the AAS program in Welding, students should be able to:

• acquire skills and perform tasks necessary for employment or for career enhancement in the welding field.
• present themselves effectively to a potential employer.
• demonstrate communication and computation skills appropriate to the welding field.

(2.A.4)

Exhibit: *WNC Academic Program Guide*

**2.A.5 Abbreviated Programs**

The college does not offer shortened or concentrated versions of its existing educational programs. (2.A.5)

**2.A.6 Credits and Tuition**

The department of Admissions and Records at Western Nevada College follows the policies and best practices established by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices (AACRAO). Classes are based on the semester system and the 50-minute hour. WNC applies the recognized formula for semester credits, and for those students transferring to WNC from institutions using quarter credits, the quarter credits are converted to 2/3 semester credits. The process of establishing common course numbering for all of NSHE proceeds.

All degrees at WNC require a minimum of 60 credits. The only exception is the Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management degree which requires 128 credits. And all certificates of achievement require a minimum of 30 credits. Program lengths are equivalent to similar programs offered at regionally accredited colleges and follow the guidelines set forth by AACRAO.
All tuition costs at WNC are credit-based. Standard tuition is determined by the Board of Regents, and these amounts are published on the College’s website. When the tuition has to be increased, the College will give students as much advance notice as possible. In fact, students will be asked to help make up part of the current budget shortfall with a 5% tuition increase beginning in spring 2010. Lab Fees at WNC, which are course-specific, are uniform regardless of course location and are reviewed every three years in “normal” times. (2.A.6)

Exhibit: Institutional Student Fee Policy 7-5-5

2.A.7 Curriculum Development and Implementation

The primary oversight responsibility for design, approval, and implementation of the curriculum is that of the College Curriculum Committee. It plays the primary role in evaluating courses and programs and “makes all final decisions regarding curriculum at the college for new and current degrees, emphases, programs, majors, certificates, and courses.” No program or course can be added to the curriculum without first going before the Curriculum Committee nor can one be changed or removed. In addition, it oversees two subcommittees (General Education and Distance Learning) and two work teams (Articulation and Catalog). It also reviews the curriculum of all programs undergoing program review.

The make-up of this committee consists of ten members and includes academic faculty, administrative faculty, and a student. Five academic faculty members represent all of the program areas, and one of them has historically served as chair. The remaining five members are the Dean of Instruction (or a representative of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs); a member of the Division Chairs Council; the Director of Information and Marketing Services, and the Director of Admissions and Records (or designee), and a representative of the United Students of Western Nevada.

Faculty who wish to design a new course must first present their proposal to their respective Division Chair, who, upon approval, submits the proposal to the Dean of Instruction, who then submits it to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Then the proposal goes to the Curriculum Committee for final approval.

Program design begins with individual faculty members who present their proposal to their respective Division Chair, who reviews the proposal and then presents it to the Division Chairs Council for further review. Once the Dean of Instruction signs off, but before the Curriculum Committee reviews the proposal, it is put on the college website for review and comment by the college community. Once the proposal is approved, it goes to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Approval and implementation of curriculum is systematic and thorough, as documented in the “New Curriculum Proposal Form.” To have new curricula approved and implemented, among other requirements, the author of a new program must present a plan for assessing the degree objectives, demonstrate the “intrinsic academic value” of the program, justify the existing or projected need of the program, and prepare a resource analysis. (2.A.7)

Appendix: Curriculum Review Report
Appendix: New Curriculum Proposal Form

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2.A.8 Use of Library and Information Resources

At Western, viable working partnerships exist between the library staff and the teaching faculty. For example, each instructional division has a librarian liaison who is responsible for working directly with faculty to incorporate library and information resources into the learning process. The liaisons solicit collection development information, help with developing class assignments, tailor research lectures to specific classes, and provide reference services to faculty to facilitate course development.

The college's new program development process requires an analysis of both the library and information services necessary to support the proposal and the financial impact on WNC's total library operation. Additionally, the articulation form required to establish a new course strongly encourages faculty to communicate material and service needs to the library staff. To assist in the development of new programs and courses, one of the librarians maintains an active presence on the Curriculum Committee.

Information literacy is addressed in one of the general education student learning outcomes. Specifically, students need the skills to locate and evaluate information. One library strategy in this regard is to reach students through the core curriculum of the College. English and social science are targeted in order to contact students at least once while at WNC. (2.A.8)

Exhibit: new course articulation form

2.A.9 Optimal Learning and Accessible Scheduling

At WNC, the construction of the course schedule begins within the five instructional divisions. Faculty, including program coordinators and division chairs, design schedules which are both flexible and accessible. The college schedule is reviewed by the Division Chairs Council and Dean of Instruction before the process is finalized. In order to maximize use of College space, the office of the Academic Scheduler provides important oversight and coordination in terms of room utilization and appropriate facilities.

WNC schedules most of its classes Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 9:45 p.m. However, weekend classes, seminars, and workshops occasionally appear on the schedule. A recurring example of Saturday offerings is the Latino Outreach Computer Applications course. Instruction is provided by the teacher with support from a bilingual teaching assistant. Classes are offered in a variety of different time frames, e.g., two or three sessions per week and block. Similarly, design and formatting of courses is equally diverse, which increases student options. For example, under the Distance Learning umbrella, both Web and interactive video courses are available. Web class sections and enrollments have grown dramatically since receipt of the 2005 Interim Evaluation Report.
Students can earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in Accounting, Business, or Management and a Certificate of Achievement in Bookkeeping or Business entirely online. Additionally, they may complete all of their general education requirements with the exception of the lab sciences required for the Associate of Science in Mathematics utilizing the Web delivery system.

Unfortunately, the current economic downturn and resultant loss of many full-time faculty positions have negatively impacted some instructional divisions, i.e., they have had to reduce the number of their course offerings. (2.A.9)

2.A.10, 2.G.9 Prior Experiential Learning

A policy for awarding credit for experiential learning is published in the catalog. Students may be awarded up to 15 credits from non-traditional sources, such as military training, correspondence courses, extension courses, post-secondary institutions without regional accreditation, and certificate training. These sources must “meet the minimum standards for accreditation by nationally or state recognized agencies,” and “credit is awarded only for those courses or training experiences that are comparable to those courses offered by WNC.” (2.A.10; 2.G.9)

2.A.11, 2.A.12 Deletions of Programs or Courses

Policies, regulations, and procedures for additions and deletions of courses or programs are systematically and periodically reviewed by the Curriculum Committee’s Articulation Work Team, which consists of the Director of Admissions and one other member of the Curriculum Committee. In the matter of the elimination of a program, students who previously began the program have up to six years, when a catalog is subject to expiration, to complete the program requirements. When necessary, arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis to offer classes to enable students to fulfill all program requirements. (2.A.11; 2.A.12)

Exhibit: Applicable catalog language

2.B.1 Overall Planning and Evaluation Plan

WNC’s processes for assessing its educational programs are clearly defined, encompass all of its offerings, are conducted on a regular basis, and are integrated into the overall planning and evaluation plan. The Assessment Plan for WNC is a five-year plan that establishes multiple goals for each year of the plan. For example, one goal for 2006-2007 was “to use data from [a] nationally normed instrument.” That spring, WNC administered the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory to gauge progress toward achieving the 2006-2012 Strategic Goals.

College faculty and staff will spend the next year developing the assessment plan for the next five
years, a process that affords stakeholders the opportunity to envision institution-wide improvements in assessment practices. In particular, those working on the 2010-2015 assessment plan will need to develop processes for systematic course-level assessment of general education outcomes and suggest changes to the organization of assessment efforts in order to foster deeper involvement from faculty at the division level.

The assessment process is a collaboration between PARC, the Curriculum Committee, Institutional Research, Division Chairs, faculty, students, and the administration. All programs at WNC are to be reviewed and assessed to ensure that the intended outcomes, both program outcomes and student learning outcomes, are being achieved and to determine what improvements need to be implemented.

Faculty play a central role in assessment beginning with PARC, which oversees program review and assessment of programs. IR assists all departments of the college with their institutional research, assessment, and data analysis needs. The IR assessment coordinator is a permanent member of PARC and works with other PARC members to facilitate annual assessment projects and the five-year program reviews as well as to provide training for program coordinators, who are responsible for carrying out assessment and program review activities. One workshop focused on curriculum mapping.

As a result of this partnership, student learning outcomes/course matrices are now published on the College website for almost all programs. PARC also began publication of the PARC Assessment & Review News, a bi-monthly newsletter containing information about assessment workshops and conferences and sharing of institutional best practices in assessment.

Similarly, the General Education Subcommittee completed a large-scale curriculum mapping project to determine to what extent the ten general education student learning outcomes were addressed in general education courses applicable to the AA, AS, and AAS degrees. The subcommittee undertook this assessment project as part of the College's first review of the general education program. The mapping project revealed that although all associate degree recipients are expected to demonstrate competency in all ten outcomes, not all general education learning outcomes are addressed in every program at this time. As a result of this self-study, the General Education Subcommittee is partnering with PARC to lead faculty discussions on possible adjustments to the general education program and means for assessing these outcomes for all general education courses.

Unfortunately, just as the program review process was improved to integrate results from annual assessment activities and include input from external reviewers, the IR programmer/analyst responsible for assessment coordination left the College, and that position remained vacant for most of that year due to the hiring freeze brought on by the budget shortfall. A few months after that position was filled on a temporary basis, the department lost its director. That position remains unfilled. As a result of these disruptions to a portion of the administrative oversight, collaboration, review, and input, support for the assessment processes diminished just as faculty buy-in for assessment was gaining momentum.

Annual assessments of all programs, both academic and administrative, are required. Each spring, each program area is expected to submit at least one program goal that will be assessed during the following academic year and then reported on the following year. These reports are then reviewed by PARC and the assessment coordinator in IR. Institutional Research staff provide technical assistance and other resources to faculty to assist them in these assessments. (2.B.1)

Appendix: Program Review and Assessment Committee Bylaws, mission, goals

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2.B.2 Learning Outcomes Assessment

WNC identifies and publishes mission statements and expected student learning outcomes for almost all of its academic programs, both in the WNC Catalog and WNC Academic Program Guide and on the College website. Faculty publish student learning outcomes in their course syllabi, including general education outcomes, and assess their students' proficiencies in demonstrating those outcomes. Impressive outcomes assessment is taking place, but there is no denying that not enough faculty are documenting those assessments for their courses in a systematic way. Those who do provide annual assessment reports submit them for publication on the Institutional Research website. The commitment to assessment is less uneven than it was at the last accreditation visit, but getting full faculty participation is still a challenge. (2.B.2)

Exhibit: Mission statements and SLOs for all programs

2.B.3 Improvement of Teaching and Learning

According to the WNC Policy on Assessment and Evaluation: “It is the responsibility of faculty who teach in an area to use the results of assessment to improve the educational program for the area. Failure to develop and implement ways of improving the educational program using assessment results may be used in the evaluation of a faculty member unless it is clear that the reasonable support needed to make improvements was not available.” Division Chairs and program coordinators responsible for program-level assessment are encouraged to participate in PARC assessment workshops and are made aware of assessment processes and deadlines via the Institutional Research website, the PARC Assessment & Review News, and college e-mail, but the response to these efforts is uneven.

Most faculty are doing a commendable job assessing the skills and knowledge of students at the course level and using assessment results to improve teaching and learning. For example, an adjunct developmental writing instructor administers pre- and post-tests on sentence skills in order to prioritize students' deficiencies and tailor his instruction. However, more faculty need to document evidence of improvements based on their assessment activities.

Faculty have a greater understanding now of what student learning outcomes are and how to assess those outcomes, and through their participation in PARC assessment workshops are better able to apply the results of their outcomes assessment activities to improve teaching and learning.

A number of assessments of general education learning outcomes were highlighted in the 2009 WNC General Education Program Review Report.

The Institutional Research office provides much of the data faculty use to make decisions about their programs. (2.B.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Assessment Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course or Program</td>
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## Appendix:

### Examples of Course or Program Improvements Implemented Based on Assessment Results

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course or Program</th>
<th>Goal/Outcome</th>
<th>Method &amp; Criteria for Success</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA Deaf Studies</td>
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<td>AA Fine Arts</td>
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<td>AA Musical Theatre</td>
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<td>AAS Computer Networking Technology</td>
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<td>AAS Early Childhood Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic Information Systems (AAS and Certificate)</td>
<td>Incorporate GPS into the GIS curriculum. Students enrolled in the GIS courses were introduced to the use of a GPS unit to create spatial data in a GIS.</td>
<td>Assessment methods used was a three-part assignment where students went into the field and captured way-points and brought them into the GIS lab and created a spatial layer of data.</td>
<td>Students were successful in completing the assignment and were able to incorporate the newly created layer into an existing GIS project.</td>
<td>Results were shared with students and also used for instructor assessment of curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAS Graphic Communications</td>
<td>Add an advanced web design course to give students required skills in web design, an ever-changing technology.</td>
<td>Criteria for success would be the articulation of GRC 275B and the addition of the course to the A.A.S.</td>
<td>The course was approved by the curriculum committee and will be added to the 2009-</td>
<td>The results will be published in the 2009-2010 catalog.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Specifically, skill levels need to be increased in the areas of cascading style sheets and actionscripting.

The program will articulate GRC 275B Web Design and Publishing II and will add it to the A.A.S. degree requirements in the 2009-2010 catalog.

The course will not be taught until Spring 2010.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAS Information Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Sign Language Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>AS Chemistry</td>
<td>Students can apply safety standards in the laboratory when using chemicals,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>equipment, and instruments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AS Geosciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>AS Math</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Education Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network Support Technician Certificate</td>
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</table>

2.C.1, 2.C.2, 2.C.3 General Education

The General Education Subcommittee of the College Curriculum Committee has the primary responsibility of overseeing the general education program at WNC. Over the past several years through a collaborative process spearheaded by this subcommittee, general education has been transformed from what was a collection of courses focused primarily on content and credits only to a comprehensive outcomes-based program of study.

Ten student learning outcomes have been developed that will provide students with “critical life skills” that will benefit them in their “personal and professional endeavors.” These learning outcomes are the criteria by which the relevance of each course to the general education program is determined. The
rationale for the general education program reflects the college’s mission, specifically that the college provides students with “opportunities that cultivate creativity, intellectual growth, and technological excellence, in an environment that nurtures individual potential and respects differences.” The rationale, general education program mission, and the ten student learning outcomes are published in the college catalog and the WNC Academic Program Guide as well as on the college website. Students who complete degrees and certificates are expected to demonstrate these outcomes.

While conducting the first-ever general education program review, the subcommittee spent more than a year mapping the student learning outcomes for all degrees except the associate in general studies and the associate of arts with no emphasis. This was a meticulous process but did reveal that depending on which courses a student takes to fulfill the general education requirements, he or she may not be exposed to all ten outcomes.

Although the number of credits may vary from program to program, all students completing the bachelor of technology, associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of general studies degrees must select courses that satisfy the English/communications, fine arts, humanities, mathematics, science, social sciences, and U.S. and Nevada Constitution general education requirements. Students seeking the associate of applied science degree do not have a fine arts requirement but must fulfill a human relations requirement. In addition, instruction related to safety or environmental awareness is embedded in the curricula of several programs, including nursing, surgical technology, lab sciences, and occupational areas. Students in certificate of achievement programs “are expected to demonstrate [that] they have the communication, computational, and human relations skills appropriate to the certificate area.” And the bachelor of technology degree in construction management requires nine credits of capstone courses to include a rigorous writing component and a formal oral presentation. (2.C.1; 2.C.2; 2.C.3)

[Appendix items: Gen. ed. Mission statement; ten student learning outcomes; Criteria for Determining General Education Status of Courses at WNCC [sic]:Does the Course Meet the General Education Student Learning Outcomes?]

Appendix: capstone course guidelines
Exhibit: WNC General Education Program Review Report

2.C.4 Transfer and Acceptance of Credit

WNC has clearly articulated transfer of credit policies. These policies are published in the college catalog and online. Courses from institutions with regional accreditation are usually transferable as long as they are comparable to WNC courses and can apply toward degree requirements. Common course numbering among NSHE institutions allows for efficient transfer of credits. Courses from outside the system are evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to course title and designator, number of credits, and course description. WNC subscribes to CollegeSource Online to access up-to-date information about other institutions, including Carnegie Classification, calendar system, accreditation, and course descriptions. When course information on a transcript and in the institution's catalog is insufficient to allow Admissions & Records to determine a course's applicability toward a student's program, students may be asked to provide further evidence, such as a course syllabus, so that WNC faculty in the discipline can make an informed decision.

WNC may award up to 15 credits for prior experiential learning from sources including military
training, correspondence courses, extension courses, post-secondary institutions without regional accreditation, and certificate training. Students may also be awarded credit by challenge examinations, College Board advanced placement examinations, and through the College Level Examination Program general examinations. Details of procedures for granting credit for non-traditional education and through examination can be found in the College catalog.

Transfer agreements exist between WNC and other system institutions and some non-system institutions. For example, WNC has articulation agreements for the bachelor of technology degree with the other NSHE community colleges. In addition, WNC has transfer agreements with Lake Tahoe Community College, a nearby college outside of NSHE.

Credits from some recognized colleges and universities outside the United States may be awarded if a professionally translated transcript is provided. Credit for the English/communications requirement is accepted only from institutions located in Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, and New Zealand.

In addition, WNC has entered into transfer agreements with the local high schools in the service area to offer students the opportunity to earn college credits while they are still attending high school. These agreements are of three types: dual credit; fast track; and Tech Prep. Dual Credit allows high school students to earn both high school and college credit at the same time. Fast Track offers designated courses to high school students via the Web or interactive video at a discounted cost to the student. Tech Prep offers high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to earn college credit for occupational courses.

<Exhibit: Transfer agreements>

Students who graduate from WNC with an associate of arts or associate of science degree are guaranteed admission to NSHE's universities, state college, and community colleges offering bachelor's degrees and meet the institutions' core requirements, except the upper-division capstone requirement.

Courses with “B” designators after the number may not transfer or apply to programs at four-year universities within Nevada (UNR, UNLV). In some cases, these courses may transfer and apply to programs at two- and four-year colleges within Nevada and may transfer to out-of-state schools. (2.C.4)

2.C.5 Academic Advising

All formal advising at Western Nevada College is done by Master’s Degree certified academic counselors who are knowledgeable about the programs and degrees at the college as well as articulation and transfer issues. Trained peer advisors also assist with the advising load by helping students get started at WNC by following the Checklist to Success which is displayed on the college’s website and on the back of the semester schedule.

Teaching faculty serve as informal advisors. Faculty contact information is published on the College website, and phone numbers are also published in the catalog. Faculty also have the option to post their office hours and course syllabi on their website directory pages. Many faculty have developed their own websites so that students can learn more about how a course transfers and how it may be used toward a degree.
Faculty participate in campus events such as College Days for high school juniors and seniors. Their presence and knowledge of programs and potential job markets are invaluable. Faculty and counselors work in partnership so that students are advised appropriately. (2.C.5)

2.C.6 Developmental Education

WNC does not require developmental credit for admission to the college or to any of its programs. However, upon admission, completion of developmental credit may be required. Students who do not have recent ACT/SAT scores are encouraged to do placement testing to determine placement and/or ability to benefit in mathematics, English, and reading courses. (Placement testing in English is mandatory as determined by the Board of Regents.) The college uses ACCUPLACER, a computerized adaptive placement testing program, approved by the U.S. Department of Education for placement. After they have tested, students meet with counselors to determine appropriate placement in those courses. Students are encouraged to do any developmental coursework as early as possible. Degree- or certificate-seeking students must complete this coursework within the first 30 credits.

Developmental courses are numbered below 100. All degrees and certificates of achievement clearly state that courses numbered below 100 are not applicable toward the degree or certificate.

Students who wish to take more than 18 credits must have permission from a counselor. (2.C.6)

Exhibit: remedial work (catalog?)
Exhibit: NSHE policy

2.C.7 Faculty Credentials

WNC faculty is adequate for the educational levels offered. Faculty who teach lower-division courses in transfer-level programs are required to hold at least a master's degree in the discipline. Faculty teaching lower-division courses in the occupational programs are required to have a combination of appropriate experience and post-secondary education. Faculty teaching upper-division courses in the bachelor of technology program are required to hold a doctorate.

Historically, the College has had full-time faculty representing every degree-granting program. Unfortunately, seven associate-degree granting programs are currently without full-time faculty representation because of the budget shortfall. This topic is addressed in greater detail in 4.A.1.

2.C.8 Student Achievement and Success

WNC has only one pre-baccalaureate vocational program—nursing—whose graduates must pass a state licensing examination before entering the workforce. Faculty assess the program's effectiveness in a number of other ways as well. Program faculty track job placement rates and implement annual surveys. An end-of-program survey is sent to second-year nursing students before graduation to determine their level of satisfaction with the program and how well they were prepared to meet program learning outcomes. Students are surveyed again a year after graduation to gauge how well prepared they were for employment. Another survey is administered to employers one year after they have hired WNC nursing graduates to determine their level of satisfaction with the graduates and how
well they believe WNC prepared the students to function as entry-level registered nurses.

Here are the NCLEX-RN pass rates:

- Class of 2004  90%
- Class of 2005  93%
- Class of 2006  91%
- Class of 2007  91%
- Class of 2008  92%

Job placement rates???

### 2.G.1 Continuing Education and Other Special Programs

WNC offers a variety of off-campus, continuing education (both credit and non-credit), and other special programs that reflect the college’s mission and goals and are designed, approved, administered, and evaluated under established institutional procedures.

For example, there are numerous non-credit, self-supporting community education classes, including courses designed expressly for children (College for Kids) and for seniors (Senior College). Such classes are designed by the instructor who submits his or her proposal to the community education coordinator for approval. Upon completion of the course, students evaluate it, and the results are reviewed by the coordinator.

There are also a number of special programs offered to meet the needs of specific constituencies. The Workforce Development Center works closely with business, industry, government, or non-profit agencies to design and offer classes that meet their needs. These courses can be offered for either credit or no credit.

A significant addition to special programs is the partnership that has been articulated between WNC and Nevada State College to allow WNC students to complete a bachelor’s degree and certification in elementary education without leaving the WNC campus.

The Western Nevada State Peace Officer Academy is a program that will prepare students for careers in law enforcement. In addition, there are special programs dedicated to 9-1-1 dispatching, phlebotomy, certified nursing assistant, and emergency medical services.

Another special program that continues to grow is ABE/ESL. The number of second-language students, for example, increases almost every semester.

<Table: ESL enrollments>

Unfortunately, the Correctional Education program, a program that had been graduating more and more students, has been reduced because of budget cuts, which resulted in having to release the program’s coordinator. (2.G.1)

### 2.G.2, 2.G.4 Oversight of Continuing Education
The fiscal and academic responsibilities for all instructional programs fall under the Dean of Instruction and the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. The College has no contracts with organizations that are not regionally accredited. (2.G.2; 2.G.4)

2.G.3, 2.G.7, 2.G.8 Academic Standards for Continuing Education

All courses offered for academic credit, regardless of whether they are initiated through Workforce Development or one of the Divisions, are expected to meet the appropriate academic standards and are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. Non-credit Community Education courses are also reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, but they are not held to the same academic standards as credit courses. The Curriculum Committee's interest in non-credit courses is to ensure that they do not compete with courses offered for credit. (2.G.3; 2.G.7; 2.G.8)

2.G.5 Access to Distance Learning Resources and Faculty

WNC offers a variety of interactive video and web-based courses. In addition, the College offers five associate degrees and one certificate of achievement online.

To help students determine if they are well suited for online instruction, they are encouraged to complete an online readiness quiz. To ensure that students have ready access to appropriate learning resources, the college assists students in understanding and applying the relevant technology and provides aid to students who are experiencing difficulty using the required technology. In addition, the College provides laboratories, facilities, and equipment appropriate to the courses or programs.

Because Web instructors are not in “classroom contact” with their students, and interactive video instructors meet regularly with only a portion of those enrolled, most distance learning instructors expend considerable effort to be sure that they interact with their students. Interactive video instructors are encouraged to travel to the remote sites to teach some of their classes, and Web instructors maintain discussion boards and provide chat rooms to be sure that students are able to exchange information with the instructor and with each other. The College hires interactive video facilitators at the remote sites, who are responsible for operating the equipment and handling the course materials sent between the instructor and the remote site.

In order for students to have ready access to appropriate learning materials, Library & Media Services has been developing methods to provide that access. Approximately 9,000 full-text journals are now available to students via authenticated access to the library’s website. Processes exist to provide library cards, books, and specific assistance to students via the department’s website and e-mail reference services. Electronic reserves are available to students taking Web classes through the college’s Blackboard interface. Informal arrangements with public libraries in the rural portions of the service area provide access to library collections for students in their home communities. The library buys a small number of books for the rural libraries in exchange for providing library assistance to students. A small electronic book collection provides access to monographs for distance education students.

Courses taught via distance learning undergo the same rigors of review and evaluation as the campus-based courses. The institution evaluates the distance education courses to ensure the educational effectiveness of its distance education programs and to make sure that they are comparable to campus-based programs. The Curriculum Committee, for example, has formed a permanent distance-learning
subcommittee, and an additional distance education college advisory committee is being formed.

A full-time coordinator had been responsible for oversight of Web education at WNC until fall 2008 when he left and the budget deficits prevented the hiring of a replacement. There are plans to hire a new coordinator, but for now the Webmaster has taken on the responsibility for Blackboard administration, library personnel help students access their courses, a half-time classified employee based at the Fallon Campus provides Web-based instructional support, and the faculty are temporarily getting by without technical and instructional design training and support at the College. However, the Instructional Design Team at the University of Nevada, Reno allows WNC faculty to attend their workshops on a space-available basis.

One interactive video specialist handles Fallon and rural site support duties in addition to providing technical training and support to the whole college. On the Carson campus, the interactive video responsibilities have been divided between a number of personnel. Library personnel provide scheduling, training, technical support, personnel and facilitator recruitment, and supervision for the Carson City and Douglas campuses.

Funds to pay for licensing of software such as the online learning (Blackboard), anti-plagiarism, etc. are currently funded through the College’s tech fee. In past years expenses have been paid from year-end funds. State funding is not regularly provided although the college has never experienced problems obtaining funds via the tech fee. (2.G.5)

2.G.6 Continuing Education Fee and Refund Policies

The fee structures and refund policies for all instruction are equitable. Information about fees and refund policies for all programs is published in the printed schedule and online, and fee and refund policy information pertaining to courses for credit is also available in the catalog.

WNC strives to notify students as early as possible of any upcoming fee increases. To help students avoid having to pay a late fee, Admissions & Records goes to great lengths to notify students who have been dropped from for-credit classes due to non-payment.

Students may exchange courses of equal credit during the first two weeks of instruction for no extra fee, and the dropped class will not appear on students' transcripts. (2.G.6)

2.G.10 External or Special Degrees

WNC does not offer external degrees, a degree-completion program, nor special degrees. (2.G.10)

2.G.11 Outcomes-Based Credit

The College does not grant credit based on outcomes alone or by any other non-traditional means. (2.G.11)

2.G.12 Travel/Study Courses

WNC has no formal study abroad program, but it does offer courses that require travel or study at
locations other than the College. Travel/study courses are offered both for credit and not for credit, and
credit is awarded based on successful completion of objectives and coursework and not for travel alone.
WNC does not contract with organizations that are not regionally accredited in the delivery of courses
involving travel. (2.G.12)

2.H.1, 2.H.2, 2.H.3 Non-Credit Programs and Courses

The Community Education, College for Kids, and Senior College programs offer non-credit courses
and programs that are administered under institutional policies that determine procedures for
budgeting, selection and compensation of instructors, and course registration. Although the Community
Education Program policy states that “noncredit activities and courses will have a registration process
that is separate from the regular college registration,” the only Community Education classes that have
a separate process are the motorcycle safety classes. The Workforce Development Center offers both
for-credit and non-credit classes.

Faculty are involved in the planning and evaluation of all non-credit programs. The coordinator hires
qualified instructors, who are evaluated at the end of every course by their students. Topics for courses
are selected through marketing research or in response to a request from the community.

Information pertaining to enrollment, scheduling, and content for Community Education courses, with
the exception of motorcycle safety courses, is maintained for audit purposes in the Student Information
System. Separate records are kept for College for Kids, Senior College, Workforce Development, and
motorcycle safety courses. Non-credit courses are offered in the fall, spring, and summer terms. The
course schedules are available either online or in the printed course schedules as appropriate. Course
fees are collected by the WNC Business Office.

WNC follows national guidelines for awarding and recording Continuing Education Units (CEU),
awarding one CEU for ten hours of instruction appropriate to the objectives of the course. Certificates
are provided to students who receive CEUs, listing the course or courses attended and the number of
CEUs issued. Instructors for classes offering CEUs keep daily attendance records for their courses, and
the Director of Workforce Development maintains those records for all courses. There is an additional
fee for CEU courses. (2.H.1; 2.H.2; 2.H.3)

Appendix: WNC Community Education Program Policy No.: 12-2-1
Standard Two – Supporting Documentation

faculty-student ratios by discipline
English 098 Assessment Report

Appendices

2.1 Academic Programs and Degrees and Certificates Granted (Last Three Years)
2.2

Exhibits

2.1 Curriculum Committee Bylaws
2.2 Recent Minutes of the Curriculum Committee
2.3 Programs with Advisory Committees
2.4 Recent Minutes of Advisory Committees
Strengths

- WNC has committed faculty and staff determined to maintain quality educational programs in spite of budgetary setbacks.
- PARC has developed a successful program review process.
- The design and implementation of courses and programs are collaborative processes that include administrators but are faculty driven.
- A culture of assessment continues to develop.
- The general education program is increasingly outcomes driven.
- The Foundation has established an exemplary fund-raising model which includes a successful Employee Giving program.
- The two-year-old Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management program produced its first three graduates in 2009.
- Library & Media Services now students with access to full-text journals through the Library website and provides electronic reserves through the Blackboard interface.

Concerns

- Financial resources have been decreasing, necessitating an increase in tuition and fees.
- The number of students applying for scholarships and financial assistance has increased dramatically.
- Assessment is viewed by some faculty as a responsibility that falls outside the normal realm of duties.
- The director of Institutional Research retired and has not been replaced.
- Institutional Research programmer/analyst position responsible for coordination of assessment was filled on a temporary basis after an eight-month vacancy.
- Rationale for capstone courses required for the Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management program is not made available to students.
- Faculty contact information is no longer published in the printed semester schedule.
- Faculty appointed to PARC are not always well-versed in assessment best practices and in WNC's assessment processes in particular.
- There is some confusion as to how to distinguish between Continuing Education and Community Education and how the entire area or set of programs is organized.

Recommendations

- Continue to develop a culture of assessment by building on successful assessment activities that are used to improve teaching and learning.
- Provide members of PARC with more opportunities for professional development so that all PARC members can take a more active role in assisting program faculty and staff in their assessment and program review efforts.
- Create an assessment liaison in each academic division to work with PARC to review assessment plans and otherwise support assessment work.
- Publish rationale for capstone courses (BT Construction Management).
- Fill director position in Institutional Research, and make IR programmer/analyst position
responsible for coordination of assessment.

• Clarify organizational responsibilities of Continuing/Community Education.

Actions Taken

• In 2008, guidelines and templates for assessment and program review were evaluated and then revised.