Destination Accreditation

Self Study 2013

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Greetings from...

WEST VIRGINIA
NORTHERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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DESTINATION ACCREDITATION
WV NORTH. COMM. COLLEGE

BOARDING PASS

Introduction

Evidence:

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I.2   2010 Census

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SNAPSHOT OF THE INSTITUTION

West Virginia Northern Community College (heretofore, "WVNCC," "Northern," "the College," or "the institution") is a public, tri-campus, two-year comprehensive community college in West Virginia. The College was created by action of the West Virginia Board of Regents on May 9, 1972, and was officially established on July 1, 1972. The Board specified the responsibilities for the comprehensive community college for providing "post-secondary academic, occupational-technical, and general education programs of two years or less duration for high school graduates and adults." The college upholds an "open door" admission policy for general admission to the institution. Programs are offered in Liberal Arts and Sciences, Career-Technical, Workforce Development, Transitional Education, and Community and Continuing Education. The College maintains a six county service area in West Virginia comprised of the counties of Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, and Tyler. Additionally there is a tuition reciprocity agreement with the following counties in Ohio: Jefferson, Harrison, Belmont, and Monroe; residents of these counties receive the in-state tuition rate. Furthermore, the College offers a Metro Rate to students from Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Greene Counties in Pennsylvania, as well as students from Columbiana and Washington Counties in Ohio.

DEMOGRAPHICS

WVNCC is located in the Northern Panhandle region of West Virginia which includes Tyler, Wetzel, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke, and Hancock counties. It is an area currently experiencing declining population and economic upheaval, an area that is economically depressed—as are many rural regions across the country. The keystone steel industries, for example, have reduced employees from 23,000 fifty years ago to 7,000 in 2006, and this number has been further reduced to 1,300 employees reported in July 2009 (Brown, 2009, I.1). More local employment data is available on the WorkForce WV website (I.4). Primarily due to the pronounced lack of opportunity in the region, the six-county service area has experienced a population decline of nearly 10,000 residents since the 2000 census. Given this rather bleak outlook, the two-year community college has be-

come a refuge for displaced workers, those reentering the workforce, and recent high school graduates desiring an affordable education at a school located close to home. WVNCC has always responded quickly to the needs of residents, and this has certainly helped increase enrollment significantly in recent years, reaching 3,328 in fall 2009, making WVNCC the largest college in the service area. Sound educational planning based on national, state, and local data support the College's mission to provide higher education that empowers individuals to achieve academic and career goals, ultimately leading to a competent workforce which excels in a global economy. The College responds to the educational, cultural, and civic needs of the communities it serves by offering an accessible, safe, diverse, and high-quality learning environment.

The population in the six West Virginia counties served is 158,086, according to 2010 Census (I.2), as shown on Table I.1. The population is evenly distributed by gender ranging from 52.4% female in Ohio County to 50.9% in Wetzel County. It is also an aging population with 19.55% over 65 in Wetzel County to a low of 17.6% in Marshall County. All six counties are above West Virginia's 16.0% persons over 65. The median age of West Virginia citizens, at 40.5, is third highest among the States, according to U.S. Census data for 2010. Census data also identifies West Virginia as the State having the lowest percentage of persons under the age of 18 (20.9 %) (US Census Bureau, I.2). Combined with the population in neighboring Ohio and Pennsylvania counties, the regional population is estimated at 1,981,521—the most substantial number coming from Allegheny County in Pennsylvania—as shown on Table I.2.

Table I.1—WVNCC Service Areas

County	Population	Square Miles
Brooke	24,069	92.26
Hancock	30,676	88.35
Marshall	33,107	312.18
Ohio	44,443	108.86
Tyler	9,208	260.69
Wetzel	16,583	361.37
Total	158,086	1,223.71

Table I.2—Counties Bordering WVNCC's Service

County	Population
Allegheny, PA	1,223,348
Beaver, PA	170,539
Belmont, OH*	70,400
Columbiana, OH	107,841
Greene, PA	38,686
Harrison, OH*	15,864
Jefferson, OH*	69,709

| County	Population
Monroe, OH*	14,642
Washington, OH	61,778
Washington, PA	207,820
Total	1,981,521

*Reciprocal agreement

The Upper Ohio Valley communities clearly face significant educational and economic challenges and a serious decline in population. Of people 25 years and older, high school graduation rates range from 88.5% in Ohio County to 82.2% in Tyler. Area residents 25 and older who hold a bachelor's degree or higher ranges from a high of 24.6% in Ohio County to a low of 10.3% in Tyler. The high achievement rate in Ohio County likely stems from the fact that there are two colleges/universities and one community college in the county. The poverty rate in the region is also high, ranging from a low rate of 13.6% in Brooke County to a high of 18.7% in Wetzel County. Unemployment at present remains significant, ranging from 7.7% in Ohio County to 11% in Hancock. Five of the six counties are above the state average of 8.6%. ("Northern Panhandle Jobless Rates" Weirton Daily Times, I.3). WorkForce West Virginia's (I.4) unemployment data for July 2011 indicated that state unemployment rates improved, but the Northern Panhandle rates remained below average ("N. Panhandle Jobless"—Weirton Daily Times, I.3). The primary employment in the valley is in the steel, chemical, and aluminum industries, medical services, and retail business. However, at present these major industries and services have been superseded by Wal-Mart as the largest state employer. Recent new employment has also resulted from the expansion of Wheeling Island Hotel, Casino, and Racetrack in Wheeling and Mountaineer Casino Racetrack and Resort in Chester, WV, after the State Legislature approved table gaming in West Virginia. In addition, the current development of the Marcellus Shale industry promises increased employ-   ment in the foreseeable future.

The New Martinsville area, Wetzel and Tyler counties, is the rural southern end of the district, with a smaller population but a larger land area. A narrow land portion is along the Ohio River, but that is also the location of the more populated communities. Since these river towns are located between Wheeling to the north and Parkersburg to the south, residents often travel to these larger communities for services. In the eastern portions of the counties, residents travel to Morgantown, Fairmont, and Clarksburg for many services. Sources of employment are found mainly outside the counties, at chemical industries and electric power plants in Marshall County, a chemical industry and a corrections institution south of Tyler County, and a Monroe County, Ohio, aluminum plant. Within the counties are medical service agencies (including two hospitals), public schools, other governmental agencies, a Super Wal-Mart Center, and other retail stores. This area is more isolated
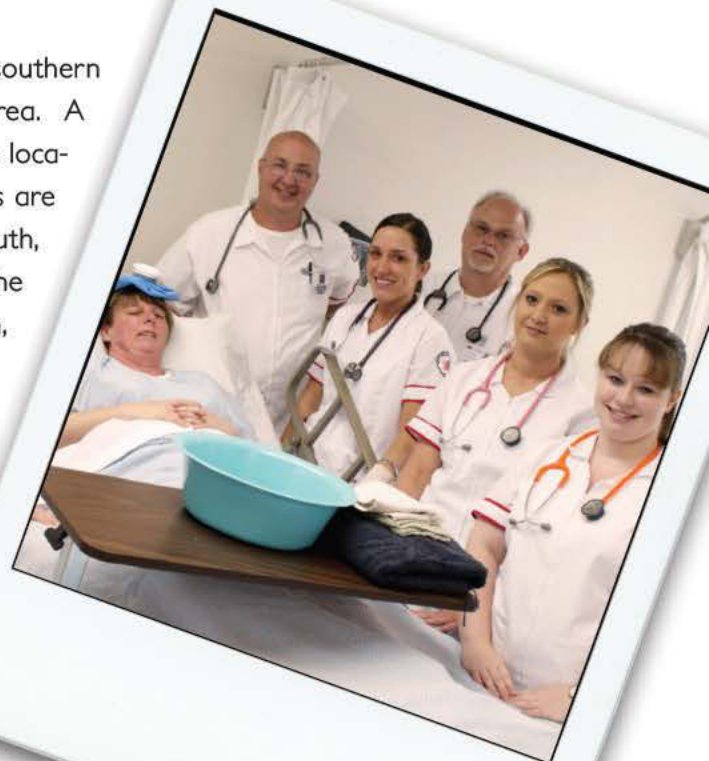
from higher education, with travel of at least an hour required of most residents to reach any college other than the local campus of Northern. The present New Martinsville campus, located next to the City Building in the downtown area, is 22 years old and resulted from partnership efforts with the city, State, and local individuals and businesses.

The north end of the Northern Panhandle, served by the Weirton campus, is located between the Pittsburgh area of Pennsylvania and the Steubenville, Ohio, area with people relating to colleges, medical facilities, employment, and other services in both border cosmopolitan areas. A private university and a community college are located in Steubenville, directly across the river from Weirton. In order to better serve the region, an addition was made to the Weirton facility in 1999-2000, and, in response to emerging employment opportunities in electrical and mechanical maintenance and health care, another new 9,500 square foot addition was completed in January 2012. Located out of the downtown area, the Weirton campus is in a convenient location near residential housing, businesses, and a private high school.

Providing service to the central region of the panhandle, the Wheeling campus is located in the downtown area and currently consists of two buildings—the B&O and the Education Center. The Education Center is a relatively new (renovated) building, completed in 2006. Both buildings house classrooms and faculty/administrative offices. The College also rents space in the Hazel-Atlas Building for HVAC courses. This will continue until the completion of renovation of recently purchased Straub properties. The recent purchase of the Straub Honda and Hyundai buildings will lead to substantial expansion of the Wheeling campus. The Straub Honda building will become the site of a technology center offering Mechatronics, welding, diesel mechanics, refrigeration/heating/air conditioning, and appliance repair. The Hyundai building will house a Barnes and Noble Bookstore, and a planned second floor addition will provide accommodation for a student activity center.

Wheeling is in the midst of major economic development initiatives, including employment diversification and a planned revitalization of its east side. Electric power companies, aluminum and chemical industries, some coal companies, and small manufacturers remain as employers, most with reduced employees. Health care is a major employer, with two Wheeling hospitals and others in nearby communities on each side of the river. For years, the city's retail businesses have been reducing as the malls expand in nearby St. Clairsville, Ohio, and the Highlands shopping area. Wheeling also provides district offices for other governmental and education agencies. A four-year public university, two private universities, and a proprietary business college are in the area. Additionally, a technical college and a large branch university campus are located within a few miles across the river in Ohio. Wheeling provides the most urban setting of the three campuses.

HISTORY OF CAMPUSES

WVNCC originated as a dual-campus community college made up of the former Hancock County Branch and the Wheeling campus of the current West Liberty University. As a result of community requests, the College began offering courses in New Martinsville in 1973.

Wheeling Campus

The Wheeling campus was originally housed in the Hazel-Atlas Building, which was the former West Liberty campus. The building was utilized for general education courses, as well as health science and heating and air conditioning labs until February 2009 when it was sold. The college continued to lease space in the building for the Refrigeration, Air Conditioning, and Heating program, as well as table gaming courses.

In December 1977, the college acquired the B&O Building, which originally served as the main terminal of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This building contains the administrative offices, Bookstore, Business Office, Financial Aid, Library/Learning Resource Center, tutoring services, and Support Services for Students with Disabilities, as well as laboratories, classrooms, and faculty offices.

The Wheeling Wholesale Grocery Building was purchased by the College in June 2004. The former warehouse is located adjacent to the B&O Building. After extensive renovations, the building opened in August 2006 and currently houses the WVNCC Culinary Arts facility, health science laboratories, classrooms, faculty offices, Student Activities, and a 5,000 square-foot Multipurpose Room.

On August 19, 2011, the college purchased the Straub property from the Ohio County Development Authority. The former Honda dealership will be renovated to create the Applied Technology Center which will house labs for welding, diesel and refrigeration/heating/air conditioning instruction, as well as a lab for Mechatronics, a new program that prepares students to be electrical and industrial maintenance technicians. The building is scheduled to be completed in March 2013.

A second parcel included in the Straub purchase is the former Straub Hyundai building. This building will house a Barnes & Noble bookstore and student activity center. Groundbreaking occurred on September 20, 2012.

Weirton Campus

The College offered courses in Weirton at Weir High School until 1975 when land and modular buildings were purchased. The first phase of a permanent instructional facility was constructed in 1982, with the second phase which replaced the modular buildings constructed in 1999-2000. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held Tuesday, May 24, 2011, for an expansion of classroom space at the Weirton campus. The 9,590 square-foot building addition houses two classrooms and three laboratory classrooms utilized for Surgical Technology, Respiratory Care, and Mechatronics.

New Martinsville Campus

Courses were offered in New Martinsville for the first time in the spring of 1973, with a campus established in 1975 in a renovated downtown discount store. A permanent facility was established in 1990. The New Martinsville campus is centrally located in the downtown city complex adjacent to the New Martinsville Municipal Building. The academic facility houses administrative and faculty offices; counseling and student services; the Library/Learning Resource Center; 10 general use classrooms and 2 computer labs equipped with state-of-the-art technology; IP video classroom; conference/workshop/seminar rooms; laboratories for business, nursing, and physical and biological sciences; Academic Success Center (tutoring and disabilities services); lounges; and a College Bookstore.

Additionally, the Francis Creative Arts Center renovation was completed about four years ago. This center is home to ArtsLink, which has been very active for several years. The Center provides a series of musical events, sponsors theatrical productions for local children and adults, and conducts juried art shows. The Center currently has more than 250 paid members and receives numerous grants to cover its costs. Bob DeFrancis, Dean of Community Relations, and Larry Tackett, New Martinsville Campus Dean, are members of the board of directors.

IP Video

In order to link the campuses and to provide instruction in what would normally be low-enrolled courses on multiple campuses, the college utilizes an IP video connection with the capability of providing audio and video connections between all three campuses simultaneously. A dedicated classroom is located on each of the three campuses and was implemented in 2003. While the telecommunications classroom continued being used for several years after implementation of IP Video, this system has replaced the former video telecommunications classrooms that had been in use since 1988.

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNING BOARDS

West Virginia Northern Community College has been governed by three different governing boards and a transition board during its existence. Initial governance was by the West Virginia Board of Regents, which governed all higher education institutions until 1989, at which time it was replaced by the Board of Trustees for universities and the West Virginia Board of Directors as the governing board for state baccalaureate and community colleges. In 2000, through SB 653 (WV Code 2, I.5), the State Legislature established the Higher Education Policy Commission and individual institutional governing boards which became effective July 2001. The year 2000-2001 was a transitional year for governance, with an Interim Governing Board at the State level while the Higher Education Policy Commission established itself, and the Institutional Board of Advisors prepared for becoming a Board of Governors. On July 1, 2001, the Board of Governors officially assumed powers and duties of a local governing board in accordance with the Higher Education Act adopted by the State Legislature and signed by Governor Cecil Underwood in June 2000. The current Board of Governors consists of twelve members,

with nine members being appointed by the Governor (http://www.wvncc.edu/about/board-of-governors/531). (One position remains unfilled at the time this report is written.) The remaining three members are representatives of the faculty, staff, and students. They are elected by their respective constituencies for a two-year term. Below is a list of the current Board of Governors membership:

Name	Role
Dr. Darrell Cummings	Chair
Mary K. DeGarmo	Vice Chair
Christin Byrum	Secretary
Brann Altmeyer	Member
John Clarke	Member
Joe Craycraft	Member
Gus Monezis	Member
Fred Renzella	Member
Rita Berry	Faculty Representative
Lucy Kefauver	Classified Staff Representative
Nathan Schmidt	Student Representative

COLLEGE STRUCTURE & ADMINISTRATION

Six presidents and five interim presidents have served in the College's history. Below is a table listing presidents who served in the past:

College President	Term
Dr. Daniel B. Crowder	September 1972 to November 1984
Dr. Barbara Guthrie-Morse	August 1985 to August 1989
Dr. Ronald Hutkin	July 1990 to September 1994
Dr. Linda S. Dunn	May 1995 to December 1999
Dr. John O. Hunter	August 2000 to July 2005

Dr. Martin J. Olshinsky has led the institution since August 1, 2005. Along with organizational structures throughout the years, the College has retained a central administrative unit reporting to the president for institution-wide oversight. Campus administrators are housed on the Weirton and New Martinsville campus and are responsible for their daily operations. The former Centers of Excellence concept was eliminated with the academic areas returning to a more traditional division structure. Four academic divisions (Math & Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health Sciences, and Business & Technology) were formed and led by Division Chairs, each having teaching and administrative duties assigned to them. The divisions were realigned in the 2011-2012 academic year to the following: Liberal Arts, Health & Science, Business & Technologies, and Transitional Education. Division Chairs continue to coordinate the activities within their respective divisions. The academic divisions are led by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

SINCE LAST COMPREHENSIVE VISIT

West Virginia Northern Community College has experienced many changes since the last comprehensive HLC visit in spring of 2003. At the time of the last comprehensive visit, Dr. John O. Hunter was the President, Garnet Persinger was the Chief Academic Officer, and the academic area was organized into three academic centers with a Center Director. Ms. Persinger retired following that semester and in the next five years, three individuals served as Chief Academic Officer. In the spring of 2005, Dr. Hunter announced his resignation as President and Dr. Martin J. Olshinsky was named President effective August 1, 2005. In 2005, Barry Good was named Dean of Instruction, and the academic division structure was re-established in the spring 2006 semester with four divisions each having a Division Chair.

For the 2006-2007 and for part of the 2007-2008 academic years, Michael Koon was interim Vice President of Academic Affairs. He served in this capacity until January 2008 when Dr. Vicki Riley was named the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The division structure was realigned to establish a more equal distribution of faculty in 2011-12 but maintained a total of four components administered by Division Chairs.

The Office of Institutional Research was newly developed and under the direction of Michael Smith at the time of the 2003 HLC visit. Title III funds were utilized to establish an effective Institutional Research Office. The office is the primary source for internal reporting and administers the College's institutional reporting software along with managing the student database system, which is currently Ellucian's Banner System. The office is under the direction of Pam Woods, Institutional Research Director, and has three additional staff members.

There have been significant changes in leadership for assessment at the College. While the Assessment Committee has always had oversight responsibility for assessment, the College has used several approaches for coordinating assessment. In 2004, the position of Dean of Institutional Effectiveness was created with directing assessment as a prime responsibility. This position was later eliminated, and a faculty member was recruited to serve as Assessment Coordinator and was granted release time to perform the duties. In June 2007, the College hired Sherry Becker-Gorby on a part-time basis to serve as Assessment Coordinator. She served in this capacity until December 2007. A faculty member, Thomas Danford, stepped in and served in the capacity of Assessment Coordinator. Despite retiring in May 2011, Mr. Danford continues to serve in this capacity as a consultant. (A more comprehensive history of assessment at Northern is available in the Assessment Plan 2012 (I.6) which is available on the Assessment homepage: http://www.wvncc.edu/offices-and-services/assessment-homepage/751).

In addition to changes in structure and personnel, the College has undergone significant facility additions and upgrades since the last comprehensive visit. The Education Center has been opened and has created a true campus concept in Wheeling. All programs formerly housed in the Hazel-Atlas Building, except Refrigeration, Air Conditioning, and

Heating, have been moved to the Education Center. These programs include Nursing, Respiratory Care, Surgical Technology, and others. The plaza behind the B&O Building has been renovated. The Wheeling campus continues to expand with the addition of the two Straub properties, which will become the Applied Technologies Center and a Barnes & Noble and Student Activities Center. The Weirton campus also underwent an expansion with the addition of three new laboratories as well as classrooms in its updated facility.

The classrooms and laboratories on all three campuses have become technology enhanced with instructor podiums complete with computers, DVD and VCR players, and overhead LCD projectors in each room. Additionally, Wi-Fi has been installed throughout all College areas.

The College's mission had been virtually unchanged until 2000 when it was revised to reflect a more aggressive responsibility to not only serve those who wish to participate but to motivate persons to participate in higher education. A second revision occurred in 2011 to reflect the fact that institutions must be responsive to both community and global needs in order to provide a competent workforce for the future.

HISTORY OF ACCREDITATION

WVNCC has been accredited since the North Central Association transferred the accreditation formally accorded the Weirton and Wheeling campuses of West Liberty State College to West Virginia Northern Community College, effective July 27, 1972. The College conducted its first self study in 1973-1974, and the transfer of accreditation was affirmed in 1975 for five years. In 1980, the College was awarded a continued five years of accreditation, following a team visit in the spring of 1980. As a result of the next comprehensive self-study, the College was awarded continued accreditation for seven years, with a scheduled visit in 1992-93. The 1992-1993 visit resulted in a ten-year accreditation award with a focus visit scheduled for 1996-97. The April 1997 focus visit concluded that the three focus issues were addressed successfully and no further monitoring was necessary. The last comprehensive site visit was in March 2003. This visit resulted in a continued ten-year accreditation with a visit scheduled in 2007-08 to address Assessment of Student Academic Achievement. The focus visit showed that "evidence was sufficiently demonstrated. No commission follow-up recommended." The next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for March 2013.

PROCESS FOR SELF STUDY

WVNCC identified its direction for the self-study process in the 2009-2010 school year. In the fall of that year, the three coordinators of reaccreditation were tentatively selected to represent the three primary sectors of the institution: faculty, staff, and administration. In the spring and summer of 2010, the tri-coordinators, in conjunction with the accreditation liaison, developed the self-study plan, which included five primary goals:

- produce, through deliberation and reflection, a candid self-study report that enhances accountability to both internal and external constituents,
- inform the College of the emerging needs of future learners to foster development of strategies that meet those needs,
- analyze programs and services to identify strengths and challenges in relation to future trends that will guide development of strategies for improvement, planning, and decision making,
- demonstrate fulfillment of Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components, and
- review and clarify the College's communication processes to advocate institutional improvement and student learning.

The self-study process at WVNCC is designed to produce a self-study report that meets the Higher Learning Commission's (heretofore, "Commission" or "HLC") and institution's needs. The Commission needs an evaluative document with clear patterns of evidence that demonstrates the institution is fulfilling the five criteria for accreditation and associated core components and which leads to continuous improvement. From an institutional perspective, the process should be a comprehensive assessment which delineates institutional strengths and areas for improvement. Northern sought for the self-study process to link to strategic planning and to its institutional effectiveness program. The committees of accreditation have been established with a cross-functional composition, and this will contribute to both a comprehensive approach and a critical evaluation. The use of a website to house committee work ensures that the process is transparent and is intended to foster college-wide discussion about the findings. All subcommittee chairs received training and resource materials on the criteria and core components, and one of the self-study coordinators serves as a liaison to each of the subcommittees to ensure that they focus on patterns of evidence for the criteria. The dependence on data for the study helps reinforce the College's efforts to become more data driven in decision-making and planning. The self-study process is interwoven within the institution's strategic plan, and feedback processes were established so that findings from the committees can be linked to planning and improvement of institutional effectiveness.

In the fall of 2009, the College administration tentatively identified the three coordinators—one staff member (Christina Sullivan, Director of Academic Student Support Services), one faculty member (Lisa Ingram, Associate Professor), and one administrator (Steve Woodburn, Wheeling Campus Dean)—to drive the 2012-2013 reaccreditation process. These individuals were chosen not only for their representation of the primary sectors but also because of their leadership abilities and focus on team work. In the

spring of 2010, the tri-coordinators and accreditation liaison attended the Commission's Annual Conference to begin to study the self-study process. From that point, the coordinators and liaison met to initiate the initial stages of the process, including identifying the necessary subcommittees and their leaders, as well as developing the self-study plan (I.7). The tri-coordinators determined that eight subcommittees were to be created and led by other members of the college community: one for each of the Criteria of Accreditation, a Change Request Committee, a Federal Compliance Committee, and a Resource Room Committee. In selecting the leadership of these committees, the coordinators considered the following:

- diversity in representation to include those from the three campuses of the College,
- diversity in representation to include individuals from the three primary sectors (faculty, staff, and administration),
- leadership attributes, including ability to share leadership with committee members, and
- area of expertise.

After selecting candidates for leadership, the tri-coordinators divided up committee oversight with the staff coordinator overseeing Criterion Two, Federal Compliance, and the Resource Room; the administrative coordinator overseeing Criteria One and Five as well as the Change Request Committee; and the faculty coordinator overseeing Criteria Three and Four. The tri-coordinators and accreditation liaison then approached the candidates for committee chairs for their participation. In addition to the committees listed above, the coordinators also identified three major areas to lead themselves: the History, Publication, and Self-Study Process. These areas were identified as critical to the self-study document, either in terms of sections to include (History and Self-Study Process) or key processes (Publication). Once chairs were officially established by the end of the spring 2010 semester, the coordinators and liaison continued to refine the self-study plan and processes, including establishing SharePoint as the electronic tool of choice for evidence collection and general communication. SharePoint was selected as the tool of communication and evidence collection because of its ability to reach all College employees to promote the goal of transparency, its user-friendly nature, its ability to coordinate efforts conveniently across the three campuses, and its potential as a storehouse of data collection.

Outlined below is the timeline for the self-study process, and along the way, some important readjustments to the organizational structure and process were made. One of the first major changes occurred one year into the self-study process: the administrative coordinator, Steve Woodburn, formerly the Wheeling Campus Dean, left WVNCC in May 2011. In response to this pivotal change, the institution determined that the best course of action to replace Dean Woodburn was to appoint the accreditation liaison, Mike Koon, Weirton Campus Dean and Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development, as the new administrative representative among the coordinators. Mike's years of experience already proved his expertise to be invaluable in the year prior to this change, so the College decided to appoint Mike to avoid setting back the progress

of the self study. The coordinators also realigned their assignments as liaisons, with Mike Koon working with Criteria 1 and 2 and the Change Request Committees, and Christina Sullivan with Criteria 5, Federal Compliance, and the Resource Room Committees. Because Criteria 1 and 2 chairs were located in Weirton, it was logical to assign Mike, as Weirton Dean, to those subcommittees. Another major change occurred in September 2011 when Dr. Deborah Folger, chair of Criterion Two, left Northern by the end of that month. In response to this, the coordinators invited a different faculty member, Dr. Greg Winland, to replace Dr. Folger. Dr. Winland already served on the Criterion Two Committee and had been closely involved in writing the first draft of the chapter outline for Criterion Two. No other pivotal changes occurred in membership and process.

After the Self Study Steering Committee and all other subcommittees were established and had begun work, the institution learned at the Annual Meeting in 2011 that the new criteria would be implemented with the spring 2013 visits. Therefore, another important step in the process involved deciding to which set of Criteria to write our report. There were important considerations regarding this, including the following:

- The institution had requested its preference of a spring 2013 visit, and this was granted by HLC.
- The new Criteria would be effective and required of all institutions with visits in 2013 onward.
- The new Criteria for Accreditation were not going to be finalized by the Commission Board of Trustees until February 2012.
- Institutions with spring 2013 visits choosing to follow the old criteria would need to use a crosswalk to show where they satisfy the new Criteria.
- Subcommittees for our self study had been organized and began heavily researching the "old" criteria during the 2010-2011 school year. Subcommittees had been formed based on the old Criteria, meaning that key College representatives were placed on committees specifically for their expertise. Changing to the new Criteria would disrupt this organization.

Based on the above considerations, the self-study coordinators, in conjunction with the larger Steering Committee, decided to continue researching and writing to the old Criteria and using the crosswalk to show it satisfied the new Criteria. Because the new Criteria were not going to be finalized until we were already expecting to be writing our initial drafts, waiting to reorganize and write to the new Criteria would have put the institution's process for the self study significantly behind schedule. Furthermore, as the new Criteria underwent a few metamorphoses in its various versions, there were significant changes to the Criteria from one version to the next, and the self-study coordinators were concerned that subcommittees could not be reorganized or refocused to effectively address the final version of the new Criteria. Therefore, to help the subcommittees and institution continue its momentum in the self-study process, the self-study leaders agreed to continue its path of researching and writing to the old Criteria and components and using the crosswalk to show alignment with the new Criteria.

The Steering Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis (agendas and notes, I.8), and the self-study coordinators continue driving the overall process.

Timeline for the Self Study

Spring 2010
- January – Received letter from HLC regarding upcoming visit
- February – President officially appointed self-study tri-chairs (self-study coordinators)
- April – Self-study coordinators attended HLC conference for preparation
- May – Self-study coordinators charged by President in regards to roles and expectations
- Weekly meetings of self-study coordinators
- May – Designed self-study Steering Committee and subcommittee structure
- May – Nominated and finalized Steering Committee chairs
- May – Developed outline (table of contents) for self-study report
- May – Developed goals for self-study process
- May –Developed timeline for self-study process

Summer 2010
- Self-study coordinators met monthly
- August – First Steering Committee meeting

Fall 2010
- August – Set-up SharePoint site
- September – Accreditation Self-Study Kickoff Bash
  - Presentation on HLC self-study process to all campus
  - Announced the Steering Committee and the chairs of the subcommittees
  - Selection/volunteers of subcommittee members
- Shared self-study design, goals, and timeline with Cabinet, Council, Board of Governors, and constituents
- Tentative date set for 2013 visit
- All subcommittees began meeting as scheduled by chairs
- Steering Committee meetings
- Self-study coordinators met weekly, if needed

Spring 2011
- Subcommittee tentative chapter plans were due to self-study coordinators by May 2, 2011
- Self-study coordinators and select Steering Committee members attended HLC conference
- Subcommittees continued meeting as scheduled by chairs
- Steering Committee met monthly
- Self-study coordinators met weekly or monthly as needed
- Administrative representative to self study (Steve Woodburn) left college
- Accreditation liaison appointed as new administrative representative

Summer 2011
- Self-study coordinators drafted introductory sections of self study
- Self-study coordinators met monthly as needed

Fall 2011
- All College Day update on self-study progress
- October – Subcommittees requested to submit completed outlines of chapters
- October – Self-study coordinators set timetable for completion of chapters

- Subcommittee meetings as set by chairs
- Steering Committee met monthly
- Self-study coordinators met weekly or monthly when needed
- Surveys administered—Faculty/Staff Self Study Survey, Fall Satisfaction Survey

Spring 2012

- Surveys administered—Student Self Study Survey, Community Self Study Survey
- March 15 – Each chair was requested to submit a draft of their section to self-study coordinators by this date
- March/April – Self-study coordinators and select Steering Committee members attended HLC meeting
- May 1 – Requested date for submission of revised drafts of chapters for self study to self-study coordinators
- Committee meetings as scheduled by chairs
- Steering Committee met monthly
- Self-study coordinators met weekly if needed

Summer 2012

- Committee discussions by email or SharePoint when needed
- Self-study coordinators worked on self-study draft additions, revisions
- Self-study coordinators met regularly and if needed

Fall 2012

- August – All College Day – Accreditation update (including timelines for draft availability to subcommittees and College community)
- August – Draft submitted to subcommittees for review and comment
- Self-study coordinators met regularly to review revisions and next steps
- September – Draft submitted to faculty, staff, Cabinet, and Board for review and comment
- Evaluated proposed roster of visiting team members and sent response to HLC
- October – Revisions made by self-study coordinators
- November – Final draft distributed to subcommittee chairs for last chance revisions
- December – Publicity committee formatted final version of self study
- Confirmed hotel accommodation
- HLC sent Evaluation Visit Summary Sheet
- Began arrangements for accreditation team visit
- Final version of self study completed
- Final production of self study completed
- College-wide area/departmental informational meetings to prepare for site visit
- Announced dates of visit to all constituent groups, including external constituents
- Announced dates of visit on website and in other publications

Spring 2013

- January 7 – Final report and materials sent to team and HLC Liaison
- January – pay invoice for team visit
- Room reservation for on and off-campus meetings
- Confirm campus room reservations, including Resource Room
- Verify completion of virtual Resource Room
- Post final self-study report on SharePoint and WVNCC website
- Visiting team chair contacts President to confirm arrangements
- Share self-study results with campus community
- College-wide area/departmental informational meetings to prepare for site visit
- Publicize open meeting with HLC team

- February – Complete physical and virtual Resource Rooms
- February – finalize team schedule and confirm with team chair
- Team visit – March 4-6, 2013
- April – Team chair sends draft of team report to WVNCC within six weeks of visit
- Send institutional response within two weeks of receipt of Draft Team Report
- May – Team chair sends Final Team Report to Commission
- Commission staff sends Final Team Report to WVNCC
- Send institutional response within two weeks of receipt of Final Team Report
- Celebration event

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR SELF STUDY

The Steering Committee for the self-study process comprises the tri-coordinators, the accreditation liaison (who become the administrative representative in the coordinators group, as described above), the chairs of the accreditation committees, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and a student representative, when that representative was available. Members of the Student Government Association were also given information regarding reaccreditation. The committee also included ex-officio members from Institutional Research, the Assessment Coordinator, and Community Relations. Organizational structure of the Steering Committee is outlined below:

Table I.3—Steering Committee Members

Name, Title	Steering Committee Role
Mike Koon Weirton Campus Dean & Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development	Self-Study Coordinator, Administrative Representative
Lisa Ingram Associate Professor, Respiratory Care	Self-Study Coordinator, Faculty Representative
Christina Sullivan Director/"Academic" Student Support Services	Self-Study Coordinator, Staff Representative
Lisa Soly Counselor I	Chair, Criterion 1
Dr. Greg Winland Associate Professor	Chair, Criterion 2

Name, Title	Steering Committee Role
Chris Kefauver Assistant Professor **Michele Watson** Professor	Co-chairs, Criterion 3
Lucy Kefauver Executive Administrative Assistant to the VP of Academic Affairs	Chair, Criterion 4
Larry Tackett New Martinsville Campus Dean	Chair, Criterion 5
Debbie Cresap Assistant Professor, Director of Medical Assisting Program	Chair, Change Request
Ralph Lucki Professor, Division Chair of Health Sciences, Director of Respiratory Care Program	Chair, Federal Compliance
Rebecca Yesenczki Administrative Assistant	Chair, Resource Room
Dr. Vicki Riley Vice President of Academic Affairs	Member
Tom Danford Assessment Coordinator	Ex-officio member
Hilary Curto Graphic Designer, Community Relations	Ex-officio member
Pam Woods Director of Institutional Research	Ex-officio member
Jonathan Dickerson	Student Representative

Committee members were selected in fall 2010 following the Accreditation Kickoff. At the kickoff event, all College members were asked to volunteer to serve as committee members in their areas of interest. In organizing the committees' members, the tri-coordinators followed the same considerations in selection as those followed in selection of committee chairs. This included consideration of membership from all campuses and all sectors and of members with needed areas of expertise for each committee. Some membership did change over the course of the self study as some employees left the College or requested to be excused from committee membership for various reasons. At the time of the publication of this document, the following highlights membership in each committee:

Criterion 1

Lisa Soly (Chair), Staff, Weirton
Robert Gibb, Staff, New Martinsville
Charleen Stokes, Faculty, New Martinsville
John Reho, Faculty, Weirton
Nancy Nosko, Staff, Weirton
Candice Stadler, Staff, Wheeling*
Gene Evans, Faculty, Wheeling*
Joan Harvath, Staff, Wheeling
Linda Shelek, Faculty, Wheeling

Margaret DeCola, Staff, Wheeling
Megan Deichler, Faculty, Wheeling*
Pam Drake, Staff, Wheeling
Stephanie Smith, Staff, Wheeling
Robert DeFrancis, Administration, Wheeling
Jeanne VanFossen, Faculty, Weirton
*Former employee & member

Criterion 2

Dr. Greg Winland (Chair), Faculty, Weirton
Dr. Deborah Folger, faculty, Weirton**
April Schrump, Staff, Wheeling
Arlene Kuca, Faculty, Wheeling
David Hanes, Staff, Wheeling
Donald Poffenberger, Faculty, Wheeling
Jill Keyser, Faculty, Wheeling
John Mehaffey, Staff, Weirton
Mary Merz, Faculty, Wheeling

Nancy Albert, Non-Classified, Wheeling
Sarah Griffith, Staff, Wheeling
Steve Lippiello, Administration, Wheeling
**Former employee & subcommittee chair

Criterion 3

Chris Kefauver (Co-chair), Faculty, Wheeling
Michele Watson (Co-chair), Faculty, Wheeling
Lisa Slie, Staff, New Martinsville
Mark Goldstein, Faculty, New Martinsville
Dr. Anthony Vavra, Faculty, Wheeling
Bonnie Peterman, Faculty, Wheeling
Melanie Eberhart, Staff, Wheeling
Donna Hans, Faculty, Wheeling
Sandy Beck, Faculty, Wheeling/Weirton

Dr. Cris Riter, Faculty, Weirton
Pat Stroud, Staff, Weirton
Misty Kahl, Faculty, Wheeling
Melissa Stephens, Faculty, Wheeling

Criterion 4

Lucy Kefauver (Chair), Staff, Wheeling
Dr. Terry Craig, Faculty, New Martinsville
Janet Corbitt, Staff, New Martinsville
Benjamin Fulton, Faculty, Wheeling
Shirley Rychlicki, Faculty, Weirton*
Shannon Payton, Staff, Wheeling
Alicia Frey, Staff, Wheeling
Pam Woods, Staff, Wheeling
Kim Hart, Staff, Wheeling

Teresa Ramsey, Faculty, Wheeling*
Robert Guy, Faculty, Wheeling and
New Martinsville
Dave Goeddel, Faculty, Wheeling*
Dr. Jim Bull, Administration, Weirton*

*Former employee & member

Criterion 5

Larry Tackett (Chair), Administration,
New Martinsville
Debbie Bennett, Staff, New Martinsville
Van Slider, Faculty, New Martinsville
Crystal Harbert, Faculty, Wheeling
Kelly Herr, Staff, Wheeling
James Tully, Faculty, Weirton
Dr. Richard Pusz, Faculty, Wheeling*

Lynn Miller, Faculty, Weirton*
Emily Fisher, Administration, Wheeling
Marian Grubor, Faculty, Wheeling
Carol Cornforth, Faculty, Wheeling
Tammy Aftanas, Faculty, Weirton
Ida Williams, Staff, Wheeling

*Former employee & member

Federal Compliance

Ralph Lucki (Chair), Faculty, Wheeling
Frank DeCaria, Faculty, Weirton
Mike Davis, Faculty, Weirton
Debra Yadrick, Faculty, Weirton
Janet Fike, Administration, Wheeling
Dr. Charles Rogerson, Faculty, Wheeling
Elizabeth Knollinger, Staff, Wheeling
Sarah Baricska, Faculty, Wheeling*

Darryl Clausell, Staff, Wheeling
John Regan, Staff, Wheeling
Kerry Sneddon, Staff, Wheeling

*Former employee & member

Resource Room

Rebecca Yesenczki (Chair), Staff, Wheeling
Hilary Curto, Staff, Wheeling
Shelly Reager, Staff, Wheeling
Meredith Wycherley, Faculty, Wheeling
Mary Marlin, Faculty, Wheeling
and New Martinsville
Debbie Wayt, Staff, Wheeling
Delilah Ryan, Faculty, Wheeling

Rita Malek, Faculty, Wheeling
Linda Dudash, Staff, Wheeling

Change Request

Debbie Cresap (Chair), Faculty, Wheeling
Ina Robinson, Staff, New Martinsville
Carolyn Eastham, Faculty, Weirton*
Charles Morris, Faculty, Weirton*
Kim Patterson, Staff, Wheeling
Pam Sharma, Faculty, Wheeling
Connie Dale, Faculty, Wheeling
Richard McCray, Staff, Wheeling

Jason Woods, Staff, Wheeling/
New Martinsville
Linda Fletcher, Staff, Wheeling
Philip Bischof, Staff, Wheeling*
*Former employee & member

RESPONSES TO CONCERNS FROM 2002-2003 VISIT

As a result of the 2003 self-study visit (a copy of the 2002-2003 Self Study Report is in the electronic Resource Room, I.9), the peer review team recommended commission follow up regarding concerns in Criterion 3. The College was required to undergo a focus visit in 2007 with attention on assessment. In the 2003 Team Report (I.10), the following concerns were highlighted:

a. "The college has made progress in developing a plan to assess student learning; however, the bulk of that progress has been completed in the last year.

b. The plan for the assessment of student academic achievement currently includes assessment of administrative and enrollments management. The institution must make the distinction between assessment of student learning and evaluation of functional areas (i.e., institutional effectiveness).

c. The team's review of program assessment plans identified some confusion between classroom assessment and assessing learning above the level of the classroom. The team also identified a lack of multiple assessment measures in some of the academic units.

d. There are five clearly identified general studies outcomes with clear statements of competency for each outcome. It is not clear to the team, however, who will be assessed for these outcomes, who will conduct the assessment and when and how they will be conducted.

e. It is clear to the team that the senior executive officers provide leadership and support for assessment, as they currently serve as the co-chairs of the CLTA (The College Leadership Team for Assessment). However, the Handbook of Accreditation, 2nd edition (page 44) states that effective assessment programs are marked by 'faculty, including on- and off-campus faculty, [that] own and drive the program and use it to find ways to improve the education they provide....' The faculty at WVNCC must own and drive the assessment program. In addition, meetings with faculty other than CLTA members, confirm that they need assistance in further developing and implementing the plan.

f. The team found little evidence that the institution has moved beyond planning for assessment and that there is an assessment program with 'structured processes that are continuous and provide meaningful and useful information to the planning processes as well as to students, faculty and administration' as identified in the Handbook for Accreditation, 2nd edition (page 53)."

The 2003 team report (I.10) recommended a Focus Visit for the 2007-2008 year to address these concerns with assessment. When the team visited in 2007 and provided a report in early 2008 (I.11), it was demonstrated that the College sufficiently demonstrated evidence that its assessment practices were consistent in measuring student learning outcomes across various levels, including course, degree programs/certificates, and institutional, and through both direct and indirect means. The Focus Visit Team did, however, express slight concern over general education assessment. At the time of the visit, the General Education Task Force had been reinstituted, with general education outcomes identified, but there was not clear evidence that general education had been assessed consistently and continually. Thus, the team recommended the College focus attention to this area. A copy of the Focus Visit Report is available in the Resource Room (I.11).

Assessment of student learning is discussed at greater length in Criteria 3 and 4 of this self study. Highlights of progress made that answer the 2003 team report concerns are briefly described below:

- The College's Assessment Plan (I.6) was developed originally in 1997 and revised periodically, including in 2012. Since it was first implemented, multiple assessments on the program, course, and institutional levels have been completed. Reports are accessible through the college website in a secured section, "Faculty Documents." Furthermore, the college instituted staff unit assessments in 2009-2010, and several departments have participated in these assessments since then to assess processes, goals, and outcomes to contribute to institutional effectiveness. Furthermore, the College continues to participate in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to measure student learning and institutional effectiveness. Information on institutional effectiveness is available via the Institutional Research and Effectiveness website (http://www.wvncc.edu/offices-and-services/institutional-research-and-effectiveness/674) and the Assessment Homepage (http://www.wvncc.edu/offices-and-services/assessment-homepage/751).

- By creating a plan to assess student learning on multiple levels, including course, program, and institutional (i.e., staff unit assessments), the College has created a clear distinction between student learning and evaluation of functional areas. The secure Faculty Documents page that houses assessment reports also divides reports by course, program, and offices/services to further clarify this distinction.

- Overall, assessment activities have included regular participation from the academic departments at Northern. Several have multiple years of assessment, while others have less participation. The College recognizes the continuing need to practice assessment on a course and programmatic level from all departments and makes continual strides in garnering regular participation in assessment from all departments.

- The Assessment Plan (I.6) clearly identifies the general education outcomes and assessment cycles for measuring each. The General Education Committee is in charge of ensuring that these outcomes are assessed on the cycle and in the manner determined by the Assessment Plan. General education assessment is addressed in greater detail in Criterion 4b.

- Faculty have become heavily involved in the assessment process. In fact, the Assessment Committee is led by a retired faculty member and includes a mostly faculty membership. Faculty dyads within the committee take responsibility for completing peer reviews of course and program assessments. Furthermore, the General Education Committee is led by a faculty member and includes faculty-driven membership. Staff and administration are also a part of assessment activities; for instance, the VPAA serves on the Assessment Committee and three staff representatives serve on the committee to review staff unit reports. Additionally, the Institutional Research and Effectiveness Office collects and synthesizes CCSSE and other external data agency reports. Mostly, though, assessment is faculty driven and coordinated in conjunction with key institutional members.

- The Assessment Plan (I.6), as originally devised and updated, presents a structure for assessment processes. These processes and resulting assessments inform decision making and provide meaningful information to college constituents. The updated 2012 Assessment Plan is available on the Assessment Homepage (http://www.wvncc.edu/offices-and-services/assessment-homepage/751) and in the electronic Resource Room (I.6).

Chapter One

Criterion 1

CRITERION 1:
MISSION AND INTEGRITY

WVNCC operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

INTRODUCTION

"The mission drives my day-to-day activities. It is important to remember why we are here-for the students. When I have a stressful day, I look at the mission to remind myself of our goal and reason for being here" (Response on Self Study Survey (1.a.1). WVNCC's mission drives the work of all employees at WVNCC including all faculty and staff members. The core foundation of the institution's existence molds the employees' and Board of Governors' decisions and efforts, which ultimately impacts the lives and futures of all students who enter.

Core Component 1a:
WVNCC's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.

Evidence:
1.a.1	Responses to Self Study Survey
1.a.2	WVCTCS Master Plan
1.a.3	Website
1.a.4	Board of Governors minutes and packets
1.a.5	Mission statement survey results
1.a.6	Strategic Planning Committee meeting minutes
1.a.7	Academic Department Missions
1.a.8	Places/locations where mission is public
1.a.9	Various publications
1.a.10	Strategic Plan
1.a.11	Mission and vision statements
1.a.12	Catalog
1.a.13	Student Handbook

The College typically revisits its mission and vision statements about every five years during the strategic planning process. During this time the College evaluates the mission and, if needed, makes any changes to update the mission. The mission and vision statements were revised by the College in 2010 (1.a.11). The Strategic Plan (1.a.10) is updated every five years by the College and typically consists of goals that the College sets to achieve during those five years.

Compression Planning was used as the vehicle to facilitate the strategic planning process in 2010. Compression Planning is a visual decision-making process that is designed to allow for rapid movement through ideas and making decisions about future goals. The process was facilitated by an employee in the College's Foundation office. Various constituents from the College, including representation from faculty, classified staff and administration, were selected to participate. In total, four sessions were used to complete the planning process (1.a.6).

During the strategic planning process, the Planning Committee reviewed the statewide Master Plan and Compact to ensure that the institutional documents aligned with System goals. The West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education master plan, Meeting the Challenge: 2010-2015 (1.a.2) was developed to meet the needs of the State of West Virginia by providing a quality education to citizens so that they can compete in the global marketplace. The Master Plan focuses not only on access, which has been a pillar of community college education, but also on producing more graduates. In addition to the goals outlined in the Master Plan, four strategic priorities were also outlined.

Consistent with institutional priorities, the State Master Plan, and changes in higher education nationwide, the College's focus was to revise the mission and vision statements to focus more on student success and, thus, graduation and job placement rates while still maintaining commitment to providing access to education, building workforce development programs, and meeting the facility needs of a growing institution. This was achieved in the five strategic goals (1.a.10) developed out of the compression planning process.

Following the compression planning process, the draft mission and vision statements were disseminated to the entire College community for review and comment. This assured that all members of the College were aware that a revised mission statement was being developed and provided to them with the opportunity to provide input into the final document. After the comment period, the revised statement was submitted to the Board of Governors for WVNCC and the Board adopted the updated mission, vision statement, (1.a.11) and Strategic Plan for 2011-2016 (1.a.10) on April 28, 2011.

The College's mission was revised to state:

"West Virginia Northern Community College's mission is to provide higher education empowering individuals to achieve academic and career goals leading to a competent workforce which excels in a global economy. The College responds to the educational, cultural and civic needs of the communities it serves by offering an accessible, safe, diverse, and high-quality learning environment." (1.a.11)

The College's vision statement was revised to state:

"As a leader in education, a catalyst for economic growth and as the provider of choice for workforce development, West Virginia Northern Community College is recognized and admired for being a community of learners who model integ-

rity, mutual respect, partnerships, and a commitment to excellence and community service. We envision empowering students to take ownership of their education as the College expertly manages continued growth in conjunction with fiscal responsibility, engages and retains a diverse population of life-long learners, and produces graduates in unprecedented numbers. As this vision is attained, West Virginia Northern Community College deservedly will earn a regional, statewide and national reputation for best practices." (1.a.11)

The revised mission documents (the mission statement and the vision statement) clearly demonstrate the College's commitments to the constituencies it serves. The themes of student success, empowerment, workforce development, diversity, quality programs, community service, and safety are evident in the documents, and they permeate the Strategic Plan and College initiatives. These themes will also be articulated throughout the self-study document.

Upon final approval of the College's updated mission and vision statements and the 2011-16 Strategic Plan, the next step was to disseminate the information to the College community, both internal and external. The mission, vision, and Strategic Plan were provided to all faculty and staff members via an email distributed through the President's office.

Information regarding the mission and vision is easily accessible and available to the public through the College website, www.wvncc.edu (1.a.3). Visitors to the site need only click the "About" button on the site's homepage to view the information. Also, the information was made available to the public in the 2011-12 College Catalog (1.a.12), the Student Handbook (1.a.13) on the website, and as part of the PowerPoint presentation made during orientation sessions for all new students.

The Criterion 1 subcommittee found that there was ample evidence to demonstrate that the College has clear mission documents that articulate institutional commitments. However, the committee recommended that additional methods be developed to publicize the mission statement. Suggestions for enhanced ways to display the mission statement were proposed, including creation of a dramatic graphic/artistic printed presentation that could be used in a variety of settings. The committee recommended that the revised mission and vision statements be included in packets for prospective students, in the schedule of classes, as part of academic syllabi, in the campus libraries, admission applications, program brochures, on various faculty websites, as part of standard agenda information for meetings and in the personnel manual. In addition, the committee advocated having the mission statement screened and matted for use as plaques on bulletin boards and in the lobbies of College buildings, as well as posting it on electronic boards posted near the elevators. These recommendations were subsequently adopted, and visibility of the mission and vision statements has increased significantly (1.a.8).

Ideally, the administrative areas and academic departments within the College will have mission statements that closely align with the College's mission. While not all areas have formal mission statements, they do have goals that align with the mission documents and Strategic Plan. The Liberal Arts division has developed a new mission; Health Sciences has a mission that needs to be updated; and the Business and Technology division currently does not have a written mission statement. These mission statements are instrumental in completing the arc required for clear representation of the College commitments (1.a.7).

Core Component 1b:
In its mission documents, WVNCC recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

Evidence:
1.b.1	Mission Statement
1.b.1	Vision Statement
1.b.2	2010 Census
1.b.3	Title III Grant
1.b.4	General Education Outcomes
1.b.5	Diversity Programming
1.b.6	Diversity for Equity grants
1.b.7	Survey results
1.b.8	Affirmative Action Plan
1.b.9	EEO Audit
1.b.10	College policy
1.b.11	Veterans services
1.b.12	WorkForce services

The College mission documents clearly indicate that Northern recognizes and values diversity of its learners. The mission statement states that the College offers a diverse learning environment, and the vision statement speaks to engaging and retaining a diverse population of life-long learners (1.b.1). When discussing diversity, it is important to note that at Northern this refers to the broad array of populations the College serves. Northern is also committed to providing programming to help raise awareness among students of a diverse society. The diverse populations the College serves includes minorities, low income students, first-generation college students, disabled individuals, academically disadvantaged individuals, displaced workers, non-traditional students, veterans and military personnel, traditional students, high school students in early entrance courses and in the Middle College, transient students, and participants in continuing education and workforce offerings.

The table below shows the percent of enrollment by race and gender and the percent of students receiving financial aid. The number of minority students appears to be low for what is often found in many community colleges with only about 7% of enrolled stu-

dents represented by minorities in 2010. However, the percent of minorities in the entire service area as reported in the 2010 Census (1.b.2) is only 4%. Therefore, the percent of minorities attending Northern exceeds the proportion in the general population. The table also demonstrates that Northern serves a very large proportion of students on financial aid.

Table 1.1—2010 Census Data with Race, Gender, Aid Receipt Status, & Disability

Category	2010 Census Service Area	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
White	96%	93%	93%	95%	95%	95%
African American	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Hispanic/ Latino	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	<1%
Asian	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	<1%
Other	1%	2%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Female		68%	67%	68%	64%	68%
Male		32%	33%	32%	36%	32%
% Receiving any financial aid		83%	75%	75%	NR	NR
% Receiving pell grants		74%	66%	68%	64%	68%
No. disabled students receiving services		128	115	68	64	68

While the percent of minorities attending the College is representative of the area population, Northern is committed to increasing the participation rate of minorities. One approach that the College has used to increase participation by minorities is to use scholarships targeted to specific groups. For instance, the Upper Ohio Valley African American Scholarship is used to help attract African Americans to the College.

Northern has a broad array of services to support the diverse populations it serves. The Office of Student Disabilities provided services for 144 students in the fall of 2012. The Academic Success Center provides tutoring and assistance to academically under-prepared students. In fall 2012, more than 500 students received services through the tutoring centers on the three campuses. Criterion 3 discusses the initiatives implemented by Northern to facilitate student success including the U.S. DOE Title III grant (1.b.3) the College received. The Financial Aid Office assists economically disadvantaged students with 83% of the College population receiving some form of financial aid. As will be discussed in Criterion 4, the Financial Aid Office provides financial literacy courses and works with students to help them understand their financial obligations and ramifications of their actions on their finances. The Student Services offices provide quality service to veterans and military personnel as evidenced by the College being selected as a Military Friendly College for the past three years (1.b.11). Unemployed and underemployed individuals who receive assistance through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) are assisted through the process by the College's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (1.b.12). There is clear evidence that the institution has developed services to assist the diverse types of students it serves.

Northern has demonstrated a commitment to helping students gain an understanding of diverse cultures and obtain a global perspective through both its curriculum and its extracurricular offerings. One of the six general education goals is to "acquire a cultural, artistic and global perspective." Courses such as World Cultures (HIST 100 & 101), Global Communities (SS 255), and Understanding Human Diversity (HS 147) help the College address this goal. In addition, the general education matrix (1.b.4) discussed in Criterion 3 demonstrates that activities regarding a global perspective are embedded in many courses.

Northern has a long history of offering a variety of multi-cultural programs and activities for students and the community. Every October, the College sponsors Disabilities Awareness Month on all three campuses with a barbeque, displays, and special events. Black History Month and Dr. Martin Luther King Day have been celebrated with a variety of events, including special presentations and a breakfast for children. Women in History Month is celebrated annually with LRC displays, and the Student Activities Office usually arranges for an enactor to make a presentation on each campus. Programming that celebrates the Appalachian culture is offered in conjunction with the SS 207 (Appalachian and West Virginia Subculture) course. This has been accompanied by the Culinary Arts program serving ethnic foods. The College has also sponsored programs on Native American culture. Information about the programs is available in the resource room (1.b.5).

Every year since 2004, Northern has received a special grant from the Higher Education Policy Commission to fund programming for cultural awareness. These competitive grants were originally called Social Justice Initiative grants, but the grant name was changed to the Diversity for Equity grant (1.b.6) in 2010. The funds from these grants have enabled the College to offer special programming. In 2012 the grant was used to fund a program for Disability Awareness Month by the Dancing Wheels Performance Company. Past grants have been used for special speakers or performers for activities during Black History Month and for Native American Culture programs. Information on these grants is available in the resource room (1.b.6).

Although the College has offered extensive multicultural programming, student participation has been limited. The Student Activities Office has tried a variety of approaches but they have all had limited success. This is particularly frustrating because the one question on the CCSSE (1.b.7) which has been below national and state averages for all three survey years was encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds. The College must continue to seek ways to increase student participation in multicultural programming.

The proportion of minorities among the College's faculty and staff is also low. Two factors that contribute to this are the low percent of minorities in the district which was already referenced and the low salaries paid by the College, especially for faculty. While these factors make it difficult to attract minority candidates, Northern has implemented strategies for recruiting minorities. These strategies are available in the College's Affirmative Action Plan (1.b.8).

Northern has policies (Rules) related to anti-discrimination and equal opportunity, which are widely publicized. Anti-discrimination and EEO statements are printed in the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, financial aid documents, webpages, employment advertisements, and other locations. In addition, the College periodically conducts training on harassment and discrimination. The Chief Human Resources Officer sits as an ex-officio member of all search committees to ensure that all interviews are conducted properly. The WV Community and Technical College System (CTCS) periodically conducts EEO audits of all institutions. Northern's last audit was in 2009, and there were no significant findings. The last audit report is in the resource room (1.b.9).

Core Component 1c:

Understanding of and support for the mission pervades the WVNCC community.

Evidence:

1.c.1   Mission Statement survey results
1.c.2   Strategic Plan
1.c.3   Community Survey results
1.c.4   Title III Grant documents
1.c.5   Annual Crime Reports
1.c.6   Budget
1.c.7   College Committees and practices

Faculty, staff, students, administration and external constituencies were surveyed to determine if understanding of and support for the mission of the College pervade the organization. The results demonstrate that the majority (74.8%) of the internal College community, consisting of faculty, staff, and administration, had read the current mission statement prior to the survey. The results of the survey clearly demonstrate support for the mission with 97.5% of the respondents indicating that they support the mission. A review of the written comments is also illustrative of the support of the internal community as there were a large number of comments in which individuals were able to give specific examples of how their job supported the mission. The best indicator for support of the mission, however, is not what people say but what the institution does. There is clear evidence in the following paragraphs and throughout the document that the actions of the institution demonstrate support of the mission. The complete Self Study Survey is in the resource room (1.c.1).

Chart 1.1—Percentage of Respondents answering the question, "Do you support the mission?" Source: Self Study Survey
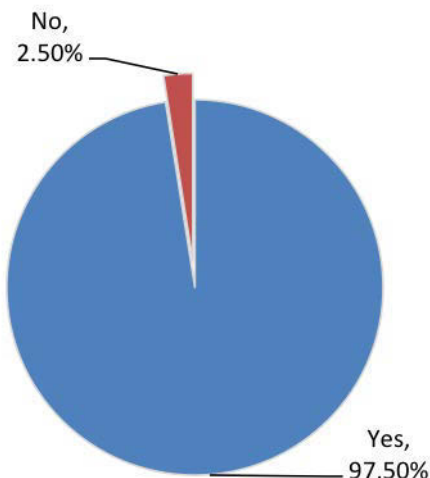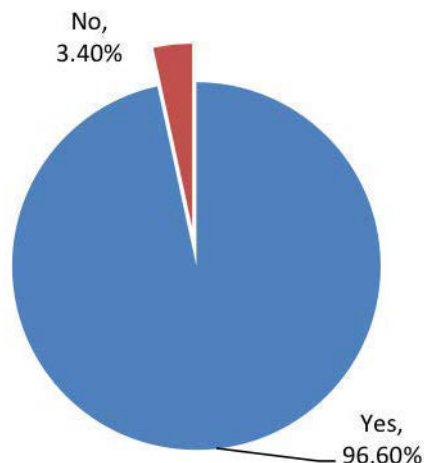
Chart 1.2—Percentage of Respondents answering the question, "Do you feel the strategic plan aligns with the mission?" Source: Self Study Survey

No, 2.50%

Yes, 97.50%

No, 3.40%

Yes, 96.60%

Survey results indicated that the website was the location where most people viewed the mission (38%), followed closely by the College Catalog (29.3%). However, 20% responded that they saw the mission statement for the first time when completing the survey indicating, that more needs to be done to promote, visualize, and publicize the mission (1.c.1).

In addition to knowing and understanding the mission, it is encouraging that 96.6% of the 157 respondents felt that the Strategic Plan aligned with the mission. Component 2d discusses Northern's Strategic Plan which is available on the website (1.c.2). It is clear from the goals and strategies in the Strategic Plan that the College's actions support the mission. The goals of student success, access, workforce development, and quality programs are the key elements in the first paragraph of the mission statement.

As part of the self-study process, Northern also surveyed community members about various aspects of the College, including the mission. The survey response rate was disappointing, but 100% of those responding indicated that they agreed with the College mission. Further, 96% felt that the mission was appropriate to the community college. Only 48% of the respondents had read the new mission statement before seeing it on the survey. The community survey results are in the resource room (1.c.3).

The institution's focus on student success aligns directly with College activities, such as applying for and subsequently being awarded the Title III grant that focuses on success. A federal grant of more than $1.5 million has been awarded to WVNCC targeting its efforts to retain and graduate more students. The grant, under Title III, Part A, of the Higher Education Act of 1965, provides $332,158 for the first year and totals $1,543,090 over five years. (The grant and grant reports are available in the resource room (1.c.4).)

Key strategies for activities to be provided by Northern through the grant include the following:

1. Developing a test preparation program for transitional math, writing, and reading students designed to provide intensive instruction to students prior to them taking the college's placement test. (This program is currently in place.)

2. Developing and delivering a transitional math boot camp program for students who have enrolled in and have not successfully completed transitional math courses. (This is to be implemented in spring/summer 2013.)

3. Advisement services geared to transitional education students. (An Academic Advisor "Student Success" has been hired and implemented.)

4. Providing additional full-time math faculty members to assist with the development of the test preparation and boot camp programs and to teach transitional math classes. (An instructional specialist has been selected and implemented to fulfill this goal.)

5. Enhancement of professional development for all faculty members, focusing on the needs of underprepared students. (Professional development opportunities have been ongoing since the 2011-2012 school year.)

The grant enables Northern to hire additional employees in the areas of math instruction, counseling, and tutoring. Also, the grant includes a challenge to the WVNCC Foundation to assist in the establishment of an endowment to continue funding activities increasing student retention and graduation rates.

In addition to student success, providing education in a safe environment is a component of the mission statement. Actions by the College clearly demonstrate support for this component of the mission, including creating a safety committee, developing emergency plans, conducting drills, and implementing alert systems. Wheeling City Patrolman Ronald Faldowski was named campus liaison officer for the Wheeling campus of WVNCC. The joint announcement from WVNCC and the Wheeling Police Department indicated that the job responsibilities included patrolling campus buildings, enforcing campus regulations including those concerning parking, providing escorts as needed, securing buildings, and maintaining required records related to safety issues. In addition, the College continues to utilize part-time Wheeling police officers on campus during evening hours. Furthermore, the College offers the WVNCC WatchText Alert system. All students and employees can sign up to receive text alerts for emergency announcements, including unscheduled campus and College closings, threats on or near the campuses, and other emergency crime information. The College also discloses crime on or near campuses through the annual Crime Report, which is available through the website and is in the electronic Resource Room (1.c.5).

Core Component 1d:

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

Evidence:

1.d.1	WV Code, Chapter 18B
1.d.2	WVCTCS website
1.d.3	Board of Governors website (with minutes and actions)
1.d.4	Board By-laws
1.d.5	Committees and councils
1.d.6	Committee minutes
1.d.7	Rule development process
1.d.8	List of approved Board Rules
1.d.9	Campus Communicator
1.d.10	Organizational Chart
1.d.11	Survey Results

Northern has an effective governance and administrative structure which includes clear delineation of responsibilities at each level and provides opportunities for collaboration by constituent groups. The College has a hierarchical governance and administrative structure. Governance of the College is under the jurisdiction of the WV Council for Community and Technical College Education and the WVNCC Board of Governors. The Board of Governors delegates responsibility for administration of the College to the President and College administrators. Throughout the history of the institution, Northern has employed shared governance processes to ensure that constituent groups are engaged in the institution's governance and decision making.

In 2001, higher education in West Virginia was reorganized with establishment of a co-ordinating board for the ten community and technical colleges known as the Council for Community and Technical College Education. Chapter 18B of the West Virginia Code (1.d.1) establishes authority for the Council and contains legislation governing higher education in the State. The Council is charged with setting the overall direction of the System through development of a strategic plan and a state-wide Compact (discussed in Component 2d). The Council also establishes Rules (policies) for administration of the system. In addition to establishing the overall direction of the System, the Council approves a number of actions taken by institutional Boards of Governors. Some of the items requiring Council approval are institutional budgets, institutional tuition and fees (within certain limits), new program approval, program discontinuance, program review, Board selection of the president, and presidential compensation. The Council also pro-mulgates legislative Rules (policies) for governance of community colleges in the system. Legislative Rules must be approved by the Legislative Oversight Commission on Educa-tion Accountability (LOCEA) and final Rules are published on the Council website (1.d.2). Most legislative Rules at the System level require companion Rules at the College level.

The College's Board of Governors comprises 9 lay members appointed by the Gov-

ernor, one faculty representative selected by the Faculty Assembly, one classified staff representative selected by the Classified Staff Council, and one student representative elected by the student body. Although the Governor appoints members to the Board, State Code stipulates that no more than 5 may come from a single political party. Lay members are appointed to four-year terms which are staggered, and they may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Institutional members serve a two-year term, and they may serve no more than four consecutive terms. The combination of staggered terms and limitations on the number of members from a single political party reduces the possibility of political influence on the Board. As a result, the Board of Governors has consistently demonstrated that it operates independently and acts consistent with the College mission in what it believes is in the best interest of students and the community. Minutes reflecting Board action are available on the Board of Governors webpage (1.d.3). It is also important to note that legislation requires involvement of constituent groups in governance and administration beginning with voting representation on the Board.

The WVNCC Board of Governors operates under the "governance by policy" model. The Board establishes the overall direction of the institution and enacts policies (Rules) to guide the organization. Duties of the Board are enumerated in Code and also in the By-Laws of the Board (1.d.4). These documents clearly indicate the Board's fiduciary responsibility as well as the Board's responsibility for strategic planning, establishing the mission, program approval, hiring the president, and other actions. Board members are required to complete six hours of professional development during a 2-year period so they are very aware of their responsibilities as a Board. Minutes of Board meetings clearly demonstrate that Northern's Board of Governors is knowledgeable about the institution and that the Board exercises appropriate oversight of the institution.

The Board delegates responsibility for administration of the College to the president and the administrative team. Dr. Martin J. Olshinsky became the sixth president of the College in 2005. There have been a number of organizational changes since the last HLC visit. Some were the typical changes that accompany presidential change, and some are the result of normal institutional dynamics as personnel leave and priorities change. Key changes since the last HLC visit include elimination of the Wheeling Campus Dean position, elevation of the Dean of Student Services to a Vice President position, creation of the Executive to the President for Development, reorganization from four academic divisions to three with Division Chairs, creation of the Transitional Education Division, and establishment of a director for academic student support. The current organizational structure is depicted in Appendix A (1.d.10).

The President's Cabinet and Northern's President's Council are the two key committees which provide advice and input to the President. The President's Cabinet is the administrative body that comprises the eight principal administrators of the College: Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development and Weirton Campus Dean, Vice President of Administrative Services and CFO, Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Community Relations, New Martinsville Campus

Dean, Executive to the President for Development, and Chief Human Resources Officer. Northern's President's Council consists of the President's Cabinet, supervisors, the president of the Faculty Assembly, and the president of the Classified Staff Assembly. Its purpose is to consult with the President on strategic planning, policy development, and institutional issues. Because it includes constituent representation, the Northern's President's Council serves as the liaison and communication vehicle between the administration and the constituent groups.

In order to maximize involvement of constituent groups in governance and administration, the College has created a number of committees to address specific areas of College life. These committees all have representation from administration, faculty and staff and many have student representatives. These committees provide input to administrators in key areas and assist with policy development where appropriate. The role of many College committees such as the Curriculum Committee, Assessment Committee, and Budget Development Committee are discussed in other chapters. The entire list of College committees and councils is available in the resource room (1.d.5). Minutes from the various standing committees are available on the College's webpage (http://www.wvncc.edu/about/faculty-and-staff-councils-and-committees/667) (1.d.6).

Northern has a long history of shared governance, with a faculty senate formed at the College's inception and classified staff and student councils formed shortly thereafter. However, State Code now mandates a Faculty Assembly and a Classified Staff Council at each college and university and goes so far as to prescribe the composition of the Classified Staff Council. All three constituent groups meet on a regular basis (usually monthly) to consider issues of interest to the membership, including policies, planning, committee reports, and programmatic considerations. The President and members of the administrative team attend meetings when requested to discuss concerns about pending policies or procedures and to apprise the group about changes that may be coming. The constituent groups are important vehicles for gaining input from each constituency, and they are important for enhancing communication within the organization.

The College has a well-defined process for development of Rules (policies) which is available in the resource room (1.d.7). The initiative for a Rule can come from any committee or constituent body, and it then is referred to the Rules Committee, which has representation from all constituent groups. Draft Rules are shared with each constituent group and are posted for comment on the College website for 30 days before being sent to the Board of Governors. The Board has two readings of Rules before taking action on them to again ensure that there is opportunity for collaboration and input. The entire list of approved College Rules is available on the Board of Governors webpage and in the resource room (1.d.8).

While Northern has numerous processes in place to promote collaboration and to engage its internal constituencies in the College's governance, survey results show communication continues to be expressed as a concern by faculty and staff (1.d.11). Numerous comments on the self-study survey indicate that many feel they are not getting infor-

mation in a timely manner or not receiving information about policies and changes in practices until decisions have been made. The administration has attempted to address some of the concerns by reinstituting the Communicator (an internal newsletter) (1.d.9), making a greater effort to share potential changes with the President's Council early in the process, emphasizing the need for committees to serve as communication vehicles and to share information with constituent groups, and placing committee minutes on the website. Also, a special ad hoc communication channel was set up to address Classified Staff communications concerns by having the executive committee of the Classified Staff Assembly meet with the Chief Human Resources Officer to discuss concerns. Clearly, however, communications within the College is an on-going concern that will require continuing attention.

Core Component 1e:
WVNCC upholds and protects its integrity.

Evidence:

WVNCC's policies and activities are compatible with its mission, and the Board and the College community uphold their responsibility to the community to ensure WVNCC operates legally and responsibly and with fiscal and ethical honesty.

Northern represents itself accurately to students and to the public in regards to all matters, including its accreditation, programs, entry requirements, tuition, and compliance with Federal and State laws. The main vehicles for presenting itself to the public are the College Catalog (1.e.2), the College webpage (1.e.1), program brochures, media releases (1.e.3), and advertising. The Dean of Community Relations and his staff take great care in ensuring accuracy of everything that is disseminated to the public. The College webpage was completely overhauled in 2011 to make it easier for users to find information and to include portals for students, faculty, and staff to access the various online components that users needed. The College received a Gold Paragon Award from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) for the redesign of the webpage. As required by law, the webpage also contains pages with information about Campus Crime, Student Right to Know, and Gainful Employment. As with any webpage for a complex organization, some pages are sometimes difficult to find. However, the webpage is completely searchable by key words, and this greatly enhances the utility of the webpages. In addition, the Community Relations staff work to improve navigation to key pages when issues are reported to them. Samples of the materials prepared by the Community Relations staff will be present in the Resource Room on campus, and many can be accessed through the electronic resource room including the website (1.e.1), the College Catalog (1.e.2), and media releases on the webpage (1.e.3).

Through legislation, Rules established by the WV Council for Community and Technical Colleges and Rules and procedures promulgated by the Board of Governors, the

College has a framework for implementing fair and ethical practices. The State Ethics Act and Open Meetings Act guide the Board of Governors to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest and that activities of the Board are transparent. College employees are also State employees and subject to the provisions of the Ethics Act. To provide a fair and equitable workplace, the College has Rules regarding Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, Freedom of Information, Harassment and Discrimination, Nepotism, and Workplace Standards of Conduct, and information is provided in the employee handbook (1.e.12). To ensure that the College operates with integrity in its financial transactions, the College follows State purchasing regulations and has enacted Rules on Purchasing, Cash Management, Use of College Property, and Travel for Employers and the Board of Governors. Rules are available on the webpage for the Board of Governors or through the resource room (1.e.4).

The College is committed to operating with integrity in its academic functions and has developed Rules to guide faculty and students in the responsible acquisition and application of knowledge and freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Rules in this area include Academic Freedom, Academic Integrity and Student Responsibilities, and Student Code of Conduct (1.e.4). While not required, most faculty include statements about plagiarism and cheating in their course outlines. The College has reminded faculty and students to follow copyright laws and has generally informed them that they should seek assistance from the Library/Learning Resource Center if they have copyright questions (1.e.9). During the Self-Study process, it was discovered that the College did not have an actual written policy (Rule) on copyright use; one is now being developed.

Northern has strict policies in place to ensure the students' rights to privacy are upheld with regard to records and confidential material. The College Catalog clearly spells out information about compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Students are required to show their ID cards before receiving services to ensure that staff are talking to the actual student. Faculty and staff receive information on FERPA at All College sessions, and part-time faculty are informed about FERPA at part-time faculty orientations. All faculty and staff are required to sign a statement yearly stating that they are familiar with their responsibilities under FERPA.

Northern recognizes the importance of ensuring that individuals have due process so it has appropriate processes in place. The College has a process for handling Student Complaints. In addition, the College has a grievance process for academic matters and a grievance process for non-academic matters. Both processes along with information about Student Complaints are found in the Student Handbook (1.e.5). The College also has processes for staff grievances and for faculty grievances although these processes are largely set by the Legislature (1.e.6).

As discussed in Component 1c, Northern is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for students and employees. Institutional Rules which have been established to provide direction for health and safety include Crime Awareness and Cam-

pus Security, Sexual Assault Rule, Social Justice, Alcohol and Drug Free Environment, and Tobacco Free Campus (1.e.4). Northern clearly "walks the talk" when it comes to safety as the College has a safety committee which meets regularly, conducts regular safety drills and activities, and provides a Timely Warning process which includes a text alert system, e-mail notification, and postings in the buildings and on the webpage. It should also be noted that Northern became a totally tobacco free campus (not just buildings) on November 15, 2012, and is just the third college or university in the state, behind the WV Osteopathic College and the medical campus at WVU, to take this action.

CONCLUSION

Northern meets and exceeds the components of Criterion 1. WVNCC has a clearly stated mission statement that articulates the organizations commitment. While the mission is accessible in many places, the College can further spread awareness of the mission through other methods suggested through the self study. Northern also recognizes the diversity of its learners through quality diversity programming and grants that fund diversity activities, such as for Disabilities Awareness Month. A vast majority of constituents also express support for the mission in their day-to-day jobs and in the missions of their departments. The governance structure also supports integrity and collaboration among the Board, Faculty Senate, the President's Council and Cabinet, and standing committees and councils that share a voice in decision-making processes. Finally, the institution upholds and protects integrity through Board policies and institutional practices that protect intellectual property and encourage fair treatment. Northern's mission is fulfilled as its structures and processes involve many constituents who support the College mission.

Strengths

- The new mission statement was developed with wide-spread participation by all constituent groups.

- The College mission aligns with State goals for higher education and drives the College strategic planning process.

- The College is proactive in providing a large number of activities to promote cultural awareness.

- The Board of Governors is autonomous and demonstrates that it operates with integrity and provides appropriate leadership for the governance of the institution.

- Collaborative processes are in place to promote engagement by all constituent groups in institutional governance.

- Northern expends considerable effort to develop and implement policies and practices to ensure that it operates with integrity.

- Northern is highly proactive in attempting to ensure that it provides a healthy and safe learning and working environment.

Challenges

- The mission statement is not as visible as it should be for both the internal and external communities.

- Activities to promote cultural awareness are not well attended.

- Communication within the College continues to be an area of concern.

- As more information is placed on the web and on social media, college personnel will be challenged to ensure that accurate information is disseminated.

Future Direction

- The College should be more proactive in making the internal and external community more aware of the mission.

- The College needs to find ways to increase participation in cultural awareness events.

- Although minority population in the area is small, the College needs to explore ways to increase minority student enrollment and to recruit more minorities for employment.

- The College will need to be more proactive in addressing communication issues.

- The College will increase the use of social media for recruiting and promotion so it will need to be more vigilant to ensure that the proper message is conveyed to prospective students and to the public.

Chapter Two

Criterion 2
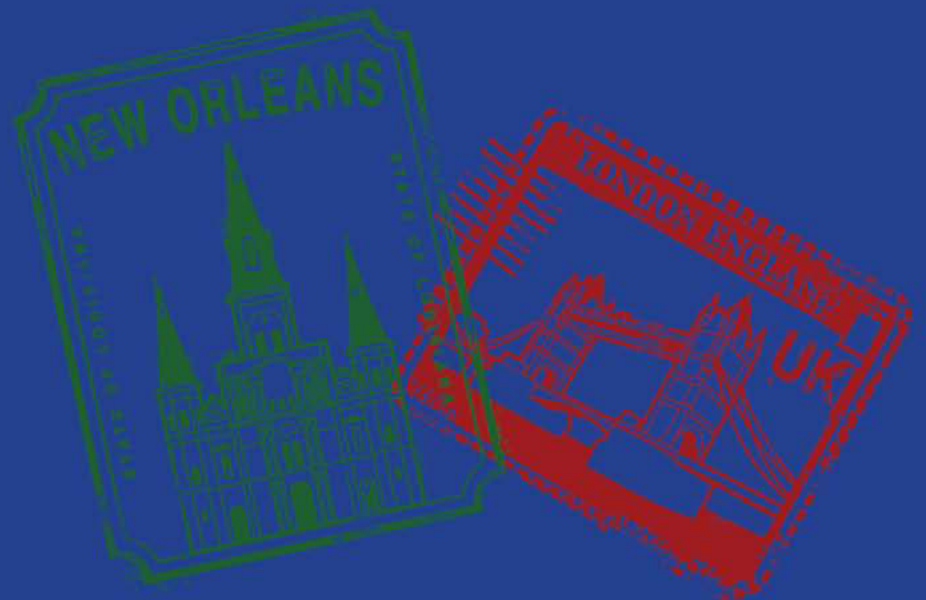
CRITERION 2:
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

WVNCC's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

WVNCC's campuses are located in the Upper Ohio Valley region of West Virginia (also serving boarding communities in Ohio and Pennsylvania), which is experiencing population decline and economic challenges, yet the area offers opportunities for citizens of the area in new energy technologies and the ever-present needs of health care. While the College faces challenges in maintaining enrollment with population decreases and training students for a workforce that faces a tough climate in different sectors, Northern has been able to meet the challenges of the time and thrive as a quality educational institution. Through effective strategic planning and sound fiscal management, the institution has been able to expand its resource base and offer effective programs that respond to the needs of the region. The College uses Institutional Research to enhance this planning and overall Institutional Effectiveness. While the College continues to recognize the need to monitor and improve the planning, budgeting, and research processes, Northern continues to prove its ability to use resources effectively in meeting the needs of the communities it serves.

Core Component 2a:
WVNCC realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Evidence:
- 2.a.1 Unemployment Data (WorkForce WV)
- 2.a.2 2010 Census
- 2.a.3 Clarus Report
- 2.a.4 Shale Play newsletter
- 2.a.5 IPEDS Data Feedback Reports
- 2.a.6 Title III grant news releases, reports, and application
- 2.a.7 Progress Report on Middle College

It is difficult to determine if an institution is realistically prepared for a changing and uncertain future. However, there are two key indicators that should be predictors of an institution's ability to adapt and succeed. One is whether the institution has the in-

frastructure and processes in place to monitor the environment and anticipate change. The other is the institution's past ability to be responsive to changing societal and economic trends. The paragraphs that follow will provide evidence that Northern monitors its environment and that the College has been, and continues to be, able to successfully respond to changes.

The six counties of the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia which comprise Northern's service area (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, and Tyler) and the surrounding counties in Ohio and Pennsylvania constitute an area that is currently experiencing declining population and economic upheaval. Unemployment in the region has consistently been higher than either the State or the nation and the October 2012 data continued that trend with only Ohio County, at 6.5%, falling below the State average of 6.8%. Others ranged from 7.6% to 10.2% (2.a.1). The keystone industries of steel, glass, and chemicals have been reducing the workforce and closing facilities. For example, the steel industry has reduced employment from 23,000 fifty years ago to fewer than 1,500 today. In addition to the declining population, the demographic data also demonstrates that the region's population is aging (2.a.2).

Along with the negative population and economic trends, the Upper Ohio Valley communities also face significant educational challenges. Of people 25 years and older, high school graduation rates range from 88.5% in Ohio County to 82.2% in Tyler. The percent of area residents 25 and older who hold a bachelor's degree or higher ranges from a high of 24.6% in Ohio County to a low of 10.3% in Tyler (2.a.2). The high achievement rate in Ohio County likely stems from the fact that there are two colleges/universities and one community college (WVNCC) in the county.

The most significant increase in new jobs in recent years was associated with the addition of table gaming to Wheeling Island Hotel, Casino, and Racetrack in Wheeling, WV, and Mountaineer Casino Racetrack and Resort in Chester, WV, in 2007. However, the region anticipates significant new employment opportunities with the development of industries related to the Marcellus Shale gas deposits.

Northern is well aware of the economic and demographic trends because it continually scans the environment through formal and informal processes. The College contracted with the Clarus Corporation to conduct an environmental scan in 2005. The report is available in the resource room (2.a.3). While that report is now dated, it did provide information that was extremely useful to the College. The formal processes currently in place involve the collection and dissemination of data by Institutional Research, primarily for new program development and grants. The informal processes are just as important as the formal processes as Cabinet members are continually scanning the environment through news articles, listservs, participation in community and economic development organizations, and participation in State meetings. Cabinet members then share information about trends at Cabinet meetings, and there is discussion about possible ramifications to the College and how the College should react. For instance, information about such events as changes in financial aid requirements, possible budget cuts, and job

opportunities in petrochemical construction were first obtained by Cabinet members through their networks. These items were discussed in Cabinet, and the institution was able to formulate a proactive plan to deal with them. The paragraphs below will demonstrate that the informal processes have worked very well for the College in the past. However, as the Institutional Effectiveness area of the College improves, the College should look to develop more formal processes for environmental scanning.

Northern's past performance provides ample evidence of an institution which is able to anticipate changing economic and societal trends and to respond to them. There are numerous examples to illustrate the College's responsiveness, and the next few paragraphs will highlight some responses to employer needs (economic trends) and to the State and Federal changes in education to enhance graduation rates (societal trends).

While much of the above data appears bleak, Northern has been quite active in training workers for emerging employment opportunities in the region. When table games legislation passed in 2007 under House Bill 2718, the College, after careful preparation prior to passage of the Bill, began offering table gaming classes soon after the legislation was enacted. To meet the target date of the local casinos, Northern started training within two weeks of the passage of the local referendum, despite the fact that the College had no previous infrastructure in place for this type of training. This training allows area residents to find gainful employment in the expanding casino industry in West Virginia and neighboring Pennsylvania and Ohio and serves as a prime example of Northern's responsiveness to economic trends.

After recent controversies regarding the lack of employment of local labor in shale drilling operations and in response to gas company claims that they would be willing to hire people from the area if they could find workers who had the proper training, WVNCC began offering classes on the New Martinsville campus to train local residents in the skills necessary to find work on a drilling rig. The inaugural class offering coincides with efforts by some members of the State Legislature and unions to motivate gas companies to hire more West Virginians. Upon completion of the course, students receive an International Association of Drilling Contractors rig pass that allows them to gain entry-level employment (Junkins, Shale Play, 2.a.4). The inaugural class was quite successful. Subjects covered included general safety, CPR, first aid, and rudimentary information regarding the drilling process. Approximately one-third of the class was offered employment after completing the coursework (Shale Play 2/23/12, 2.a.4).

Once again responding to community needs, the recent expansion of the Weirton campus houses two classrooms and three labs that will train students and workers in health sciences and Mechatronics, a new program designed to prepare individuals to be

electrical and mechanical maintenance technicians to fill positions in steel mills, industrial power plants, coal mines, and shale drilling operations. Job opportunities for graduates of the program are ample as manufacturing facilities are confronted with substantial numbers of baby boomers retiring, creating significant demand for highly skilled labor which can maintain and operate the automated equipment of modern manufacturing facilities. This program will be of particular use to the area's steel industry. While the manufacturing base in the region has experienced a steady decline with the steel industry being hit particularly hard, the fact remains that these are going to be high-demand jobs as many baby boomers move out of the workforce. A substantial number of highly skilled employees in our area are reaching retirement age, and companies like Arcelor Mittal Steel will need a prepared workforce to replace retiring workers. Arcelor Mittal's Steelworker for the Future program is a cooperative work/study program that guides students to earn an AAS degree from a partner college (like Northern) and includes a paid internship at Arcelor Mittal. Upon completion, program participants will be trained electrical and mechanical technicians. Although affiliated with Arcelor Mittal, the associate degree in Mechatronics is designed to prepare individuals for work in any manufacturing setting. Students will learn technical skills including basic electricity, hydraulics and pneumatics, programmable controls, motors and motor controls, instrumentation, and machine maintenance.

The College has also stepped in to fill an urgent need after a local hospital discontinued its radiologic technology program. Northern stepped forward and worked to transfer accreditation from the hospital to the College in order to continue providing opportunities in this field to local students as there is clearly a need for skilled workers trained in this field. Graduates of the program have the opportunity to find employment in hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, urgent care facilities, and diagnostic imaging centers.

In addition to adding programs and providing training for high potential workforce opportunities, Northern responds to enrollment concerns within the College. Retention has recently become a major issue for WVNCC, as it has for other community colleges in the State and the nation. While enrollments have increased in recent years, the declining population of the Upper Ohio Valley is a significant concern. Retention rates of full- and part-time students were 57% and 28% respectively (IPEDS 2010, 2.a.5). The 57% rate places the College on par with comparison-group institutions. The low part-time retention rate is likely due to the fact that many of these students are exceedingly transitory, looking only to earn a few credits before moving on to or returning to a four-year institution or employment.

Like retention rates, graduation rates are on par with or exceeding those of comparison institutions with an overall rate of 15%. Students completing programs within 100% of time to complete the program amounts to 14%, and those needing 150% of time to complete a program represents 14%. Those requiring twice the normal time to complete their programs were 17%. These numbers compare favorably with the comparison group (IPEDS 2010, 2.a.5).
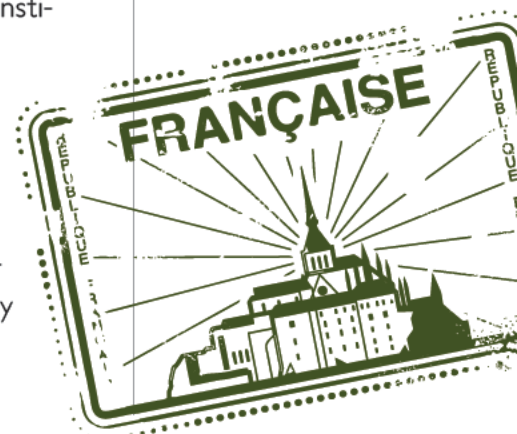
Even though retention and graduation numbers compare with the peer group, clearly more can be done. Cognizant of State and Federal demands for accountability, the College applied for and received a Federal Title III grant of more than $1.5 million to help in its efforts to retain and graduate more students. The funds will be used for a variety of initiatives to improve student success with much of the effort being targeted at students needing to take developmental, or transitional, courses. Some of the activities of the grant include test preparation with the goal of helping students test out of transitional classes, a boot camp for students who do not pass math transitional courses, modified transitional education courses to address multiple learning styles, enhanced placement test orientation, improved advising, and professional development for transitional faculty (2.a.6).

In the ongoing effort to retain students, WVNCC has implemented several retention and student success initiatives. This begins with the Retention Strategic Plan which identifies ten primary goals and a number of related objectives to address over a three-year period. This is intended to identify areas of concern, to modify policies and practices that negatively impact retention, to implement needed additional services and training that will positively impact retention, and to develop a culture that values the significance of retention, success, and completion. The Title III grant and the College's retention initiatives are discussed in more detail in Criteria 3 and 4. The importance of those initiatives in preparing for the future is that they are indicators of the College's respon- siveness to changing societal trends.

WVNCC is also involved in increasing the graduation rates of local secondary school systems and the success of capable, but at-risk, students. Given the problems associated with high school dropouts and growing evidence that traditional high school does not work for all students, WVNCC initiated the first Middle College program in West Virginia in the 2009-2010 school year. Middle colleges have the potential to significantly decrease dropout rates and alter the way teens get ready for life beyond high school. Middle College Early Entrance High School at WVNCC allows 10th and 11th grade students from Ohio, Brooke, and Marshall Counties to earn their high school diplomas through participation in this program on the Wheeling campus. Students can also earn post-secondary credit at the same time. The initial pilot group of 28 students experienced considerable success, increasing the average GPA from 1.89 to 2.4 during the first year. Students also showed increased skills in algebra, reading, and writing. Those enrolled also collectively earned 83 hours of college credit, an average of nearly three hours per student (Intelligencer "Middle Road," 2.a.7). Equally significant, approximately 67% of students enrolled in a Middle College program go on to some form of higher education. The success of the program on the Wheeling campus has led to efforts to expand it to the Weirton campus as early as January 2013.

Core Component 2b:

WVNCC's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening its quality in the future.

Evidence:

2.b.1   Independent Financial Audits

2.b.2   Summary Comments from Delloite and Touche System-wide audit

2.b.3   IPEDS Data Feedback Reports

2.b.4   Budget Committee

2.b.5   Budget Committee Minutes

2.b.6   Facilities Master Plan

2.b.7   Website

2.b.8   Self Study Survey
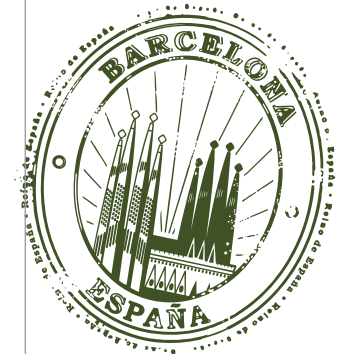
Northern is located in an area experiencing significant population loss and challenging economic times. The College has faced many challenges over the years. Despite these challenges, the College has experienced significant financial growth. For the period July 1, 2002, through June 30, 2011, the following audited financial results were reported:

1. Current Assets grew by 584% to $13.6 million.

2. Total Assets grew by 147% to $40.2 million.

3. Unrestricted Net Assets grew by 3912% to $10.0 million.

The following charts further support the College's financial growth over the past ten (10) years.

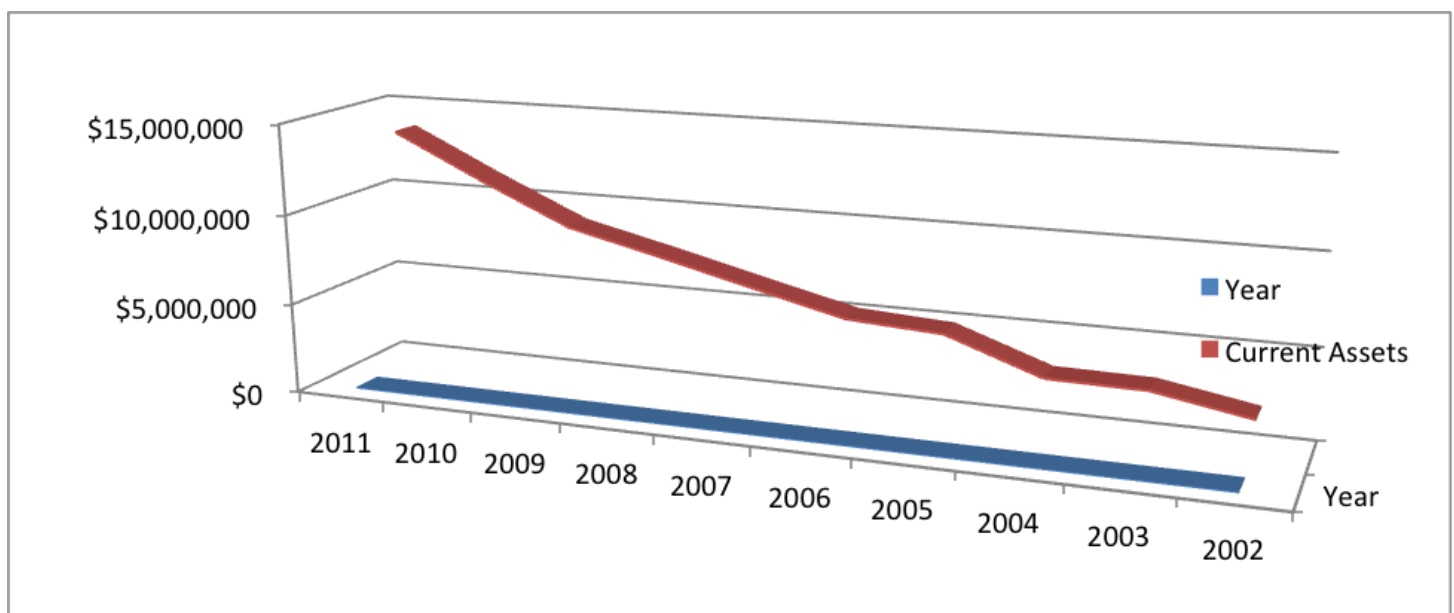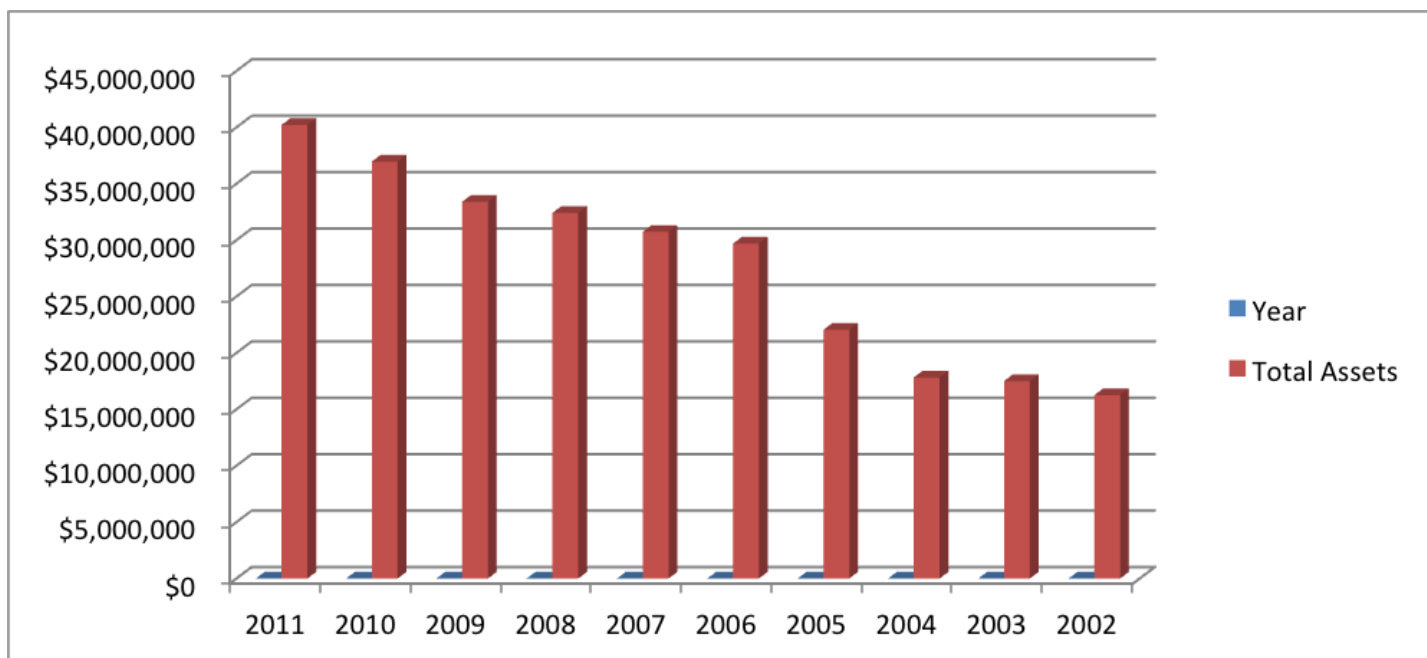## Chart 2.1—Current Asset Growth, 2002-2011

Chart 2.2—Total Asset Growth, 2002-2011

Further examination of the College's Statement of Net Assets indicates the growth in liabilities over the same ten (10) year period is significantly less. Total liabilities grew to $3.6 million or 59%. It must be noted, however, the driving force behind the growth is Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 45 – Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions. In summary, GASB 45 requires the College to report as a liability the full actuarial accrued liability for promised benefits. Prior to the revision of GASB 45, the College reported only the exchange of services in the period in which the services were rendered. Since the change, the College has seen its liability grow from $816,000 to $1.8 million or 124%. If one were to remove the effect of the GASB 45 change from the College's financial position, liabilities would approximate $2.0 million rather than $3.6 million.

The operating results of the College for the ten (10) year period 2002-2011 continues the theme of significant growth, as supported by the following audited financial results:

1. Operating Revenue grew by 118% to $5.9 million.

2. Non-Operating revenue grew by 97% to $16.4 million.

3. Net Assets grew by 1083% to $2.6 million.

Audits are available in the resource room (2.b.1).

As with all academic institutions, peer comparison is a key element in defining areas of success and improvement. The WV Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) is statutorily charged with the preparation of audited financial statements for West Virginia's Higher Education Fund (Fund). The Fund is made up of all activity related to institutional operations of the HEPC and the West Virginia Council for Community and

Technical College Education (Council or CCTCE) member institutions. Each institution is independently audited as part of the Fund Statement. A combined financial statement is issued for the Community and Technical College System (System) which includes the Council and the community and technical colleges. The Council is charged with approving the System's financial statements. The audit is completed by Deloitte and Touche, LLP, under a contractual arrangement with the Commission. The complete statements from Deloitte and Touche, LLP, are included in the resource room (2.b.2), and key information about Northern is included here.

Primary Reserve Ratio

The primary reserve ratio used to calculate the primary reserve score is determined by dividing expendable net assets into expenses and applying the appropriate strength factor. For most colleges in the system, the amounts held in reserve did not keep pace with increases in expenditures due to the increased Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) liability. Northern's primary reserve did not decrease even with the OPEB liability included and its primary reserve ratio of 2.56 without OPEB is the second highest among community and technical colleges in the State.

Net Operating Revenue

The increase or decrease in net assets resulting from ongoing operations is divided into the revenues from ongoing operations to determine the net operating ratio. WVNCC has the highest net operating revenue ratio of all community and technical colleges in West Virginia at 1.50. This ratio clearly indicated WVNCC's revenues have supported growth in its net assets and that the College functions within its means by prudently and effectively using its resources.

Return on Net Assets

The return on net assets ratio is calculated by dividing the change in net assets by the beginning net assets. WVNCC maintains the highest return on its net assets of all community and technical colleges. WVNCC's 3.0 ratio indicates the effective way in which assets were applied toward the completion of its mission.

Viability

To determine the viability ratio of this calculation, expendable net assets are divided into capital project-related debt. This ratio was not calculated for Northern as it had no significant debt levels.

Composite Financial Index

The four ratio scores were combined to determine the CFI. Because the impact of the OPEB expense and liability was substantial, the CFI was calculated with and without the OPEB information. The Composite Financial Index for WVNCC is the second highest in the State at 7.06. This ratio indicates WVNCC has more than twice the reserves to accomplish its mission and further demonstrates the College's prudent and effective use of its resources. The State support for capital projects and a low level of capital debt are reflected positively in the scores.

Number of Days Cash

The number-of-days cash ratio was calculated to provide additional liquidity analysis. This ratio is calculated by multiplying the institution's June 30 cash balances by 365 and dividing the result into total expenses less depreciation and the OPEB expense. The Moody's median number-of-days cash ratio for institutions with A3 ratings is 60. Northern's 266 days cash is the highest among all community and technical colleges in the State and is approximately 4.43 times greater than the Moody's median number of days cash for institutions with A3 ratings. The College maintains a sufficient cash balance to address its operating needs.

Revenue Sources

Northern's three principal sources of revenue are State appropriations, tuition and fees, and grants and contracts. According to the audited financial statement for 2011-12 (2.b.1), Northern received $7,858,495 in State appropriations, $3,189,007 in tuition and fees net of scholarship allowance, and $10,051,849 in Federal, State, and private contracts and grants. This means that State appropriations constitute approximately 37% of the total revenue, tuition and fees represents 14%, and grants and contracts total 47% of the revenues. This percentage distribution has been fairly constant over the past five years. A comparison with peer institutions in the IPEDS Feedback Reports (2.b.3) reveals that the proportion of revenues coming from tuition and fees is similar to peer institutions, but Northern has a slightly higher proportion coming from State appropriations and a significantly higher proportion from grants. Northern has no local appropriations, and revenue from auxiliary sales and services generally ranges from 1% to 3% of the College revenues.

At the current time, State appropriations are based upon a base allocation that was established in 2008. West Virginia does not currently use a formula for allocations. However, there is ongoing discussion about using performance-based funding for a portion of the State allocation. It is likely that the allocation in 2014 will be based upon the performance-based model.

Tuition and fees are established by the Board of Governors, subject to CCTCE approval. Requests for tuition increases of less than 5% do not require CCTCE approval, but anything greater than that amount does. Because of the economic situation in West Virginia, the CCTCE has been reluctant to approve tuition increases above 5%. Northern's

current tuition is $94 per credit hour which is among the lowest in the state. In addition, Northern is among 100 colleges and universities who have the lowest net tuition costs in the nation. While that is beneficial for students and is a critical part of remaining accessible, it means that tuition increases of 5% or less do not generate much additional revenue.

The comparatively higher proportion of revenues coming from grants can be attributed mainly to the high percentage of students receiving Pell grants and success in obtaining external funding through grants and donations. According to the 2010 IPEDS Feedback Report (2.b.3), 66% of Northern students receive Pell grants, but only 46% of students are Pell grant recipients at peer institutions. Much of the success in obtaining external funding can be attributed to the College's Office of Development, which is discussed in the next section.

As previously discussed, Northern currently has a sound financial base. However, the College is aware that changes in enrollment or in the way that the State allocates resources could have significant implications for future budgets. Consequently, College priorities which are emphasized in the Strategic Plan are enhanced student success and increased enrollments.

WVNCC Foundation and the Office of Development

One of the significant changes which has occurred since the last comprehensive visit has been the establishment of an Office of Development at Northern. The office is staffed by the Executive to the President for Development and a Fundraising and Development Assistant. The office works with the WVNCC Foundation to acquire funds to support College programs and also is a conduit for grant development. The WVNCC Foundation was established in 1972. As a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational corporation, it solicits, receives, manages, and administers gifts on behalf of WVNCC. The Foundation is a public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service. During 2011, the Foundation raised $1,588,274. Funds are used for scholarships, equipment, and special projects. Information about the Foundation is available on the website. (2.b.7) The Foundation is audited separately, but the audit reports are found within the College's independent financial audits (2.b.1). At the end of the 2011-12 year, the total net assets of the Foundation were $2,735,023.

Northern has also had some success in obtaining grant funding. As noted previously, the College received a $1.5 million Title III grant from the US Department of Education to develop programs to enhance student success. A portion of the grant ($250,000) is an endowment challenge which can match donors 1:1. The College has also received a number of grants from the State for program development and for workforce development projects.

Budget Development Process

The budget development process at Northern is an inclusive process that provides opportunity for input at multiple levels. Northern develops its budget in three discrete steps. Institutions usually receive guidelines in September from the Department of Finance regarding budget submissions. These guidelines include any budget constraints for the year. The CFO and Vice President for Administrative Services convenes the College Budget Committee in September or October to discuss budget parameters for the year and to set the timelines for budget development. The Budget Committee has representatives from faculty, staff, and administration. Departments first submit their capital requests, and then they submit their requests for Other Than Personal Services (OTPS). Capital requests are presented with a rationale which should be linked to the mission. Any OTPS request that differs significantly from the previous year must be accompanied with an explanation. The Budget Committee meets to discuss capital requests and develops a prioritized list. Following submission of the OTPS request, the Budget Committee meets to discuss the OTPS budget.

The last step in the budget development process is formulation of the personnel budget. Departments are notified when they may submit requests for new personnel. These requests are submitted to the President through the Chief Human Resource Officer. The Cabinet meets to prioritize the personnel requests, and the President determines which positions to fund in consultation with the CFO and the Chief Human Resource Officer. This information is then given to the Budget Committee, along with proposed scenarios regarding salary increases. At this point, the Faculty Salary Committee provides recommendations to the President regarding salary increases, and the Classified Staff Council has an opportunity to provide input on staff salary increases. Non-classified salary increases are usually set at the same percentage increase as the other groups. The President and the CFO then determine the proposed salary increase to be included in the budget. In late January or February, the total budget request is presented to the Budget Committee. Following discussion, the Budget Committee recommends the budget be presented to the Board. Minutes of the Budget Committee available in the resource room (2.b.4) detail the budget development process.

The proposed budget is generally presented to the Board for a first reading in February. The Board is also given information about proposed tuition and fee increases at this time. Following a second reading, usually in March, the Board adopts a budget and tuition and fee increases. Both the budget and tuition and fee increases must be submitted to the CCTCE. Tuition increases of less than 5% do not have to be approved by the Council. Council consideration of increases above 5% is linked to the institution's performance on the State Report Card.

Facilities – History

WVNCC was created by action of the former West Virginia Board of Regents May 9, 1972, which became effective July 1, 1972. The College was created from the former Hancock County Branch and the Wheeling Campus of West Liberty State College.

In its unanimous resolution, the Board specified the responsibilities for the comprehensive community college for providing "post-secondary academic, occupational-technical and general education programs of two years or less duration for high school graduates and adults." The two sites provided primarily the lower-level baccalaureate degree courses plus some limited technical programs.

The College was located in Wheeling in the Hazel-Atlas Building, which was home of the former West Liberty campus. A major addition to the College's offerings took place in fall 1973 when the Wheeling Hospital School of Nursing was transferred to WVNCC. The B&O Building was added shortly after the College was established. The Education Center, which opened in 2006, is a renovated warehouse building across from the B&O.

In Weirton, classes were offered at Weir High School during the evenings. By 1975, the College acquired land and modular buildings in Weirton. The first phase of a permanent instructional facility was constructed in 1982, with the second phase to replace the modular buildings constructed in 1999-2000.

In the fall of that first year, the College made arrangements for offering its first courses in New Martinsville in the spring of 1973. A campus was established in New Martinsville in 1975 in a renovated downtown discount store, which was replaced with the permanent facility in 1990. Tyler County was not officially assigned by the West Virginia Legislature as part of Northern's service district until SB 547 in 1995. This assignment is shared with the West Virginia University-Parkersburg campus to the south.

With an emphasis on integrated services, the College has technologies connecting the three campuses, integrating data, voice, and video services. A video telecommunications classroom was used for the first time in spring of 1988 connecting the Wheeling and New Martinsville campuses via a T-1 line. The third connection with Weirton was established in 2000. In keeping up to date with telecommunications technology, the College recently converted the older telecommunications system to the IP Video system. Both a portable IPV system and a set classroom housing an IPV system are available on all campuses.

Northern's Wheeling Campus facilities principally are located in two historic buildings. (A third campus building has included another historic structure, the former Hazel-Atlas Glass Co. building on Fifteenth Street, but the College leases space in the building until new property is renovated. The only programs located there now are Refrigeration, Air Conditioning, and Heating and training for table games dealers.) The historic buildings are the former B&O Railroad Station, which was opened for business 100 years ago, and the former Wheeling Wholesale Grocery Building, opened in the early 1900's across Chapline Street from the B&O station. Rail lines were constructed from the back of the B&O (at the viaduct), which connected with lines that led directly into the grocery warehouse for unloading of foodstuffs. The B&O Building has been on the National Register of Historic Places since March 7, 1979. The College has used it for educational purposes since 1975, and its adaptive reuse has been recognized on multiple occasions for the

commitment to retaining as much of the original structure as possible. The wholesale grocery building was languishing for decades and was being used to store a number of different items when the College purchased the building. Its multi-million dollar renovation adhered to the integrity of the structure's history as well.

The WVNCC Wheeling campus is located in the city's southern business district. The area is a mix of businesses, government offices, medical facilities, events centers, and business offices. This urban campus is "fenced in" by major downtown Wheeling thoroughfares and is bisected by Chapline Street, a major downtown Wheeling north-south transportation artery which provides vehicle access to West Virginia State Route 2 as well as to interstate highways.

The Facilities Master Plan (2.b.6) has provided the College with a vision for campus restoration and development. This well-conceived document has resulted in a campus that is both functional and accessible. The Plan led to the acquisition and renovation of the Education Center in Wheeling, which supports critical programs such as Culinary Arts and Nursing.

These facilities represent approximately 223,730 square feet of space, apportioned as follows:

1. B&O Building – Wheeling campus   74,300 square feet

2. EC Building – Wheeling campus   68,430 square feet

3. New Martinsville campus   34,400 square feet

4. Weirton campus   46,600 square feet

These facilities enable the College to conduct approximately 700 classes in the fall and spring semesters of each academic year.

Facilities – Future

With the support of the Board of Governors, the administration gradually built adequate financial reserves to support future capital expansion efforts. In the summer of 2011, the College acquired three parcels that will be used in the following capacities:

1. A 17,000 square-foot Applied Technology Center will be opened by March 2013 and will include labs for Mechatronics (industrial maintenance), welding, HVAC, and diesel technology training.

2. The College will renovate a second parcel in which the renovated building will serve a dual purpose. First, the building will house a Barnes and Noble bookstore which will retain its affiliation with the College while providing a typical retail operation for the citizens of Wheeling. Secondly, the building will accommodate a Student Activity Center on the second floor. The Center will provide students the opportunity to gather in a safe, relaxed environment before and after their regularly scheduled classes. The approximate square footage of these spaces is 16,000.

3. The third parcel, a 9,700 square-foot auto body repair shop will undergo renovation in support of the College's maintenance efforts. The building is used to house State vehicles and equipment and will afford the maintenance staff a central space in which to perform routine maintenance and repair work.

In support of its vision to "be recognized as a place of educational opportunity," the College made an additional capital investment in fall 2011 with the addition of 9,600 square feet of space to its Weirton campus. This new space houses labs for Mechatronics, Surgical Technology, and Respiratory Care.

As a result of listening to and interacting with community and business leaders, State, and local officials, and employees, WVNCC believes in and supports the communities in which it serves. The aforementioned projects represent an investment of approximately $9.0 million, $3.0 million of which is funded solely by the College. The remaining funding is provided by the HEPC via proceeds from a bond issue.

Human Resources

The College has 142 full-time employees as of February 2012, 36% of which are men and 64% of which are women. This gender distribution has remained fairly consistent. The racial/ethnic distribution is 95% white, and the combined non-white ethnicity is 5%. These percentages are comparable to the student population and the population of the districts served by the College.

The average age of full-time employees of the College is 48. Their average years of service is 11. Of the full-time employees employed by the College, the following schedule delineates the number of degree-holding employees:

Doctoral Degree	8
Masters Degree	57
Bachelors Degree	34
Associates Degree	18
No Degree	25

Historically, the College has made a concerted effort to increase the portion of its operating budget appropriated for salaries and benefits. For the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2011, the College committed $10.6 million or 75% of its planned operating budget on employee costs. Despite appropriations at the State level having been streamlined with little increase, the College has been able to provide annual increases to employees. In addition to the customary benefits, the College waives up to six (6) credits per semester for employees and their spouses and dependents.

At the start of fiscal year 2012, the College experienced a dramatic reduction in its enrollment due to sweeping changes in financial aid eligibility for students. These changes have afforded the College the opportunity to reexamine its course offerings, schedule, and other factors that would afford students access to courses while maintaining a competitive advantage over neighboring institutions.

The College often faces difficulties locating and hiring employees due to the various social and economic factors in the Wheeling, Weirton, and New Martinsville areas served by the College. As such, it is critical for the College to maintain competitive hiring procedures which attract highly skilled individuals while providing sufficient professional development opportunities and benefits to retain them. National searches are conducted for key positions in an effort to bring in the most highly qualified individuals possible. Interview teams are balanced so as to provide the best critical thinking and analysis throughout the hiring process.

Employees are encouraged to explore professional development opportunities. Budgets provide for staff to explore areas of interest relative to one's job responsibilities. Faculty, staff, and administrators often travel to conferences and seminars in which their expertise is shared with colleagues.

As stated previously, the College employs 142 full-time employees. For the year ending June 30, 2011, enrollment numbers indicate a headcount of 4,074 and 2,156.54 FTE. The FTE/Employee ratio of 15.2 to 1, which is higher than its IPEDS peer institutions (2.b.3), may indicate understaffing in areas where student services are necessary.

Technology

One of the greatest challenges the College has faced in supporting, maintaining, and strengthening its educational programs has been the area of technology. Over the past several years, the need for technology has increased significantly while State resources to support said technology have diminished. Despite the challenge this has presented, the College continues to place a high priority on the development of campus technology in support of teaching and learning. At present, the College has in excess of 700 desktop computers, with over 400 dedicated to 10 student labs. Other computers are located in offices, classrooms, and public access areas. The computers are on a 3-4 year replacement cycle to assure the most current technology access for students and staff.

At the start of fiscal year 2011, the College made the commitment to redesign its website. After a thorough evaluation of proposals, a firm was chosen to develop a website that was simple to navigate, informative, and relevant to the business of the College. The redesigned site was launched in August 2011.

Students, faculty, and staff have found the new site to be more functional, reliable, and user-friendly. As noted in component 1e, the new website received a Gold Paragon award from NCMPR.

To further support technology in the classroom, the College invested $137,000 in new IP Video equipment in 2010. This equipment provides for the recording and delivery of instruction from any of the three campuses.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2012, the College established a new portal exclusively for students. The portal allows students to access applications most relevant to their needs through the use of a single sign-on. Applications such as Blackboard, email, and library resources are now available to students with greater ease and accessibility. The Student Portal was developed internally through the collective efforts of Information Technology and Institutional Research departments. The portal went live in January 2012.

A Faculty Portal was established in fall 2012, which enabled faculty to have a single sign on process, as well. Within the portal is access to NOW, Blackboard, e-mail, Grades-First, and CoursEval. This provides for easy access to necessary applications while on and off-campus. Staff and Adjunct Portals also exist with similar access to necessary applications and links.

In the fall of 2011, employees were surveyed for the self study process (Self Study Survey, 2.b.8). The survey was designed to solicit feedback on the performance of various departments throughout the College as it relates to customer and overall service. Responses received from all survey respondents clearly indicate an overall level of satisfaction with technology, with 88% of respondents expressing satisfaction for the level and degree of service provided by the Information Technology department.

Response to Possible Budget Reductions

As a result of sound fiscal management by the Legislature and the Governor, West Virginia was one of the few states which was able to operate in the last four years without imposing budget cuts. However, for several years, the Budget Office has warned that the State could be facing budget issues in 2013 as a result of Medicare liabilities and the expiration of stimulus funding. In August, the Governor notified State agencies that budget requests for 2013 should be reduced by 7.5% over the current year. In addition, there has been discussion within State government of a possible mid-year budget reduction in the current year. In addition to these possible cuts in State appropriations, Northern experienced a reduction in enrollment in the fall 2012 semester, which resulted in a shortfall in tuition revenue. As a result of these twin threats, the College implemented a series of actions in order to maintain its sound financial position. The College reduced OTPS budgets to 2011-2012 levels, which generally amounted to a 5% reduction for most areas. In addition, all new positions which had been approved and included in the current budget were reviewed, and most were subsequently cut. As a result of these actions, the College will be able to maintain most services and programs at their current levels and will not have to lay off any current employees. The College's

proactive response is illustrative of its sound management practices and its ability to respond to changing situations. In addition, it ensures that the College will continue to have a strong financial base to support its programs.

Core Component 2c:

WVNCC's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Evidence:

2.c.1   Assessment Rule
2.c.2   Assessment Webpage/Faculty Document Center
2.c.3   Institutional Research/ Institutional Effectiveness Webpage
2.c.4   "You spoke-We listened" Webpage
2.c.5   CCSSE Reports
2.c.6   IPEDS Data Feedback Reports
2.c.7   WV Higher Education Report Card

Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment is a critical component of Criteria 3 and 4 as well as Component 2b, so this section of the report will discuss the process of assessment of student learning and future chapters will discuss the results and impact of the College's assessment activities.

Northern is a learning-focused organization that recognizes a commitment to assessment of student learning as part of our culture consistent with the Board of Governors Assessment Rule (2.c.1). Assessment of student learning is a College-wide process, driven by the faculty supporting the College mission statement and elements of its philosophy and vision. Assessment of student learning is a critical component of the College's evaluation of its institutional effectiveness in achieving its mission "to provide higher education empowering individuals to achieve academic and career goals leading to a competent workforce which excels in a global economy, and to respond to the educational, cultural and civic needs of the communities it serves by offering an accessible, safe, diverse, and high-quality learning environment."

Assessment is an ongoing process designed to enhance student learning by measuring the extent to which students achieve learning outcomes valued and defined by the faculty and using the results of data gathered from the assessment process to make improvements. The process is embedded in the curriculum as a natural part of teaching and learning. At WVNCC, assessment begins at admission and concludes at the completion level—certificate, degree, or transfer.

Northern has a long history and culture of assessment. Efforts began in 1992 with academic course assessment. Courses were assessed on a rotating basis established by each division. Later developments included academic program assessment, general education assessment, and, most recently, staff unit assessment reports (by department). Each submitted report is peer reviewed by members of the Assessment Committee. All reports and peer reviews are posted on the Faculty Document Center. This concentrated effort resulted in not only the foundations for the assessment of student learning, but

also became a basis for measuring the overall effectiveness of the college. Assessment of student learning at WVNCC is a continuous, institutional-based, and faculty-driven process which is focused on understanding and improving student learning and institutional effectiveness.

Assessment at Northern begins when a student enrolls with placement testing and continues through the student's course enrollments and even after graduation. All instructors state clearly on their syllabi the course objectives, expected outcomes of student learning, and the method of measuring those outcomes. Instructors adhere to Master Course Guides (MCG), which identify student learning outcomes and student performance objectives that are common to all sections of the course regardless of the instructor. During a semester, many instructors use classroom assessment techniques (CATs) for immediate feedback on the level of learning taking place. Instructors may integrate this data into their course assessment reports which will be submitted to the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee has developed a timeline for submission and dissemination of information with feedback and follow-up activities. An important part of the feedback loop is a peer review process where the assessment committee reviews the assessment reports and provides feedback on the reports. Assessment reports and peer review reports are posted to the Faculty Document Center (2.c.2). Criterion 3 will provide specific examples of the reports and the feedback loop.

After students graduate, Northern continues assessment of their success. The College recognizes two distinct groups of graduates: those who enter the workforce immediately and those who transfer to a four-year institution or university to complete their education. For students who enter the workforce, the Office of Institutional Research (IR) tracks the graduation rate, licensure statistics, and job placement data. For the students who transfer to four-year institutions or universities, IR attempts to track transfer rate and transfer success. The IR Office collects the data from these areas, and the affected faculty reviews the data and develops revisions suggested by the data.

It should be noted that collection of placement data and transfer data are ongoing problems. Currently placement data is collected through graduate follow-up surveys, and the response rate is low. Additionally, changes in survey dates imposed by the State mean that surveys will be distributed before most graduates have had a reasonable opportunity to search for employment in their fields. The System office has collected and distributed some placement data in the past compiled from employment compensation records, but the problem with this data is that it only reflects employment in West Virginia. The geography of the area means that many graduates will work in neighboring states. Transfer data is also incomplete because System data is based upon West Virginia colleges and universities. The College has attempted to use Clearinghouse Data, but West Liberty University, the major receiving institution, has not submitted data to the Clearinghouse. The Director of Institutional Research is actively working on both of these problem areas and is using the data to try to educate those at the System IR Office about the nature of the problems.

The roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups related to the assessment of student learning are delineated below.

1. Faculty

A.   Define learning outcomes.

B.   Prepare and update Master Course Guide and submit changes to Division Chair.

C.   Determine methods for assessing outcomes.

D.   Participate in data collection and analysis.

E.   Submit appropriate reports in identified schedule (Assessment Proposal Form and Assessment Report Form) to Division Chair.

F.   Utilize assessment data to improve teaching and learning.

2. Program Chair

A.   Identify and provide to division chair internal and external assessment and or accreditation requirements.

B.   Identify and define program outcomes with associated Matrix.

C.   Collaborate with faculty and Division Chair for assessment activities related to accreditation, state, or institution requirements.

D.   Assist with program recommendations resulting from assessment activities.

3. Division Chair

A.   Create schedule of course, program, and division assessment.

B.   Coordinate classroom, course, program, and division assessment activities.

C.   Submit Proposed Assessment Forms and Assessment Reports to Assessment Committee.

D.   Share Division Assessment Compilation Report with division faculty.

E.   Review results of assessment activity and make recommendations for improvements.

F.   Monitor and collect updated Master Course Guides to be filed in the division and submit them to the Vice President of Academic Affairs to be published on Assessment webpage.

4. Administration

A.   Provide resources through Institutional Research to collect and analyze data.

B.   Support assessment initiatives with appropriate materials.

C.   Provide technical expertise to assist with process and professional development.

D.   Use assessment data in planning processes to improve institutional effectiveness.

5. Assessment Committee

    A.   Review assessment process and make recommendations for improvements.

    B.   Review proposed assessment projects and provide assistance.

    C.   Review Assessment Reports.

    D.   Provide Division Assessment Compilation Report (Appendix H) and feedback to Division Chairs and General Education Committee.

    E.   Collect and secure assessment documents.

    F.   Maintain a webpage for faculty, administration, and students.

    G.   Determine professional development needs for assessment and facilitate appropriate professional development activities.

Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research

Like many small institutions, Northern has had to establish an institutional research office in incremental steps over time. Prior to 2000, the College collected data through reports generated by Institutional Technology staff. With a Title III grant in 2000, the College was able to hire a Director of Institutional Research. A data analyst was later added to the office, and a system was purchased to allow for data warehousing. However, the demand on the office was such that the office devoted most of its effort to collecting data for reporting purposes to State and Federal offices. In recent years, two additional staff have been added to the IR Office, and this has allowed the office to diversify and play a larger role in providing data and reports to drive Institutional Effectiveness. The IR Office also has responsibilities for the Student Portal and for the two data systems (Banner and Hyperion) that drive the data warehouse and reporting processes. However, the Director is committed to developing an effective IR office with Institutional Effectiveness as its central focus. As a result, the Director has developed a number of new processes and reports in the past year to provide a basis for data-driven decision making at the College.

While the IR Director is moving to enhance the role of the IR Office in Institutional Effectiveness, the College administration is moving more to a data-driven model for decision making. The Cabinet agenda now routinely has an item on Institutional Effectiveness, and a large number of institutional reports are shared with administrators and key areas and are also posted on the website for easy access by constituents. Requests for new programs, additional resources, new personnel, process changes, and the like must now be accompanied by supporting data. The IR Office is rapidly moving from being reactive and producing reports only when asked or required for reporting to being a proactive office which is systematically developing processes to provide data to guide operations.

Northern does have a number of reports which provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness. Internal reports such as enrollment reports are shared on a regular basis

with College offices and the Board and are available in the resource room (2.c.3). The IR Office also administers a Fall Satisfaction Survey and other surveys to help measure performance. A particularly noteworthy achievement of the IR Director has been the "You Spoke, We Listened" initiative. The Director publishes on the webpage and on message boards changes that the College has made as a result of what has been learned from surveys (2.c.4).

In addition to the internal reports, there are a number of external reports that enable the College to measure its effectiveness and develop strategies for continuous improvement. Three of these reports are CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) (2.c.5), IPEDS Data Feedback Reports (2.c.6), and the State Report Card (2.c.7). Copies of these reports are available on the website and in the resource room. All three enable the College to compare itself and its performance with similar institutions. The CCSSE report indicates that Northern is average in most categories. However, it has demonstrated the need to develop more active learning approaches, and the faculty are discussing ways to do that. The IPEDS Feedback Reports compare the College to a peer group of colleges in several key areas. These reports show, among other things, that while the overall cost of a Northern education is lower than the peer institutions, a higher percentage of students are on financial aid. The State Report Card is a document prepared by the System office that looks at a number of key indicators tied to the State Strategic Plan and Compact. It should be noted that the Report Card was used for several years by the Council for Community and Technical College Education to measure performance, and the Council used the scores to determine the maximum level of tuition increase that an institution could request. During that period of time, Northern was the only community and technical college to be in the highest level all three years.

Northern recognizes that it has significant work to do to reach its potential in terms of developing an Institutional Effectiveness system. However, the reports that it does have and uses for improvement and the processes it has in place or is currently implementing provide evidence that the College is making significant progress in becoming more data-driven.

Core Component 2d:

All levels of planning align with WVNCC's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Evidence:

2.d.1	WVNCC Strategic Plan 2011-2016	
2.d.2	BOG Minutes	
2.d.3	WV Community & Technical College Master Plan - Meeting the Challenge	
2.d.4	Crosswalk between WVNCC Strategic Plan and State Master Plan	
2.d.5	College Budget	
2.d.6	Enrollments Management Plan	
2.d.7	Technology Plan	
2.d.8	Facilities Master Plan	
2.d.9	Retention Strategic Plan	
2.d.10	Strategic Plan Progress Report	

Northern's strategic planning process aligns both with the College's mission and with state-wide priorities. In addition, the planning process is designed to provide a mechanism to allow the institution to respond to a changing environment. Since the College Strategic Plan is usually for a five-year period, there have been several strategic plans since the last visit. The process for development of each plan has varied slightly, but it generally has followed the format of an analysis of environmental data (usually through a SWOT analysis), review of the State Compact, and development of institutional goals, objectives, and strategies (actions). To implement the plan, all objectives are assigned to appropriate Cabinet members, and timelines are established. Area plans are then derived from the Strategic Plan. Development of the current Strategic Plan (2.d.1) demonstrates the alignment of mission with planning.

In February 2011 a Strategic Planning Committee was convened to develop a new strategic plan. The planning committee consisted of the President's Cabinet, three faculty selected by the Faculty Assembly, and three classified staff selected by the Classified Staff Council. A process known as storyboarding was used to develop the new plan. The new plan was necessitated by the expiration of the previous plan in 2011 and the development of the new State Compact and Strategic Plan. The committee reviewed the mission statement in light of the State Compact and new priorities focusing on student success and revised the mission statement and values statement as described under Criterion 1. In a series of subsequent meetings, the committee developed five goals related to the mission and then established objectives and strategies for each goal. The mission statement, value statement, and draft Strategic Plan (2.d.1) were distributed to the entire College community for comment, and final revisions were made. The documents were then presented to the Board of Governors for discussion and approval (2.d.2).

The link between the College's Strategic Plan and the State Compact and Master Plan is unique to West Virginia and requires some explanation. The West Virginia Legislature has required the CCTCE to develop a System Master Plan and Compact. The Master Plan is based upon priorities the Legislature has established in Code for community and technical college education. After development of the Master Plan and Compact, each community and technical college in the State must develop strategies for implementing the Compact. This constitutes a compact between the System and the community college, and State funding can, in theory, be based upon achievement of Compact Goals. Each year, the College must report on progress toward meeting strategies for the Compact and on new strategies for the subsequent year. The State Master Plan and Compact for 2009-2015 is entitled "Meeting the Challenge" and is available in the resource room (2.d.3). Following development of the College Strategic Plan, the College creates a Crosswalk which shows how the College Strategic Plan is connected to the State Compact. The Crosswalk is available in the Resource Room (2.d.4).

The College's Strategic Plan is clearly aligned with the institutional mission and also to the State goals and priorities. All other College plans relate back to the College Strategic plan, ensuring that all levels of planning align with the mission. Other institutional plans include the budget (2.d.5), the Enrollments Management Plan (2.d.6), the Technology Plan (2.d.7), the Retention Plan (2.d.9), and the Facilities Master Plan (2.d.8). In addition, each area is responsible for implementing objectives in the Strategic Plan relative to that area.

As discussed in component 2b, the development of the budget at Northern is a collaborative process that originates at the department or division level and involves all constituencies on the Budget Committee. The requests from each area reflect priorities established in the Strategic Plan. The mission and Strategic Plan are driving factors during deliberations about the budget.

The Enrollments Management Plan (2.d.6) and Technology Plan (2.d.7) are both prepared/revised annually by the administrator in charge of that area and reviewed and adopted by the appropriate committee. Both plans are consistent with the mission and goals. For instance, the Enrollments Management Plan reflects the emphasis on technical programs and student success which are part of both the College Strategic Plan and the Compact. The Technology Plan has elements for distance education (Compact focus) and enhancing student use of technologies (College Strategic Plan). The Retention Plan (2.d.9) goals are incorporated in the first goal of the College Strategic Plan.

The College recognizes that planning must be dynamic and flexible to allow the institution to respond to changes in its environment. The annual reporting on activities and review of the Plan that is part of the implementation process provides a mechanism for the Plan to be responsive. Each area is responsible for reporting progress toward meeting the objectives and strategies of the Plan and to make recommendations for revised strategies for the subsequent year. For the current Strategic Plan, the President convened the President's Council in August 2012 to discuss the process for reporting progress and

updating the Strategic Plan. Progress reports were submitted and compiled, and the 2012 Strategic Plan Progress Report is available in the Resource Room (2.d.10). Since the current Strategic Plan is only in its second year, there are no examples of changes to it yet that reflect responsiveness to environmental change driven by the mission. There are numerous examples from implementation of the last Strategic Plan, however, including development of workforce programs to respond to the gaming industry and the oil and gas industry, facility expansion in Weirton and Wheeling, an expanded emphasis on distance education, a new focus on campus safety and security, and new positions related to student success.

CONCLUSION

WVNCC proves its commitment to effective planning for the future. Northern continues to be active in training workers for current and emerging employment opportunities in the Ohio Valley region. The College responds quickly and effectively to new economic needs, such as it had done with table gaming training and rig drilling training. Northern's physical and financial resources are quite strong, even though the College faces challenges in funding in future years and in staffing levels. Institutional Effectiveness has made great strides with the work of Institutional Research and a Director of IR whose efforts at the institutional and state levels will allow Northern to reach its full potential in establishing data for Institutional Effectiveness that well informs planning for the future. Furthermore, the (institutional) Strategic Plan, as well as departmental operational plans, ties into the mission, budgeting, and the State Compact. Through its operations, Northern evinces its ability to respond to societal and economic needs and to plan for an ever-evolving governmental and higher education landscape.

Strengths

- Northern is in sound financial shape with ample reserves and processes in place to make adjustments when funding becomes an issue.

- The College has demonstrated that it can adapt to respond to changing societal needs.

- Recent expansion in Weirton and Wheeling enhance the College's facility resource base to strengthen its ability to offer technical programming.

- The College is increasing its focus on Institutional Effectiveness and is moving toward becoming more data-driven in decision making.

- The Strategic Plan is aligned with the mission and the State Compact/Strategic Plan, and all institutional plans align with the Strategic Plan.

Challenges

- Impending budget cuts for the next fiscal year will impact the College's ability to expand programming.

- The demographics of the area will make it difficult to have enrollment growth and increased tuition revenue.

- The College has a low number of staff compared to other institutions.

- Institutional Effectiveness needs to be enhanced.

- College facilities are aging and will require more expenditures for deferred maintenance.

Future Direction

- The College will develop new programs to attract additional students in response to area demands and needs.

- Northern will continue to build its Institutional Effectiveness System with data reports being easily accessible by the College community to allow more formal and systematic processes, such as for environmental scanning.

- Northern will continue to be aggressive in seeking outside funds to support new initiatives.

Chapter Three

CRITERION 3:
STUDENT LEARNING
& EFFECTIVE TEACHING

WVNCC provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

INTRODUCTION

As per its mission statement, WVNCC is committed to providing a high-quality learning environment. For the past fifteen years, the College has been committed to establishing a culture of assessment across all areas of the institution. Assessment has evolved from course-level assessment reports to institutional level assessment projects. Today the College is using data not only for course and program decisions, but has integrated assessment of non-academic areas to improve College services, as well as to assist in long-term planning. It is important to monitor the effectiveness of the assessment initiative and document what WVNCC is doing with assessment data to elicit change and improvement in the classroom and in the offices that support the overall mission of the College.

Core Component 3a:

WVNCC's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Evidence:

3.a.1 Institutional Assessment Plan
3.a.2 Course-level Assessment
3.a.3 Program-level Outcomes
3.a.4 Program-level Assessment
3.a.5 Program-level Matrix
3.a.6 General Education Matrix
3.a.7 General Education Goals
3.a.8 Master Course Guides
3.a.9 Staff Unit Assessments
3.a.10 Course Syllabi and Outline
3.a.11 College Catalog
3.a.12 Board of Governors Multi-Year Process for Curriculum Evaluation Rule
3.a.13 WV Higher Education Report Card
3.a.14 Faculty Document Center
3.a.15 Assessment Webpage
3.a.16 Institutional Research Office/Webpage
3.a.17 WV Series 11

WVNCC has been committed to establishing a culture of assessment within all departments and divisions of the institution. Assessment of student learning provides evidence at multiple levels: course, program, and institutional. The College's assessment plan was approved by NCA in 1997. Under the guidance of the Assessment Committee, the assessment program has continued to be evaluated and refined throughout the years. The Assessment Committee, at an August 15, 2012, meeting, determined that there was a need for a few points of clarification and revision in the current Plan. As a result, the committee revised the Assessment Plan (3.a.1) in September 2012, and faculty endorsed the proposed plan at the October 5, 2012, Faculty Assembly meeting. The current Plan is available on the Assessment webpage, as well as the resource room. The modifications were necessitated largely due to changes in general education and institutional reorganization. An Assessment webpage (3.a.15) is maintained and houses the Assessment Plan, as well as all associated assessment forms. In addition, a secure Faculty Document Center (3.a.14) was created on the College's webpage to post all course level, program level, and institutional (staff) assessment reports and peer reviews. This provides a warehouse of current and past reports, as well as program and general education matrices.

The Assessment Committee is charged with monitoring and guiding the implementation of the College's Assessment Plan, (i.e. developing, maintaining, evaluating and modifying, as needed, all assessment goals and activities). The committee is comprised of faculty, staff, administrative, and student members. Members typically serve a two-year term before rotating off to be replaced by other members of the campus community. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and a campus dean serve as ex-officio members. The committee has been chaired by Thomas Danford, Institutional Assessment Coordinator, since 2008. Although Mr. Danford retired from teaching in 2011, he maintained the position as Institutional Assessment Coordinator on a contractual agreement to lend continuity to the position during the self-study period. Beginning fall 2012, a transition in leadership began as Charleen Stokes, full-time faculty member, will be mentored by Mr. Danford to assume the Institutional Assessment Coordinator position for fall 2013.

WVNCC's assessment initiative is a process which has evolved over time, but there have been four clearly identifiable phases. The assessment process has developed from course-level assessment to program assessment, general education assessment, and finally to the final phase, which focuses on institutional effectiveness.

Course level assessment was firmly in place in anticipation of the 2002-2003 re-accreditation visit. By the spring of 2000, outcomes had been submitted for 294 of 300 possible courses (98%). Assessment reports had been received for 166 of the 235 possible courses by the spring of 2001. At the present time, outcomes have been identified for all currently offered courses. Course Assessment Reports (3.a.2) are completed on a regular basis and filed in the Faculty Document Center. Each division is responsible for delineating a divisional course assessment cycle, with all courses to be assessed every two to three years. Both full-time and part-time faculty are responsible for conducting course-level assessment. Faculty utilize the Assessment Report Form to detail the course

outcome assessed, methods of assessment, results, and recommendations. The course level assessments are to be submitted to the Division Chair by September 15 for spring courses and February 15 for fall courses. After review by Division Chairs, the reports are sent to the Assessment Committee which then completes a peer review of the report and posts the assessment report and peer review on the secure Faculty Document Center (3.a.14) where the internal College community has access for review.

The Master Course Guide (MCG) is the official document by which faculty delineate the course definition, structure, student learning outcomes, and student learning performance objectives. Every course taught is required to have a Master Course Guide, which is designed by faculty members in the Division offering the course. Master Course Guides are in place for all currently offered courses. Faculty members, both full-time and part-time, are required to follow the MCG. The Master Course Guide must be evaluated periodically to assure that the offerings stay current and have appropriate learning outcomes. These receive approval of the Division Chair and are confirmed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Master Course Guides (3.a.8) are available in the Faculty Document Center. Requirements for the MCG, as well as guidelines for writing student learning outcomes and student learning performance objectives, are contained in Appendix F in the Assessment Plan. A template for writing a Master Course Guide is in Appendix G in the Assessment Plan (3.a.1). It was determined while preparing the self-study report that it was difficult to determine when MCG's were due to be evaluated. The self-study committee recommended that the Assessment Committee add a check box to the current Assessment Report Form noting a MCG was reviewed, as well as a comment box for necessary revisions to the MCG. This is a more systematic way to review the MCG and would follow the pre-set course assessment cycle. The Assessment Committee acted on the request at the August 15, 2012, meeting and approved the recommendation; this has been implemented on the newly revised Assessment Report Form.

The second emphasis in the College's assessment initiative was the implementation of program-level assessments (3.a.4). This phase would impact all programs college-wide and not only the programs subject to external accreditation, such as Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Surgical Technology, and Culinary Arts. The College offered twenty-one associate degree programs and nine certificate programs for academic year 2011-2012, as reported in the Annual Institutional Data Update submitted to HLC. The College Catalog currently lists sixty-seven degree eligible academic programs: three Associates in Science (AS), five Associates in Arts (AA), twenty-five Associates in Applied Science (AAS), fourteen Certificates in Applied Science (CAS), and twenty transfer programs with specialized 2+2 agreements with a variety of baccalaureate institutions. These numbers include all options and 2+2 agreements as separate listings and are detailed in the 2012-2013 College Catalog on pages 82-83.

Program level assessment must be multi-faceted in order to provide continuous improvement in student learning. At WVNCC, program assessment consists of program review, an annual institutional assessment project, and external accreditation reviews or self

studies. Initial program matrices were developed to comply with the 2006 WVNCC Plan for Assessment of Learning. Each program identified three to ten program outcomes in collaboration with Program Advisory Committees, External Accrediting Agencies, and Employers. Program outcomes (3.a.3) are listed on the individual program pages within the College Catalog. Each program director was responsible for the completion and submission of a completed program matrix by February 2006. Program faculty are currently revising program matrices based on the curriculum changes brought about by the West Virginia Series 11 Mandates. The completed program matrices (3.a.5) are housed in the Faculty Document Center. The program review occurs every five years and follows the cycle and process outlined in the Board of Governors Multi-Year Process for Curriculum Evaluation Rule (3.a.12). This critical section of the self study should outline briefly the faculty unit's perception of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and new directions under consideration. Outcomes in the review process include, but are not limited to, graduation rate, employment rate, student retention, transfer rate, licensure/certification success, graduate satisfaction, and employer satisfaction. In order to assure continuous program assessment, an annual institutional assessment project is completed by every program. One or more specific program outcomes will be measured for the annual assessment project. It is recommended that outcomes be determined in collaboration with the Program Advisory Committee, external accrediting agencies, and employers. These program assessment reports are completed just as the course assessment reports, on the Assessment Proposal Form found on the Assessment webpage or Appendix D in the Assessment Plan. The report is then peer reviewed, and the both documents are posted in the Faculty Document Center (3.a.14).

External accreditation reviews or self studies are multi-faceted review processes in which the elements and timeframe are established by the external accreditation agency. Specialized accreditation agencies overseeing WVNCC programs are as follows:

- Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology & Surgical Assisting
- American Association of Medical Assistants
- American Culinary Federation
- American Health Information Management Association
- College Reading and Learning Association
- Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
- Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care
- Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology
- National Association for Legal Professionals
- National League Nursing Accrediting Commission
- West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses/ Continuing Education

General education assessment was the third area of emphasis for the College. A General Education subcommittee of the assessment committee was established by the College in order to coordinate assessment activities in this area. The General Education Committee has since become a stand-alone committee due to the importance of its task. The General Education Committee is representative of each division, one at-large member, and a Campus Dean. The committee is recommended to be chaired by a faculty member and reports directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Effective fall 2012, the committee is chaired by Sherry Buerdsell, full-time science faculty member. The general education core component applies to students enrolled in all degree and certificate program. A general education course is one that meets the requirements for the General Education Goals for at least one degree or certificate program.

Rule NC-3006, General Education, outlines the College's commitment to the total development of the student and prescribes the specific requirements for each degree type. The College has established general education core requirements for certificate, AA, AS, and AAS programs. These specific requirements can be found in the College Catalog for 2012-2013 on pages 88-92. These requirements as well as individual programs recently underwent extensive review and change through the Curriculum Committee process due to a Series 11 mandate (3.a.17) that dictated associate level programs must have no more than 60 credit hours and certificate programs must have no more than 30 credit hours. All programs were required to possess courses directly related to communication and mathematical computational skills. WVNCC is at 100% compliance with the mandate for all CAS and AAS programs without external accreditations. These programs will be evaluated during the 2012-13 academic year. 2+2 programs will be reviewed in consultation with the partnering four-year institution in order to begin bringing these programs into compliance. As a result of Series 11, the General Education Core requirements were evaluated, and at the November 11, 2011, Curriculum meeting a new general education core was approved:

- AA – 41 hours
- AS – 36 hours
- AAS – 15 hours
- CAS – 6 hours

In 2008, the General Education Committee, under the direction of former Dean Steve Woodburn, reviewed the existing nine General Education outcomes and recommended to the curriculum committee that they be modified into six more current and applicable goals. The six general education goals (3.a.7) were placed on a General Education matrix along with general education courses across all disciplines. Course faculty evaluated the courses in terms of the outcomes and completed the matrix. This general education matrix (3.a.6) is housed on the Faculty Document Center. Next, these six goals were placed on a schedule for assessment. Two goals will be assessed per year: in 2009-10, goals 1 and 2; in 2010-11, goals 3 and 4; in 2011-12, goals 5 and 6. The cycle will resume for 2012-13 with goals 1 and 2. A full cycle of general education assessment has occurred

since modifying the outcomes, and while the progress has been marked, the Series 11 Rule by the state of West Virginia did significantly slow additional progress in the General Education area, as changes in the general education curriculum were necessitated, as well as programmatic changes to incorporate the change in required program hours. However, faculty persevered and during the spring 2012 reporting cycle, outcomes 5 and 6 were assessed:

5. Acquire a cultural, artistic and global perspective

6. Demonstrate professional and human relations skills

The Assessment Coordinator requested information from all faculty for this assessment cycle in regards to these general education outcomes. 100% of faculty submitted reports relative to the coverage of these goals in both general education and technical courses.

"Analysis of Goal 5: Goal 5 is adequately addressed in both general education courses and technical and other courses. Students are exposed to cultural, artistic and global perspective in 26 general education courses and in 73 technical and other courses. Program analysis reveals that goal 5 is covered in all programs: AA and AS, AAS in the following fields – ASL, BA, CART, CIT, CRJ, HIT, HS, MAS, NUR, PAL, RAD, RAH, RCT, ST. In the AAS programs, goal 5 is addressed both in the general education courses and in technical courses.

"Analysis of Goal 6: Goal 6 has even wider coverage. It is addressed in 26 general education courses and in 98 technical and other courses. Students do indeed receive instruction in professionalism and in human relation skills. Program analysis reveals that goal 6 is covered in all programs: AA and AS, AAS in the following fields – ASL, BA, CART, CIT, CRJ, HIT, HS, MAS, NUR, PAL, RAD, RAH, RCT, ST. In the AAS programs, goal 6 is addressed both in the general education courses and in technical courses.

"Overall analysis of Goals 5 and 6 show excellent coverage in both general education and in technical courses across all disciplines. Northern students are exposed to concepts and skills necessary to appreciate cultural, artistic and global perspectives and to express professionalism and human relations skills."

The integration of general education goals within a technical program is illustrated by the following example submitted by the Respiratory Therapy program faculty.

Goal 5: Acquire a cultural, artistic and global perspective
"In RCT 221, Respiratory Care Seminar, we discuss current health care trends which include a global perspective on the 'state of health care' [sic] this includes a comparison of various industrialized countries and the incidence of disease states, health care costs, and availability of health care in each. This is tested on the final exam as the student is given an essay to address why the US spends more on health care than other industrialized nations."

Goal 6: Demonstrate professional and human relations skills
"In RCT 104, Introduction to Respiratory Care, the student is introduced to communication skills from a health care provider prospective and is tested on multiple choice exams.

"In RCT 106, 127, 136, 218, 223, which are Clinical Practice courses, the students are expected to utilize professional communication in the health care setting.

This is evaluated by clinical preceptors on a daily basis using their 'Daily Evaluation' score sheet. The students are scored a 1-2-3 (Below Average, Average, Above Average) on the following:

- Communicate results of procedure
- Demonstrate appropriate professional behavior"

An additional innovation in general education includes the following example in which a multidisciplinary team of WVNCC faculty members including Dr. Pam Sharma, Professor of Physics/Mathematics; Delilah Ryan, Associate Professor of History; Crystal Harbert, Instructor English; and Donald Poffenberger, Professor of Criminal Justice, participated in a project entitled "Student Enrichment through Global Collaboration." This directly related to the general education goal "To acquire a cultural, artistic and global perspective." The "Student Enrichment through Global Collaboration Project" was designed to provide students and faculty of West Virginia Northern Community College and DAV College Chandigarh (India) an opportunity to interact with each other and gain a first-hand perspective on current topics related to social, economic, judicial, and cultural issues. The project involves setting up a series of asynchronous interactions among peers and experts in two countries using Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS). At the completion of the project, Sharma said, discussion messages from the two forums will be analyzed for the quantity and quality of interaction, quality of learning and added value of collaboration and critical thinking skills. A student survey will be conducted to evaluate student perspective on the global collaboration project. Findings of the project will be used to extend collaboration projects in the future.

The plan for general education assessment is to continue the assessment cycle that was set forth. However, the Goals will not only be assessed in the outlined general education courses, but will also be assessed in the context of technical courses and programs. This will fully integrate the general education assessment process across courses and programs.

WVNCC has moved beyond assessment solely emphasizing teaching and learning. In September 2009, a notice was sent to staff supervisors informing them that each college area would be responsible for submitting an assessment of their area. Proposals were due by October 15, 2009. Currently 23 of 26 areas have submitted reports. Upon submission of the report, the staff reports are peer reviewed and then posted to the Faculty Document Center, thus completing a full assessment cycle. Staff unit assessments

(3.a.9) are designed to analyze and improve College services and are now submitted on an annual basis.

Institutional effectiveness was the final phase of the assessment program. Although assessment of institutional effectiveness has been an ongoing process, the College is now focusing more of its efforts here. The purpose of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) is to continually evaluate the institution and its functional areas and then use these results to make improvements throughout the institution. The IE process includes activities such as planning, research, assessment, and the use of data and assessment results to support, facilitate, and inform decision-making, creating a culture of evidence. The Institutional Research office plays a vital part in the overall Institutional Effectiveness process. The office provides accurate and timely information to support and facilitate data-informed decision making throughout the institution. The office conducts analytical studies to support both academic and institutional strategic planning, policy development, resource allocation, and assessment. This office is currently run by Director of Institutional Research, Pam Woods, who is currently assisted by a staff of three.

The IR office has the primary responsibility for reporting official institutional data to external entities including state and federal agencies, HEPC/WV CTCS, National Student Clearinghouse, and IPEDS. Institutional Research examines the integrity of official institutional data to ensure accuracy in all reporting and analyses conducted by the office.

Examples of studies and surveys conducted include:
- Faculty Teaching Methods
- Student engagement (CCSSE) and satisfaction
- Course and Instructor Evaluations
- Enrollment analyses and comparisons
- Follow-up studies of non-returning and transfer students
- Graduate follow-up and placement
- Student outcomes, such as persistence and performance in developmental courses
- Benchmarking and trending analyses

The Institutional Research/Institutional Effectiveness webpage (3.a.16) currently houses institutional survey results, including CCSSE data, IPEDS data, and internal student satisfaction survey results. The institutional data page houses census enrollment reports, a link to the WVNCC College Navigator, and an institutional Fact Book. The institutional Fact Book contains commonly requested data and graphs. These include student demographics, enrollment, and graduate outcomes.

The IE/IR webpages provide the faculty, staff, students, and community with accessibility to institutional data. The College also maintains transparency with the results of course, program, and staff assessments, as well as peer reviews. All are housed in the Faculty Document Center, which is accessible by faculty, staff, and administration within the

institution. In accordance with the Federal Student Right-to-Know regulations, all potential students may review the graduation rates for West Virginia Northern Community College, which are published in the West Virginia Higher Education Report Card (3.a.13). The Report Card is available for review at each campus Library/Learning Resource Center and Campus Deans Offices, as well as in the library at any of the public colleges and universities or at the main public libraries throughout West Virginia. Crime Awareness and Campus Security Reports are readily accessible on the webpage. The reports detail safety procedures, as well as reportable crime activity associated with the three campuses. Additionally, the WVNCC website contains information for certificate programs (complying with the Gainful Employment Regulations) which includes: program costs, normal time for completion, average loan debt incurred by students enrolled in the program, completion rates, and potential career fields for program graduates.

In this age of accountability, institutions of higher education must be specific about what they expect students to learn, and they must be diligent about assessing whether or not students are learning. The Master Course Guides delineate a common core of outcomes for each course within the institution. The course syllabus must flow from the Master Course Guide, but each instructor is free to meet the outcomes in an individual manner. Course syllabi (3.a.10) typically include the learning outcomes and performance objectives as stated in the Master Course Guide, textbook requirements, evaluation methods, and grading scale. The syllabus should also include instructor contact information, such as phone number and email, and office hours for the student, as well as a course schedule of lessons and activities for the semester. All syllabi are to be filed in the division office by the first week of classes and are also available on many individual instructors' webpages.

Program outcomes have been identified for all College programs. Industry-driven skills sets were the foundation for the learning outcomes identified in many of the career and technical programs. Faculty members in other program areas linked many program learning outcomes to the College's general education outcomes. In the Business and Technology Division, for example, the paralegal studies faculty said a student completing the program should be able to "draft various types of legal correspondence that communicate the results of legal research and analysis." The Culinary Arts faculty members said a student completing that program should "apply principles of menu planning and layout for development of menus in a variety of facilities and service options." Accounting faculty members identified "demonstration of working knowledge of application software used in the field of accounting" as a learning outcome. In the Liberal Arts Division, Early Childhood Care and Education faculty identified a student's ability to "apply the skills and abilities related to assist planning and implementing therapeutic, learning, or social activities that are appropriate for children with diverse needs and abilities and for their families." Criminal Justice faculty identified students should "have an understanding of the expanded security needs and principles of security in the 21st century." In programs such as Nursing, many of the program outcomes are dictated by an external accrediting body. For example, graduates of the Nursing program will "satisfactorily

perform core competencies basic to the practice of associate degree nursing as defined by the National League for Nursing."

Developing program-level outcomes (3.a.3) was a major step in the College's assessment initiative and has allowed the College to move forward in evaluating its effectiveness as an institution. The learning outcomes are available in the College Catalog for all programs on the individual program pages.

The organization integrates into its assessment of student learning, the data reported for purposes of external accountability. Through its programming and student service areas, WVNCC strives to meet student's needs for not only educational content, but also with the resources to succeed in their chosen career paths. The institution has placed an increased emphasis on retention of students. The 2011 WV Higher Education Report Card (3.a.13) details the College's one-year retention rate as the third highest in West Virginia. The state average was 49.3%. The Northern rate is depicted in the table below.

Table 3.1—One Year Retention Rates

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Percentage	49.7	50.8	52.3	50.7	54.6

While Northern is pleased to be above the state average in one-year retention rates, efforts for further improvement continue with the retention initiatives further detailed in component 3d.

The institution not only utilizes assessment for internal course, program, and institutional improvements, but also to establish accountability to external agencies. These agencies include external program accreditation bodies, WV HEPC, IPEDS, Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Technical Education Act, Gainful Employment, and HEAPS (Higher Education Adult Part-time Student) Grant Report.

Accredited programs submit annual progress reports to their appropriate agencies, which generally consist of monitoring reports for retention, graduation rates, job placement, and licensure examination pass rates. The Institutional Research Department is responsible for compiling data and submitting reports to satisfy the requirements of the aforementioned external agencies. An Institutional Research Departmental Reporting Calendar is maintained by the IR department (3.a.16) with reporting dates and personnel responsible for compiling the information.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Technical Education Act requires submission of core indicators, performance indicators, and Perkins Financial Report. IPEDS requires information concerning Enrollment, Graduation Rates, and Human Resource information to be submitted. The overall licensure/certification pass rate within the institution for 2011-2012 is 75.65%. Nursing (100%), Medical Assisting, CP (97.5%), Culinary Arts (90.91%) were the

programs with the highest percentage of pass rates. Overall job placement in the self-reported graduation survey given to students prior to graduation is at 54%. An individualized program-by-program report prepared by IR is available in the resource room. Retention rates and graduation rates per program has in the past been collected by a variety of sources in individual programs. The institution is currently moving toward a centralized collection of all data by the Institutional Research department which is hoped to provide more accurate data in future years.

WVNCC's goals for assessment at the course, program, and institutional level are clearly outlined in the institution's Assessment Plan. Programs undergo a comprehensive review on a five-year cycle. Programmatic advisory committees suggest program and course changes and upgrades to meet industry needs. General Education assessment occurs on an institutional level, following a schedule, and involves program as well as general education faculty. The College continues to move forward with the assessment process. Marked improvements include a Faculty Document Center which allows for a centralized depository of reports and peer reviews, an assessment webpage housing all forms and procedures, and a revitalized Institutional Research department providing data and analytical studies for the institution.

Core Component 3b:
WVNCC values and supports effective teaching.

Evidence:

3.b.1   Faculty Evaluation Procedure

3.b.2   Faculty Evaluation and Promotion Rule

3.b.3   Faculty Position Description and Responsibilities

3.b.4   Faculty Professional Development Rule

3.b.5   CoursEval

3.b.6   Self Study Survey

3.b.7   Administrative Rule for Faculty Merit

3.b.8   LRC Resources

3.b.9   Adjunct Faculty Handbook

WVNCC adheres to the Commission's "Good Practices in Determining Qualified Faculty" and prides itself that its faculty members are qualified instructors, as well as subject matter experts in their field. Faculty members teaching in general education areas are required to have a master's degree or 18 graduate hours in the subject matter area. Instructors in technical areas are required to have one degree higher than the level being taught or have significant work experience directly related to the field of study. As of fall 2012, the College employs 60 full-time faculty members and 129 adjunct faculty members. The table below delineates earned degrees at each rank for full-time faculty, as well as the earned degrees for adjunct faculty.

Table 3.2—Fall 2012 HEPC Board File Data*

Rank	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Associate	None	First Prof. Degree	Advanced Certificate
Professor	3	17	0	0	0	0	0
Associate Professor	2	7	0	0	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	0	6	1	0	0	0	0
Instructor	1	8	11	2	1	0	1
Adjunct Faculty	6	57	39	16	8	2	1

* There is one faculty member who has the title of Project Manager of EHRT who also has a Bachelor's Degree.

The institution evaluates teaching and provides recognition to deserving faculty members based on performance and special endeavors. To ensure a high quality of instruction, the College evaluates faculty on a yearly basis. NC-2015, Faculty Evaluation and Promotion Rule (3.b.2), states, "All faculty shall be evaluated regularly on the basis of their primary responsibilities, utilizing multiple input and criteria." In fall 2010, the Faculty Evaluation Revision Committee (FERC) was charged by the VPAA with the task of reviewing and refining the full-time Faculty Evaluation procedure to align it with the Faculty

Position Description and Responsibilities document (3.b.3) that was revised in 2012. The current administrative procedure for full-time faculty outlines an evaluation cycle of January 1 through December 31. The faculty member submits a load analysis, faculty goals (teaching, professional development, and service areas), faculty accomplishment report, self-evaluation of the faculty position description, and student course evaluation report. The Division Chair reviews materials with the faculty member and offers suggestions for improvement. The FERC committee revised the faculty evaluation procedure (3.b.1) for the 2011 evaluation cycle, and has since taken suggestions for improvement to further refine the process for 2012.

In addition to the submitted materials, all full-time faculty members undergo a classroom evaluation by the Division Chair or Vice President of Academic Affairs. The classroom evaluation form has been revised and a new rubric has been implemented to assure consistency among evaluators and is in effect for the 2012 evaluation cycle. The classroom observation is utilized to provide evidence of subject matter knowledge, behavior toward students, and presentation of material. The classroom evaluation is shared with the faculty member in an effort to improve teaching.

While it is certainly important for the supervisory evaluation of faculty, it is perhaps even more important for one to receive student input regarding classroom teaching. Student evaluations of instructors are currently completed for each course each semester through the CoursEval system under the direction of the Institutional Research office. CoursEval (3.b.5) is a web-based evaluation tool that will allow students to view and complete course evaluations online and in one place. Results are not made available until the grades are posted.

Through CoursEval, students are provided with an e-mail link at the end of each semester and are encouraged to complete the provided evaluation. The results of each of these evaluations are provided to the instructor following the completion of the semester. Division Chairs are also provided with the student evaluation results in order to identify any potential issues. While student evaluations of teaching have been ongoing, the process has changed. The CoursEval system was initially piloted in fall 2010 with full-term courses only. The total response rate was 34%. Effective spring 2011, the College eliminated the traditional paper and pencil evaluation forms and moved entirely to the CoursEval system achieving a 29% response rate. The elimination of the pen and paper system was justified by the following: evaluations were processed during one class time period at the end of the semesters, comments were often not given by students due to concerns for handwriting recognition, and results had to be scanned and then a report generated by hand for each faculty and each course, which was very time consuming. Additionally, there was no ability to compare results with other instructors or like courses, and the turnaround time for results was very slow. The positive attributes of the online CoursEval system was determined by a group consisting of the VPAA, CFO, former Dean of IT, and IR Director. Faculty were invited to respond following the initial pilot process in the fall of 2010. During spring 2011, the online process was extended to all "for credit" academic courses. The CoursEval system supports the IR Department's

goal of having a central place to house all data. The turnaround time is minimal; results are ready to view after grades are submitted. The system provides the ability to compare results between the same course subject and with all courses within the semester. Division Chairs are able to review all of the instructors that fall under their division with ease. Students have had a week to complete the surveys and appear to be more candid with comments when utilizing this system. The CoursEval results from spring 2012 show response rates to be 28%; while this number remains less than satisfactory, the Institutional Research department continues to work with faculty and students to encourage increased response rates. Institutional Research personnel have made classroom visits to answer questions concerning the process and to encourage participation, and sent e-mail reminders throughout the open period of the surveys, and as a result of student feedback, the surveys are now being left open for two full weeks.

Adjunct faculty are also evaluated per the Faculty Evaluation and Promotion Rule; however, they are not required to submit a full evaluation packet as the full-time faculty do. They are evaluated on teaching effectiveness utilizing a classroom visit, which is completed by the Division Chair or an appointed program director or lead faculty. Additionally, students complete evaluations utilizing the CoursEval system, which are also reviewed by the division chair and the faculty member.

To further improve teaching effectiveness and expertise in content areas, faculty members actively participate in professional organizations relevant to the disciplines they teach and the educational field. Participation in professional development and professional organizations is identified as an obligation in the Faculty Position Description and Responsibilities. A portion of the full-time faculty evaluation is directly based on this duty. In the self-study survey (3.b.6) administered in the fall 2011 semester, both full and part-time faculty, staff, and administrators were asked, "Do you actively participate in professional organizations that are relevant to your teaching discipline?" Of 78 persons responding, 64.1% replied yes, while 35.9% replied no. A follow-up survey was completed during faculty return week on August 15, 2012. Full-time faculty members were asked, "Are you active in professional organizations (i.e. membership, journal subscriptions, conferences, etc.) that are directly related to your full-time faculty position at Northern?" 91.1% of faculty responded yes, only five faculty responded no, and it was speculated that these faculty were the newly hired faculty members.

In the fall 2012 self-reported survey, full-time faculty were found to be actively involved in a variety of professional organizations. Some of the organizations in which WVNCC faculty are active include:

- American Association for Respiratory Care
- National Association of Biology Teachers
- American Historical Association
- National Council of Teachers of English
- American Culinary Federation

- Association of Information Technology Professionals
- American Society of Radiologic Technologists
- NLN-National League of Nursing

Faculty are encouraged to utilize innovative teaching techniques and to offer a variety of teaching styles to appeal to visual, auditory, and tactile learners.

Faculty are encouraged to implement active learning strategies, such as internships, simulations, and tech-enhancement within their courses. Faculty have been provided with training in simulation mannequins as well as iPad integration in the classroom. There have been many internal professional development opportunities over the past few years focusing on the use of various technologies: webpage training, Quality Matters training, and Blackboard training have been provided to interested faculty members. The institution strives to provide mass training in cost-effective manners, such as best practice workshops, internal experts, and speakers at events such as All College Days. WVNCC provides resources to help faculty improve pedagogy and employ innovative practices that enhance learning. The following table summarizes some of the professional development opportunities offered to employees and faculty internally over the past three years.

Table 3.3—Internal Professional Development Activities Summary—2009-2012

Date(s)	Name	Number of Attendees	Classification of Attendees
1/12/09	Harrassment/ Discrimintation	53	All
4/15/10	Sexual Assault Workshop	19	All & Students
5/18/10 - 5/19/10	Social Networking How-to	Unknown	All
7/13/10	Stay on Track in a Volatile Market	6	All
8/16/10	Harassment	61	Faculty (P. Carmichael & V. Riley)
8/17/10	AED Defibrillator	7	All & Students
2/7/11	Maintaining a Safe Work Environment	14	All
2/8/11	Harassment	46	All
2/11/11	Harassment	4	Students
2/22/11	Harassment	39	All
3/17/11	Financial Aid- New SAP	29	All

Date(s)	Name	Number of Attendees	Classification of Attendees
5/9/11	Whose Phone is it Anyway: The Implications of Using Employer-Provided Communication Devices	5	All
5/25/11	Robert's Rules Workshop	45	All & Non-employees
9/12/11	Saving Your Documents Can Save You	9	Supervisors
10/31/11	Service Center Training	13	Service Center Employees - All
12/7/11	IPAD	19	All
3/14/12	Customer Service Training	72	Classified and Administrators

The Faculty Professional Development Rule, NC-2017 (3.b.4), provides further institutional policy concerning this matter. Full-time faculty members and staff are allotted professional development funds in order to pursue individual development opportunities. Some examples of professional development activities in which WVNCC faculty and staff participated were the HLC Annual Conference, NISOD, National Academic Advising Association, National Association of Developmental Education, and West Virginia Community College Association Conference, as well as numerous discipline-related conferences. 71.3% of faculty/staff respondents in the fall 2011 Self Study Survey believed there to be adequate opportunities for professional development. The following table summarizes the professional development dollars and participant break-down over the past three years.

Table 3.4—Professional Development Summary, 2009-2012

Year	Classified		Non-Classified		Faculty		Total	
	Number	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Number	Dollars
2009-10	17	8,813	11	11,539	53	38,632	81	58,984
2010-11	15	9,921	7	8,415	34	36,673	56	55,009
2011-12	17	21,456	11	13,764	42	25,848	70	61,068

Staff and faculty are also provided with tuition waivers from WVNCC as well as opportunities for tuition waivers or reciprocity at other state institutions. This process allows staff and faculty to pursue advanced degrees or additional certifications which will enhance their ability to do their jobs at the institution. Furthermore, faculty members have

been provided with state of the art technology and technical support in their personal offices and classrooms. 100% of classrooms are equipped with an internet-accessible computer and LCD projector in the instructor's podium. DVD players and/or VCRs are available in many of the rooms for audiovisual needs. Several classrooms incorporate SMART board capabilities. All faculty, full-time and adjunct, have access to e-mail, web-pages, and a variety of software pertinent to teaching or individual disciplines. Sim-man mannequins have been purchased and are being utilized by Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgical Technology instructors to provide realistic patient care scenarios for their students. Computer labs, as well as podium and office computers, on each campus are upgraded on a maximum four-year replacement cycle. iPad and tablet technology have been implemented into a variety of areas within the College, both academic and administrative. There are currently thirty iPad/tablets in use within the College community. Additionally, the wireless network has been completely redone, providing access for both students and faculty with a variety of personal computing devices. The Institutional Technology staff provides technical support to faculty and staff in a timely manner utilizing the OZ reporting system. The system allows work to be distributed to the appropriate technician as well as providing for prioritization based on the urgency of the issues.

Other resources provided by the College include periodicals, newsletters, magazines, and books as well as discipline-specific academic and scholarly journals. These publications provide a means of continual in-house professional development. Additionally, the WVNCC Learning Resource Center (3.b.8) maintains a comprehensive online database directory that enhances teaching and learning. Additional details on the library offerings can be found in Component 3d.

In an effort to orient and welcome adjunct instructors into the College community, a fall semester orientation session is held on each campus during the week prior to classes starting. Full-time faculty members are encouraged to attend the session to provide for a sense of collaboration between full-time and adjunct faculty members. Full-time faculty and Division Chairs provide mentoring to the adjunct faculty members throughout the semester. Adjunct faculty handbooks are also available in both hard copy and online formats and can be found in the resource room (3.b.9). While there is no formal orientation program for the spring semester, new instructors are provided guidance by the Human Resources and VPAA offices as well as the Division Chairs and senior faculty members. Adjunct faculty are provided with office space, webpages, and e-mail. Faculty workshops, as well as on campus resources, are often made available to adjunct faculty. The recent Title III grant has afforded opportunities for adjunct faculty in transitional courses to be provided with professional development opportunities, including a statewide transitional education meeting in March 2012 and the National Association for Developmental Education conference in spring of 2012.

WVNCC recognizes effective teaching in a variety of ways. Each fall, the Human Resources Department hosts the Employee Recognition Banquet. Additionally, the College recognizes excellence in teaching by nominating deserving faculty members for the

NISOD Excellence in Teaching awards and WV Community College Association Awards. Faculty members are eligible to receive Merit Pay Increases from the College as well. The Administrative procedure and criteria for Merit Awards (3.b.7) are located on the Human Resource page. Please refer to Component 4a for a more detailed description of recognition and awards.

Promoting effective teaching is an institution-wide endeavor. Both adjunct and full-time faculty are highly qualified in their fields. Multiple internal and external opportunities are provided to faculty in an effort to enhance teaching and learning. Faculty members are engaged in a variety of professional organizations which enhance knowledge of current events and issues in their profession. Finally, faculty evaluation procedures are clearly articulated and include multiple measures of effectiveness.

Core Component 3c:

WVNCC creates effective learning environments.

Evidence:

The assessments completed by faculty and staff members provide the knowledge to assist them in understanding what they need to do to improve student learning. Assessment results inform improvements in instruction. In a Self Study Survey (3.c.6) administered during fall 2011, faculty members were asked if they used assessment information to make changes to their course.   26.5% responded frequently and 48.2% responded often.

Course Assessments

The course-level assessment reports (3.c.1) provide numerous examples of changes made as a result of assessment. In the math division, several changes to math courses have been based upon assessment changes. A MATH 96 assessment report in spring 2006 identified a significant number of students lacking mastery of comprehension when utilizing twelve identical final examination items.

> "A total of 139 students participated. The Math 096 Assessment consisted of twelve multiple choice questions which were part of the thirty-question standard Comprehensive Exam for Math 096. The results indicated that at least 72% of the students earned full or partial credit on six of the twelve questions. Five of the remaining questions received ratings between 59% - 67% when considering full and partial credit, and the one remaining question received a rating of 39% when considering full and partial credit." (2006 MATH 96 assessment report).

The dismal results of this assessment support the decision to offer MATH 096 in two parts (MATH 092 & MATH 093).   The change was made to discontinue MATH 096 in the fall 2006, and the College began offering two separate courses for the content.

The concerns with transitional math courses did not end here. The transitional math courses are a prerequisite to entering the health science program. There were concerns voiced by students concerning the time it took them to complete the three transitional

courses. The goal was to present an avenue for a student to complete Transitional Mathematics work in a more timely fashion, while still obtaining the necessary skills. Mary Marlin, Math faculty member, created an opportunity for the student to do the work in one semester by offering both algebra courses (92 and 93) in one semester on the New Martinsville campus. The instructor ran two traditional courses of Math 92, one traditional Math 93 course, and the combination part-of-term Math 92 and Math 93 courses in the fall 2010 semester. All students were given the same homework and computer assignments as well as tests. The table below compares the results of the offerings. The part-of-term courses show significantly higher success rates than the traditional course offerings. Although not designed as a cohort course, sixteen students participated in both part-of-term Math 92 and 93, with fifteen (94%) of the students able to complete both sections in the one semester. Two of these sixteen students were also in the Intersession Math 86, thus allowing them to complete all three Transitional Mathematics courses in one semester. This format was continued and expanded to include offerings on the Wheeling campus as well.

Table 3.5—Transitional Math Assessment

Course	Initial Enrollment	Successful Completion	Percentage
Math 92 (part of term)	23	19	83%
Math 93 (part of term)	24	16	67%
Math 92 Traditional (Monday/Wednesday)	32	14	44%
Math 92 Traditional (Tuesday/Thursday)	35	12	34%
Math 93 Traditional	31	17	55%

Biology faculty conducted a spring 2010 assessment of BIO 115, Anatomy & Physiology II. While the overall results were positive, there were two noted areas of concern. In a student perception survey of outcomes being covered and learned, one outcome was below 75%: Outcome #5, "use metric terminology as needed." In an assessment of performance objectives, the one outcome mastered at less than 70% deals with system interdependency. Based on this data, the instructors determined to make the following course changes:

> "Instructors should place more lecture and hands-on lab emphasis on system interrelationships. For clarity, both the textbook and the ADAM computer assignments appropriately deal with each body system independently. Instructors may presume college students grasp metric terminology and, due to time constraints in a content-rich course, purposely not cover this objective. Because clinical lab results etc. are presented in metric terminology, a brief review would be useful for A & P II students."

A 2005 assessment report on POLS 102, American Government and Politics, documented 100% of students felt the outcomes were successfully learned within the course. However, students voiced their opinion that they preferred more class time for debates and less for general terms and policies. 100% of students felt the current textbook for the course was too expensive. Based on the student concerns, the instructor planned to assign more readings and quizzes for terminology and polices in order to provide more time for debate and implement a new condensed textbook, which will result in a cost-savings for the students.

In the Business and Technologies division, for a 2005 course assessment on ACC 122, Principles of Accounting I, the instructor noted a poor success rate in the course as a result of students' lack of ability in math, algebra, and reading. As a result, the course added the following prerequisites effective fall 2006: MATH 86, 92, 93 and READ 95 or satisfactory placement scores.

OFAD 120, Introduction to Machine Transcription of Medical Records, was assessed in spring 2007. The following results were surmised from the assessment of the course:

1. Students who previously completed Medical Terminology and/or Anatomy & Physiology courses demonstrated advanced knowledge and were able to quickly apply this knowledge to transcription of medical dictation.

2. Students who previously completed word processing and or document preparation courses demonstrated the ability to more quickly apply these skills to the understanding and formatting of medical documents utilizing word processing software.

3. Additional time was required for lectures and individually working with students without the above knowledge and skills. This accounted for approximately 50% to 60% of the students. This provided less time to devote to the actual introduction of medical transcription.

4. Without prior knowledge of medical terminology and Anatomy & Physiology, approximately 60% of the course time focused on these areas. The other 40% of the time focused on medical transcription and formatting medical documents, as well as compliance with HIPAA regulations.

5. The course/program currently is not current in meeting competency guidelines as set forth by the American Association of Medical Assistants and the American Association of Medical Transcriptionists.

As a result of this information, the instructor made the following recommendations and subsequent changes to the course and program:

1. Medical terminology should be required and be a prerequisite (preferred) or co-requisite to this introductory medical transcription course.

2. Anatomy and Physiology should be required and be a prerequisite or co-requisite to this introductory medical transcription course.

3. The Business Career Studies: Administrative Medical Assistant Program should be brought into compliance with the National Association of Medical Assisting guidelines.

CIT 272, Object Oriented Programming, was evaluated by the instructor in fall 2009. The instructor sought to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching in this course. The instructor changed textbooks but more importantly used a team approach to the semester-long project. Each student worked on a piece of the project and shared results with the other team members. The course grades improved significantly from average 2.0 to 2.75. Based on these results, the team approach will be continued.

A series of reports for the HS 204, Field Placement/Internship, for the Human Services: Early Childhood Care and Education program were submitted. Beginning in spring 2008, the faculty assessed the results of the students' portfolio submissions. Of portfolios, five (36%) were rated as "excellent", five were rated as "good", and four (29%) were rated as satisfactory. Faculty recommended that more advance notice and expectations be given to students for preparation of the portfolios. In 2010, the portfolio assessment was revisited, and the assessment data revealed improved portfolios at this time: Of portfolios, one student received a "D", one received a "C", one received a "B", and ten (71%) were rated as "excellent" and received an "A". The grade for one portfolio was missing.

The RCT 104, Introduction to Respiratory Care, course has undergone several format changes throughout the years. The course was originally offered as a fifteen-week traditional face-to-face lecture course. However, when the program began being offered in Weirton, it was changed to a telecom course with the instructor being based on the Wheeling campus, alternating through the semester. The course was assessed in fall 2007 for the purpose of evaluating the possibility of converting the Introduction to Respiratory Care (RCT 104) course from telecom, lecture format to web-based or another alternative format. Based on the information gathered via survey from the current students it was determined that this course will be taught in a lecture format on the Wheeling campus during the fall 2008 semester. It was, however, run as a one-week intersession course. This enabled all students to be face-to-face on campus but also able to complete the course requirements in only one week. Many of the topics covered in this course are general health care topics.

In the fall 2008, this course was offered for the first time as an intersession course in the one-week format. A survey was administered at the end of the fall semester in order for the students to reflect on the impact the intersession course had on their other fall semester respiratory care courses.

Pertinent information includes:

- 38% of students had previously taken an intersession course.
- 86% would consider taking another intersession course.
- 84% of students felt the content covered during the intersession was useful to have prior to starting the fall semester coursework.

Based on the assessment results the course will be continued in the intersession format as 84% of the students felt the material covered was beneficial to have prior to the start

of the fall semester. Only 27% of the students noted they would have preferred the fifteen-week course. Interestingly, of the 27% (seven out of the ten students) were from the Weirton campus.   This course was offered on the Wheeling campus and location may have contributed to the differences between the students.

A 2011 assessment report of RCT 104, Introduction to Respiratory Care, assessed the effectiveness of the course being offered for the first time as a five-week hybrid course in the fall 2011 semester. The course had been offered previously as a one-week inter-session course, but due to informal feedback from students complaining that the course was rushed and they did not like the one-week intersession, the course was altered to an extended format for 2011. The instructor reports the following:

> "This is the first time this course was offered in a hybrid format—students met face-to-face with instructor five times during this course; all other work was completed in the Blackboard format.

> "A comparison of the past three years' course pass rate and overall final average are as follows:

> - Pass rate for 2011 hybrid course 94% (33 students)
>   - Final average 91%
> - Pass rate for 2010 intersession face-to-face course 98% (44 students)
>   - Final average 90%
> - Pass rate for 2009 intersession face-to-face courses 95% (40 students)
>   - Final average 82%

> "The comparison reveals similar pass rates and averages for the past two years, despite the different delivery methods. This will continue to be monitored in order to determine the best delivery mode. On a subjective note, this instructor believes that the hybrid delivery resulted in students having a much higher level of discussion on topics via the discussion boards versus in-class delivery modes."

The impact of assessment projects can be seen beyond the course level. Program level assessment (3.c.2) has resulted in changes to existing programs as well as the creation of new ones. The former Business Career Studies: Administrative Medical Assisting Program, as well as the course competencies for OFAD 120, Intro to Machine Transcription of Medical Records, were revised and approved by the WVNCC Curriculum Committee in preparation for the 1+1 program for Clinical Medical Assisting. The new Administrative program was offered in fall 2007, with the first Clinical Medical Assisting class accepted in fall 2008. The changes were presented to the Board of Governors by Debbie Cresap, Program Director, for final approval for the fall 2007 academic year. The program separated from the Business Division and incorporated into the Health Science Division as Medical Assisting: Administrative Medical Assisting.

During fall 2003, ST 101, Anesthesia, Drugs, and Solutions, was evaluated. Following the evaluation of this course, it was determined that the one-credit hour could be better served by adding it to ST 107 and combining the materials into an existing course which resulted in changes to the Surgical Technology program. The CIT Business Advisory Committee was surveyed to determine if current course and program content was applicable to the business program. As a result of the responses, CIT program faculty determined the following curriculum changes: add SharePoint content to the curriculum and do not use the IC3 exam. While not based on assessment, the majority of certificate and associate degree programs at the institution recently underwent programmatic changes during 2011-2012. These curricular changes were made to reduce total program credit hours, made necessary by the State of West Virginia Series 11 mandate.

Staff Unit Assessments

Staff Unit Assessments (3.c.3) have resulted in improvements to student areas as well as in other areas of the College. For instance, Student Activities analyzed the distribution, method of publication, and promotion of Student Activities Calendar events. Event attendance, participation and satisfaction were found to be very high throughout the entire spring 2010 Academic Year despite limitations in digital communications. The Office of Student Activities has received very positive feedback on nearly every event throughout the semester indicating the Office of Student Activities has an understanding of what students want to see on campus. The Calendar of Events was found to be an effective tool for notifying students near the beginning of the semester, but its effectiveness diminishes over the course of the semester. Additionally, Institutional Technologies used data gathered during successful completion of OZ tickets within accepted time parameters as a basis for future decision making that will enhance service levels of IT support. The Registrar's Office initially completed a survey of faculty, staff, and administration evaluating their knowledge of the various services offered by the office. As a result of the assessment survey, the Registrar's Office decided to educate the faculty, staff, and administration in regards to the functions performed by the Registrar/Records Office. Follow-up highlighted the functions that were included in the survey administered. The office provided education by emailing faculty, staff, and administration on a monthly basis. Highlighting different functions each month (i.e., who performs the function, the process involved, and common questions/concerns). They are in the process of re-surveying the faculty, staff and administration to determine if our project was successful.

WVNCC values student's opinions, and we use the data and information gathered in our surveys to guide us as we make institutional decisions. In order to inform the students of the decisions that were made that were a direct correlation to these surveys, the Institutional Research department has implemented the "You Spoke…We Listened" Campaign (3.c.8). As a result of the fall 2011 satisfaction surveys, the following recommendations were received and implemented: sessions on computer basics are now being offered and course evaluations are now open for two full weeks. Another upcoming improvement will be added with security lighting in the institutional parking lots.

Institutional Effectiveness Reports

The staff assessment reports have addressed the effectiveness and areas of improvement identified in twenty-four areas of the institution. Additional Institutional Effectiveness reports (3.c.7) include the Strategic Planning Summary 2011-2016 (3.c.10), which was released September 28, 2012. This summary documents progress on each of the five goals in the plan. Significant actions under Goal 1: Prepare students to be successful in education and the workplace included the update of all program sheets to reflect Series 11 changes; undecided majors were no longer an option with the 2011-12 academic year; tracking of students who attended orientation were coded in Banner beginning 2011-12; and Career Services revitalized with an improved website, classroom presentation, handouts, and an emphasis on College Central Network. Goal II: Continue to provide educational opportunities for all students has illustrated progress in the following areas: new gainful employment programs approved for 2012-2013 and updated all certificate programs with new Catalog areas; default rate reduced by 3.9% as was released in 2011; and admissions report developed in Hyperion to track information concerning recruitment. Additional information is available in the full report (3.c.10). Further monitoring will be continued through year five of the Strategic Plan. Additionally, for 2013, the Title III grant report and associated retention data will be utilized as an institutional effectiveness project.

The College continues to expand on the facilities on all three campuses to support a positive learning environment, which is conducive to enhancing student learning. In the fall of 2006, the new Education Center was opened near the B&O building. This new addition moved all classrooms and labs from the Hazel-Atlas building, except Refrigeration, Heating, and Air Conditioning and table gaming. This renovation brought four new computer labs, state of the art Respiratory Therapy, Nursing, and Surgical Technology labs, and a new Culinary Arts complex. Additionally, faculty offices, general classrooms, a Student Activities Office, and a large Multipurpose Room were incorporated into this new building. This building, being in close proximity to the B&O, brought the entire Wheeling campus closer together, establishing a college-square complex.

In August 2011, the College acquired three parcels formally known as the Straub properties. The first parcel will be renovated to accommodate Industrial Maintenance training (HVAC, Welding, Hydraulics, etc.) with the potential for expanded academic space having multiple uses. The second parcel will be renovated with a dual purpose; primarily, the parcel will be renovated to accommodate a Barnes and Noble retail store, into which our existing bookstore will be relocated. The secondary purpose is to provide a Student Activity Center for WVNCC students. The third parcel is used by WVNCC Maintenance as a maintenance workshop and equipment storage facility.

In spring 2012, the Weirton campus opened its newly completed 9,600 square foot addition to the campus structure. This addition houses new Respiratory Therapy and Surgical Technology classrooms and laboratories, as well as a Mechatronics laboratory. In 2011, the College successfully applied for and was granted federal funds to upgrade the

boiler system on the Wheeling campus, HVAC systems in Weirton & New Martinsville campuses to improve temperature control, and computers for students in the classrooms.

WVNCC strives to create accessible learning environments for students in order to create effective learning opportunities. The College provides flexibility in scheduling options. It is through these types of course offerings that we are better able to work with non-traditional students who have job, family, and other responsibilities. Among the options offered are hybrid, Saturday courses, evening, intersession, short-term courses, accelerated courses, and online delivery. The College also has IP Video and EPOP classes which utilize the College's closed video telecommunications system, which enables offering courses (on multiple campuses) which may otherwise be low enrolled.

Distance education utilized the Blackboard Vista platform until fully migrating in the summer 2012 semester to Blackboard Learn 9.1. A selection of courses including ENG 101, PSYC 105, PSYC 208, SOC 125, and POLS 102, are offered each semester to supplement traditional classes. Online courses may relate to the reduction of travel time and expenses for students as well as allowing coursework to be completed at convenient times. In August 2008, the Distance Education coordinator built a webpage (3.c.9) offering support materials for distance education students. Beginning spring 2011 to the present, students who are in the courses using Blackboard Learn 9.1 are being automatically loaded into a Blackboard Course Orientation that was developed by Fairmont State University. The College is currently in the beginning phase of the Quality Matters implementation, which includes training and plans for conducting internal course reviews in the spring 2013. Currently 18 faculty have completed the "Applying the Quality Matters" rubric training, and there are three certified peer reviewers within the institution.

To assure the integrity of degree programs and a student's ability to succeed in college courses, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (August 2002) established uniform standards for placement of students in college-level mathematics and English courses. Upon admission, all degree and certificate objective students are required to take course placement tests in reading, writing, arithmetic, and elementary algebra to assess their current skills if ACT/SAT scores are not available and/or do not meet requirements. Also, students not seeking a degree or certificate must meet these requirements before registering for any class with an applicable prerequisite. The following table identifies scores required on ACT/SAT tests (if available) or on WVNCC ASSET

or COMPASS Assessment Tests.

Subject Area	Required ACT Score (if available)	Required SAT Score (if available)	Required ASSET score (if available)	Required COMPASS Scores	Transitional Educational Course (required if student does not meet testing standards)
Reading	17	420	36	75	READ 95, College Reading
English Composition (Writing)	18	450	38	71	ENG 90, Writing Skills
Mathematics	19	460	Numerical: 40	Pre-Algebra: 59	MATH 86 Developmental Arithmetic: Skills
	19	460	Elementary Algebra: 38	Algebra: 36	MATH 92 Beginning Algebra - Part I & MATH 93 Beginning Algebra - Part 2
	19	460	Elementary Algebra: 38-45	Algebra: 36-60	MATH 93 Beginning Algebra - Part II only

Students take the placements tests if they do not meet the required ACT or SAT score, as noted in the above table, or do not have records of completed prior college coursework. The COMPASS test is a computerized test that is not timed. A student scoring below the necessary score in any area will be required to take the transitional education course(s) identified.

Students are required to take these tests prior to registering for their first class to determine appropriate course placement(s). Students may retest in any of the required subject areas one time. Students are advised to wait at least five days between testing and retesting. Students may not retest after having attended the transitional education

course for that subject.

Group testing sessions are scheduled at a variety of times on each campus prior to the beginning of each semester to accommodate students' needs. Students whose placement test scores or ACT/SAT scores, if available, indicate a need for improved basic skills in reading, writing, and/or mathematics, will be required to enroll and successfully complete the transitional education class(es) before enrolling in college-level courses. The goals of transitional education are:

- to preserve and make possible educational opportunity for each postsecondary learner,

- to develop in each learner the skills and attitudes necessary for the attainment of academic, career, and life goals,

- to ensure proper placement by assessing each learner's level of preparedness for college coursework,

- to maintain academic standards by enabling learners to acquire competencies needed for success in mainstream college courses,

- to enhance the retention of students,

- to promote the continued development and application of cognitive and affective learning theory.

Students who are in need of the full transitional (developmental) educational course sequence will be assigned to the Academic Advisor "Student Success" to be assisted with their academic plans. The student should enroll in College Success (ORNT 100) and may also enroll in general education core courses if prerequisites/corerequisites have been met. Transitional education workshops and other supplemental opportunities are made available as are regular academic support services. Upon successful completion of the transitional education program, students then meet with a program advisor to begin into a program of study. Transitional education courses are considered college courses for purposes of determining course load and financial aid; however, these credit hours are not calculated into the total number of hours required for students to complete degree programs. Descriptions of transitional education courses are listed in the course descriptions section of the College Catalog. By offering testing, transitional education, and support for transitional students, Northern aims to appropriately place students in classes and improve chances of success to offer an effective learning environment.

Academic advisors help students assess their career and life goals as well as understand their test scores, create an educational plan, select courses, and interpret College policies. Advisors can also assist students in correctly selecting courses from their majors, which can reduce errors in meeting graduation requirements, and in submitting the appropriate information on graduation applications. Advising is available throughout the year. Based on student placement scores and campus location, each degree-seeking student is assigned an academic advisor. A registration PIN is required of all degree-seeking students for registration every semester and is received after consultation with their academic advisors. The PIN changes each semester, so that students must contact their advisor before registration. Faculty advisors are assigned students who are

enrolled in their specific programs, or who need coursework to be accepted into their program. Students are required to meet with their advisors each semester to plan their coursework. Students and the advisor use tools, like Northern On the Web's Degree Evaluation function and others, to track a student's progress through courses and other program and institutional requirements. Effective with the spring 2011 semester, registration takes place entirely online. Students are encouraged to register early to ensure their satisfaction with their schedule and classes. The 2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey (3.c.4) revealed that, overall, students seem to be satisfied with their advising experiences within the institution. 84.8% of responding students were satisfied/very satisfied with the statement "academic adviser is available and approachable" and 88% of respondents were satisfied/very satisfied with the statement "academic adviser is knowledgeable about my program requirements."

However, the advising process continues to be studied as to how it can be made more efficient and satisfactory for both students and faculty to offer effective learning in advising. Some of the concerns include whether students really need the PIN to register and whether registration should be completely online. These issues are being discussed but no resolutions have been completed. WVNCC recognizes the importance of the advisement component for student success and wants to provide the most beneficial process and procedures for each student.

In addition to internal surveys measuring student satisfaction, the College utilizes standardized tools to assess their institutional practices and the student's satisfaction levels. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is a tool to help an institution measure how engaged its students are and how well it is addressing their needs. CCSSE uses a three-year cohort of participating colleges in its survey analysis. There are five areas identified as benchmarks by the CCSSE staff (active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners). WVNCC has administered the survey for cohort groups in 2005, 2008, and 2011. The following graphic illustrates a comparison of CCSSE Benchmarks from the past three WVNCC CCSSE surveys. All areas have shown improvement since the 2008 survey, other than active and collaborative learning, which showed a slight decline.
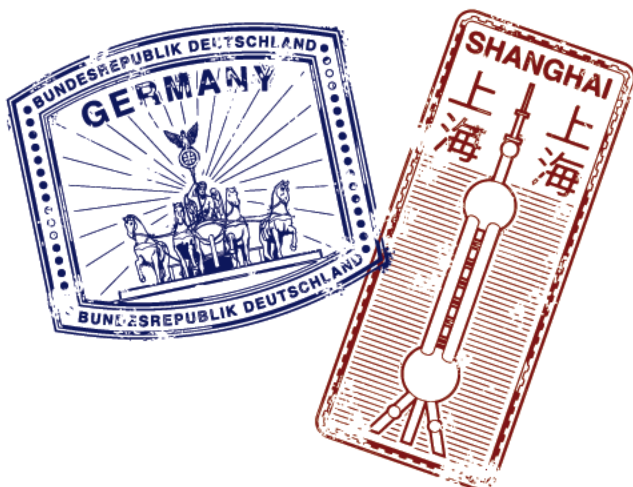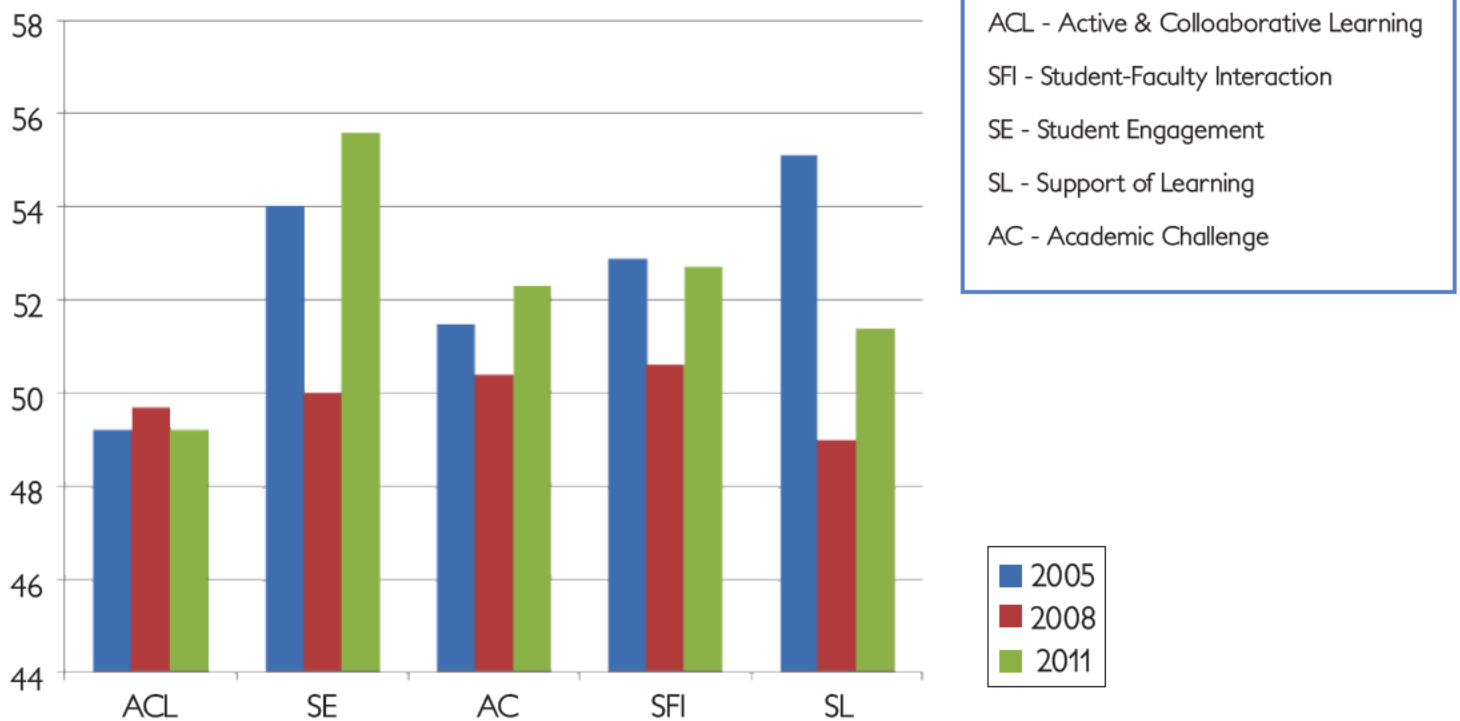
Chart 3.1—Comparison of CCSSE Benchmarks at WVNCC

ACL - Active & Colloaborative Learning

SFI - Student-Faculty Interaction

SE - Student Engagement

SL - Support of Learning

AC - Academic Challenge

WVNCC most recently administered the CCSSE survey (3.c.5) in 2011. Below is a graphic depiction of WVNCC's results as compared to the 2011 CCSSE cohort. WVNCC scored above the benchmark scores in all areas except active and collaborative learning in which it scored just under the benchmark area as illustrated in the graph below.

Chart 3.2—Comparison of CCSSE Benchmark Scores within the CCSSE Cohorts
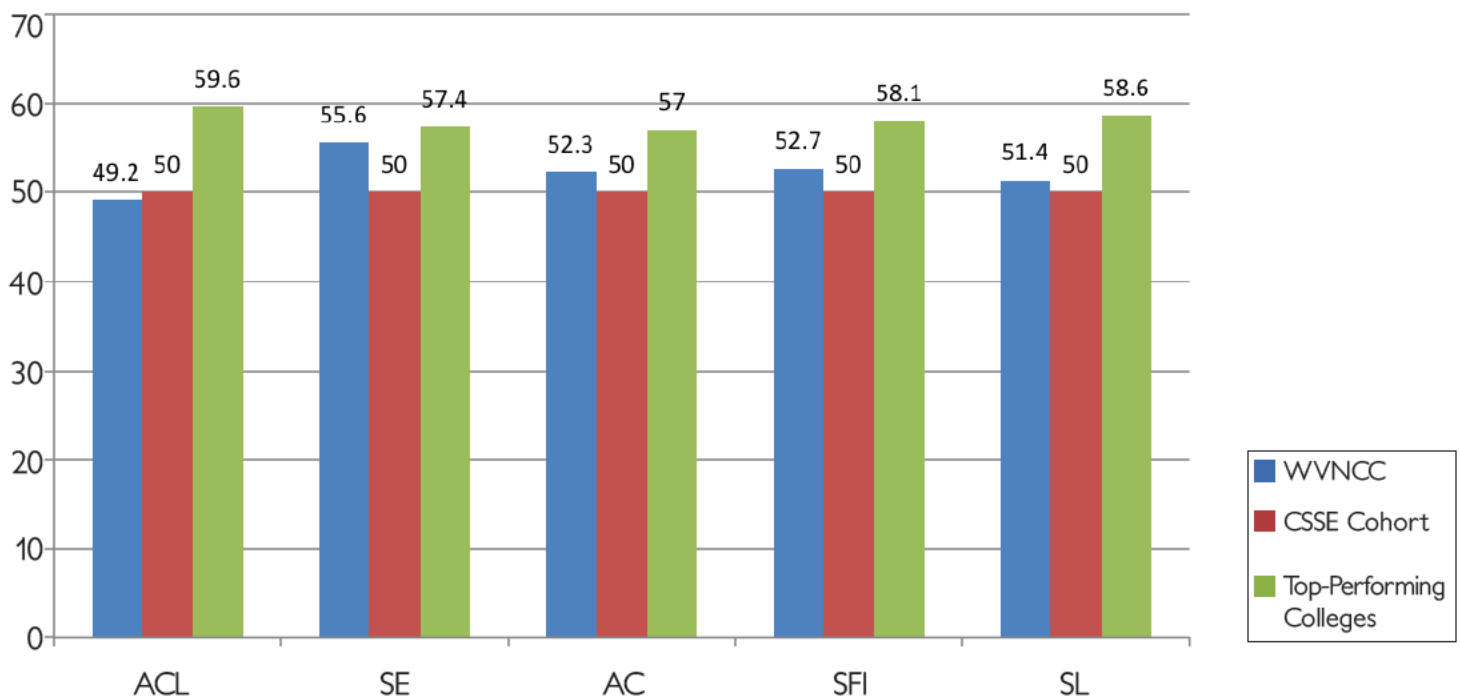
The following outlines the areas of highest and lowest student engagement from the 2011 CCSSE survey results:

## 2011 CCSSE – Aspects of Highest Student Engagement

- Numbers of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings

- Providing the financial support you need to afford your college education

- Preparing for class

- Frequency: Skill labs

- Frequency: Computer lab

2011 CCSSE – Aspects of Lowest Student Engagement

- Made a class presentation

- Worked with other students on projects during class

- Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds

- Helping you cope with non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

- Frequency: Career counseling

The results of the CCSSE data were shared with faculty at the All College Meeting as well as on the Institutional Effectiveness page. Upon receipt of CCSSE data, the data is analyzed by the administrative team, areas for improvement are identified, and ultimately data is utilized to assist in developing retention strategies.   However, a concern with the CCSSE data is that it is reflective of student perceptions only; therefore, it may not give an entire picture of the institutional practices.

WVNCC successfully demonstrates a commitment to creating effective learning environment. The College analyzes a variety of assessment and survey data in order to make decisions which will improve the student's learning and college experience. The College provides placement testing and a comprehensive transitional education program to assist students in college readiness. In addition, advisors provide a full complement of advising and scheduling services to assist students in course and career planning.
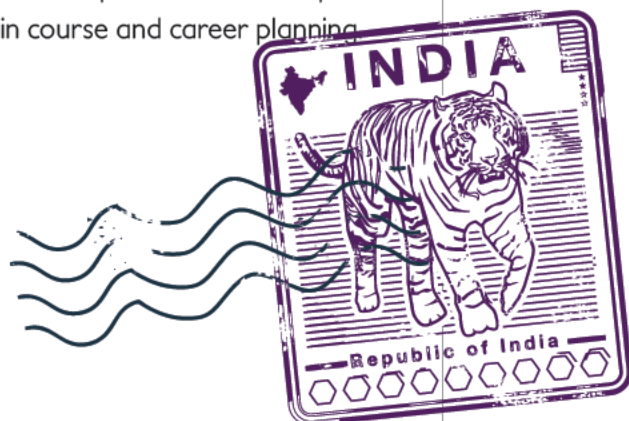
Core Component 3d:

WVNCC's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Evidence:

3.d.1   Fall Satisfaction Surveys

3.d.2   Admissions and Records Office

3.d.3   Counseling and Advising Office

3.d.4   Financial Aid Office

3.d.5   Career Services

3.d.6   Academic Student Support Services

3.d.7   Placement Testing

3.d.8   New Student Orientation

3.d.9   Project Graduation

3.d.10   Library Resources

3.d.11   WV Higher Education Report Card

3.d.12   Transitional Education Innovations

3.d.13   Self Study Surveys

3.d.14   Retention and Student Success Initiatives

3.d.15   GradesFirst

3.d.16   Clinical Sites

3.d.17   LRC Gate Count, January 2012 Assessment

3.d.18   LRC Annual Report

3.d.19   Spring 2011 Census

WVNCC is an open-door college admitting students regardless of academic background. WVNCC realizes that simply admitting students for coursework does not ensure their success. They need a variety of support services and resources to assist them in their educational endeavors. WVNCC provides excellent service to its students through its Student Service areas. All of these offices maintain not only a physical presence but also a web-based presence to assist students.

The Admission's office (3.d.2) provides a starting point for students of all types to begin their educational journey at WVNCC. Early Entrance, Transient, Transfer, and Regular Admission students can find clear directions as to how to begin their journey at WVNCC. Applications can be filed in traditional paper format or electronically. Additional information concerning entrance testing is available as well. Comprehensive academic counseling services are available on each of the three campuses. Admissions counselors are available on each campus to assist potential students and current students in becoming a college student, in selecting majors, in choosing classes, and in many other ways. The counselors have useful information about the college and community. Overall, 90.84% of students responded they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Admissions personnel and process in the 2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey (3.d.1).

All new, first-time students are encouraged to participate in New Student Orientation (3.d.8). This two-hour orientation session provides students with information related to College resources, registration processes, Northern On the Web, and admission and graduation requirements. 90.29% of respondents were satisfied (58.25%) or very satisfied (32.03%) that the information provided assisted them with their first semester at Northern, and 95.16% of respondents felt satisfied (67.63%) or very satisfied (27.53%) with the time for orientation in the 2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey (3.d.1).

In addition to the general College orientation, several departments, including Culinary Arts, Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgical Technology, have departmental orientations. These orientations provide information on departmental policies, uniforms, and an introduction to faculty and lab facilities. Course ORNT 100, College Success, is offered on each campus and is focused on college success. This is a one-credit course, encouraged to be taken by new, first-generation, and transitional students. This course focuses on developing knowledge and understanding of techniques proven to help in college success and in personal development. Topics such as study skills, time management, test- and note-taking skills, test anxiety, and College services are studied. In order for the student to be more successful in academic pursuits, additional topics of this course include life planning, career planning, critical thinking, decision making, teamwork, job search, sexual harassment, and diversity issues.

The Financial Aid Office (3.d.4) staff is available to assist students with all aspects of financial aid. The staff offers workshops each year for the completion of the FAFSA and produces newsletters to keep the College community apprised of financial aid deadlines and changes. The website details the various types of aid available as well as applications for WVNCC aid, federal loans, and other key aid documents.

The College has made great advances in their efforts to improve student success. Beginning with admissions, students not currently possessing college-level credits in math and/or English courses are assessed for college readiness by utilizing the COMPASS placement examination (3.d.7), which evaluates English, Reading and Math readiness. Students can utilize ACT or SAT scores to illustrate readiness, as well. WVNCC has been above the state average of 66.6% of students enrolled in transitional coursework for each of the five years and records the third highest average in the community college system as detailed in the 2011 WV Higher Education Report Card (3.d.11). The following table illustrates the percentage of students per year (2006-2010 data):

Table 3.7—Percent of students enrolled in transitional courses

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
66.7%	77.5%	78.2%	79.5%	78.1%

Due to the high and ever increasing numbers of students requiring transitional education coursework, the College has undertaken steps to facilitate the students completing this coursework in a timelier manner. Recent innovations that have been integrated into the transitional educational program (3.d.12) include:

- Math Labs for MATH 86/92/93, initially implemented on the Wheeling campus in fall 2011. The Math lab was integrated on the Weirton campus in fall 2012 and is projected for New Martinsville in fall 2013.

- Part-of-term MATH 92 and MATH 93 course originally piloted in New Martinsville in fall 2010 and integrated on all three campuses in the fall 2012 semester. This allows students to complete both MATH 92 and 93 in one semester.

- ALP English Option allowing students to complete English 90 and English 101 in one semester. This option is currently offered on the Wheeling and Weirton campuses. This design allows students to get into a college-level course earlier.

- Accelerated Transitional Math program was offered during the summer 2009 semester. This course allowed students to take a continuing education course that involved using software to refresh in math concepts. Students took this class after a first attempt at the placement test. If they did not pass, they could take this course over the summer to build their math skills and then retest at the end of the summer when they have practiced with many modules.

WVNCC is unique in the fact that it offers students many options for transitional MATH courses, ranging from traditional classroom, accelerated format, and lab-based classes. The initial performance report for the Title III grant is due in December 2012 and will provide data on the success of these innovative transitional formats. The following table illustrates the pass rates for each transitional course, as well as the percentage of students which pass the subsequent college-level course within two years as reported in the 2011 WV Higher Education Report Card (3.d.11).

Table 3.8—Student Pass Rates for Transitional and Subsequent College-Level Courses

Pass Rate For Transitional Courses						
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	WV State Average for 2010
English	49.0%	50.8%	63.3%	56.5%	-	51.9%
Math	55.3%	57.6%	56.1%	56.6%	50.0%	48.8%
Overall Average	58.2%	67.7%	67.3%	65.4%	52.8%	55.8%
Percent of students enrolled in transitional courses passing subsequent college level course within two years						
English	32.1%	27.5%	32.4%	51.7%	44.6%	41.9%
Math	10.2%	14.4%	17.1%	13.6%	12.6%	18.9%

The data illustrates that as of 2010, Northern is slightly above the state's overall average and the average pass rate for math course. While English students in 2010 have fared

better than the state average in passing subsequent college-level courses, the math students remain significantly below the state average. It is hoped that the newly integrated course offerings, such as the math lab, will serve to increase these numbers at the next stage of evaluation.

The Academic Student Support Services (3.d.6) area oversees the Academic Success Center, or tutoring center, and disabilities office as well as coordinates retention efforts. The tutoring center offers several opportunities for students to obtain additional assistance in mastering subject matter. Students are invited to attend peer tutoring sessions in their subject area and receive qualified assistance at no charge for up to two hours per week per subject. Free tutoring is available to all enrolled WVNCC students. The Centers are open weekdays beginning the first week of classes. Each campus offers tutoring in a variety of subjects including English, biology, math, accounting, chemistry, physics, and science and assistance with computers, writing skills, and allied health sciences. Schedules vary each semester, so students are encouraged to call the Tutoring Center for the current schedule. The Centers provide both paraprofessional and peer tutors. Peer tutors are often instructor-referred students who maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA and have completed the course they are tutoring with an A or B grade. Effective fall 2012, there is online tutoring available for math, English, and CIT courses utilizing Blackboard. 90.45% of students in the 2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey (3.d.1) were satisfied or very satisfied with tutoring services offered.

Additionally, Supplemental Instruction (SI) is available to help students learn how to succeed. Working with faculty in traditionally difficult classes, SI seeks to help students learn to solve problems, organize classroom materials, develop effective study strategies, and meet their own and faculty member's expectations. More in-depth, course-content-specific SI sessions are available, when possible, for microbiology, accounting, and allied health classes. SI is an academic assistance program that integrates how-to-learn with what-to-learn. Students who attend SI sessions discover appropriate application of study strategies, e.g. note taking, graphic organization, questioning techniques, vocabulary acquisition, and test preparation as they review content. Participation in Supplemental Instruction is voluntary, free of charge, and open to all students in the course.

Additionally, the staff at the Student Success Center conducts workshops to assist students in improving study, writing, test-taking, and research skills. The staff also provides help in time management, stress management, organizational skills, and test anxiety.

WVNCC has implemented retention initiatives in an effort to improve student success. A pilot course was offered during 2011-2012 through a Foundation Grant that targeted academically at-risk students with financial aid. The class, ORNT 115, Financial Literacy and Student Success, is designed to help students gain a broad understanding about financial literacy for their personal, professional and educational lives. In addition, students are taught academic strategies, such as time management, study skills, stress management, and learning styles.

Retention initiatives have been implemented, modified and carried on for some time at Northern. Boot camps for transitional education, math lab expansion, and the implementation of reading and writing labs as class options are all examples. Furthermore, the Early Warning system has been the cornerstone of retention and a good example of collaboration among different areas of the College. Faculty and staff use Early Warning to inform the designated person in charge of retention that a student is at risk. The designated person then contacts the student to advise him/her and connect them to resources they need. Early Warning with GradesFirst (3.d.15) is a cornerstone of retention programming at Northern. GradesFirst is an automated, web-based retention management system. Northern uses many functions in GradesFirst to connect students to resources and keep them informed of their progress in courses. When a student is at risk of not passing a course due to attendance, failing grades, or other behaviors, an instructor can flag the at risk student in GradesFirst. Currently, Grades First (computer system) contacts students automatically, which allows more speedy contact with the student, with follow-up calls from academic support staff. Students are directed to community resources for personal issues, to tutoring and disabilities for academic difficulties (as well as for study skills and learning styles strategies), and to counseling for other concerns (i.e., financial aid, explanation of College policies, etc.) This program, then, allows the designated person, faculty, academic support services, counseling, outside agencies, and sometimes more to promote retention and success of students.

Mentoring is another retention initiative utilized at WVNCC. Currently, we offer a peer mentoring program with students serving as mentors to specifically designated students who are new starting in the fall semester. In the past, we have used staff to serve as mentors to new students. These individuals offer their support and assist students when they have questions and problems.

The Student Success Blog (3.d.14) shows how technology is used to support retention and success. It provides students information about a variety of subjects that can help them stay on track in College. The blog is available at wvnccstudentsuccess.wordpress.com. The New Martinsville blog is similar and serves similar functions.

Project Graduation (3.d.9) focuses on goals to improve completion; those goals are often aligned with retention and student success initiatives. Project Graduation involves assisting students who apply to graduate but are ineligible to achieve completion of a program as well as identifying students who did not apply for graduation but who meet or are close to meeting program requirements for graduation in a given school year. Regarding the former, when students apply for graduation and are determined to have not met program requirements, the Certification Analyst in the Records Office forwards the students' information to the Director/ "Academic" Student Support Services to assist the students in identifying methods to meet requirements, such as through course substitutions or Course Learning Contracts (independent study), or to continue at Northern past the graduation period to complete requirements. Regarding the latter, the Registrar and Certification Analyst review students who may meet

or be close to meeting requirements in programs, particularly among students in Associate degrees with complementary Certificate in Applied Science programs. Currently, this project involves collaboration between Records/Registrar and retention. Faculty, chairs, and others are also involved as needed. A Staff Unit Assessment Report from 2009-2010, revealed a high success rate for the Project Graduation initiative. 91% of the 42 sought-after degrees and certificates in this project are currently deemed successful; the predicted rate of success was above 85%. It was recommended that the current process in place should be maintained. The process for assisting students who apply for graduation but are ineligible has a high success rate.

The Retention Strategic Plan is available in the resource room (3.d.14). This ambitious plan identifies ten primary goals and multiple sub-goals to address over a three-year period. The purpose is to identify areas of concern, to revamp policies and practices that impact retention negatively, to implement needed additional services and training that will positively impact retention, and to adopt a culture that values the important of retention, success, and completion.

Other retention and success initiatives provide support for learning. The "Don't Cancel That Class!" (3.d.14) program affords faculty the opportunity to request a workshop or presentation in place of a regular class session when a faculty member is unavailable to teach due to conference attendance, for instance. The On Track (3.d.14) newsletter is published twice a semester and provides students valuable information about study skills and related strategies, graduation information, advising, college services, and more. Considering that college students face many challenges in the modern world, Resource Fairs (3.d.14) are meant to spread awareness of community resources among students and connect them to internal and external resources that can assist in their success. Total Withdraw Surveys (3.d.14) allow WVNCC to collect data about who leaves and why students leave to help us address areas of concern and design preventative strategies. Northern also focuses on success with orientation modules (3.d.14). Research shows that new student orientation is a valuable activity in contributing to student success in college, so student success foci have been incorporated into new student orientation, in cooperation with campus counselors. The presentation "How to Become an Effective Student" teaches students to identify their learning styles, supply needs for starting classes, and the importance of using the syllabus to manage their time and stay on track in their courses.

A $1.5 million Title III Grant focuses on student success. Among the improvements afforded the institution as a result are placement test orientations, a placement test preparation program, new full-time tutoring coordinators on the New Martinsville and Weirton campuses, an instructional specialist to coordinate web-based math and other math initiatives, and an Academic Advisor for Student Success, who covers all three campuses working with the students who need all developmental education courses, as well as teaching an orientation course for this group of students. For instance, the placement test orientation is meant to better educate all incoming students about the ramifications of the placement test as well as transitional education. The placement test program aids

students who fail the test to remediate, retest, and possibly avoid transitional education courses. This allows the student to progress through their chosen programs of study in a timelier manner.

WVNCC is committed to assuring that students with disabilities are afforded the same opportunities and the same responsibilities as all other students. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations within the scope of the College's programs and resources to ensure that otherwise qualified students with disabilities are able to enjoy the same rights and assume the same responsibilities as other students. The campus Counselors and Student Disabilities Coordinator work with faculty and staff, as well as a number of community agencies, to arrange for appropriate accommodation for students both in and out of the classroom. Students with disabilities must provide documentation of their disability to the Student Disabilities Coordinator in order to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

The Office of Career Planning and Placement (3.d.5) offers students assistance in making career decisions, exploring career options and conducting job searches. Services include, but are not limited to:

- individual career advising, including identification of interests, abilities, and values,
- seminars on career decision-making, résumé preparation, and interview techniques,
- mock interviews which allow students to practice and improve interview performances,
- career fairs and on-campus recruiting,
- online job information, and
- assistance with conducting job searches via the internet.

The College has initiated numerous technology and communication initiatives throughout the last few years. The College website has been completely renovated for a modern look and more valuable information for the student. The redesigned website for the institution has won the top award given by the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations, the Gold level Paragon Award. 71.8% of faculty/staff/administration responding to the 2011 Self Study Survey (3.d.13) believed the webpage met their needs. Additionally, all three campuses are linked with an interactive audio, video, and data telecommunications system. This allows the College to provide more course offerings to more sites and to more efficiently utilize faculty members. Conferences, seminars, meetings, and short-term instructional programs are all possible using this equipment. Courses can also be recorded with this system and utilized for students to remediate or review after an absence, if the faculty member chooses.

All students are given a College e-mail account upon registration, which will then be utilized for all College information transmission including annual FERPA notices, campus

crime statistics notification, and other College information. Technical support for email accounts is provided by the College's Office of Institutional Research. Students can use the Student Portal for access to NOW, which is utilized for grades, online registration, class schedules, and fee payment; email; and Blackboard, to name a few services.

The Health Science programs at WVNCC offer students a wide range of clinical sites. For example, the Nursing program utilizes Ohio Valley Medical Center, Weirton Medical Center, East Ohio Regional Hospital, and Wheeling Medical Park. The Respiratory Therapy Program utilizes the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, WVU Hospital Systems, Heritage Valley Health Systems, and East Ohio Regional Hospital. The Radiography Program utilizes Reynolds Memorial Hospital and Wheeling Clinic. The Clinical Medical Assistant program utilizes many local physicians' offices, including those of Dr. William Mercer and Dr. Lisa Hill. Other locations and sites are also used in these programs. A comprehensive list is available in the resource room (3.d.16). These learning resources improve student learning and effective teaching for skills-based programs.

Additionally, state-of-the-art campus facilities complement the external clinical sites. For instance, Nursing, Surgical Technology, Respiratory Therapy, Radiography, and Medical Assisting maintain realistic laboratory experiences for their students by combining life-like simulation mannequins and state of the art equipment in their laboratories. The Culinary Arts complex provides a quick-service dining experience, as well as pastry kitchens, and order system to give the student realistic cooking and dining experiences. ADAM software enhances the Anatomy and Physiology student experience. The Mechatronics students are utilizing trainers for their various crafts. State-of-the-art equipment evinces an enriched educational experience.

Each campus of WVNCC has a Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC). The libraries (3.d.10) support the College instructional programs and the teaching and learning of faculty, staff, and students on all of our campuses, our distance education students, and the communities in which we are located. Overall average gate count of those we serve in all of the libraries per week is 3,788 or 758 people per day (Gate Count January 2012 Assessment, 3.d.17). The library hours of operation during the fall and spring semesters are Monday to Thursday 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM and Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Additionally, faculty, staff and students have access to library staff by phone or email. The 2011 fall satisfaction survey (3.d.1) revealed 87.8% of students were satisfied with the hours that the library was open. However, comments revealed that students would like to see evening and weekend hours added for convenience for students taking courses at those times.

The New Martinsville LRC is our smallest facility. The LRC has nine computers for students and one for use by our community members. The LRC staff serves 358 FTE (spring 2011 Census, 3.d.19) students with one professional Staff Librarian and one part-time Library Technical Assistant. It has been difficult over the years to keep consistent operating hours with such a small staff on this campus.

The Weirton LRC is next largest in size. Staff here serve 535 FTE (spring 2011 Census, 3.d.19) students with a staff of one full-time and one part-time Library Technical Assistant. Staffing here has also been difficult, but, since 2003, the Director of Libraries has her main office on this campus and assists when needed. This campus library moved into a new addition in 2001 and in 2005 was able to totally refurnish the interior with money from a grant obtained by the campus dean. New shelving, circulation desk, and furniture were purchased. This library has one computer for the community and ten for students to use.

The Wheeling LRC is our main and largest branch. The library is in the B&O Building. Staff here serves 1124 FTE students (spring 2011 Census, 3.d.19) with one Library Associate and two Library Technical Assistants. This is our location for centralized administrative functions such as acquisitions, cataloging, interlibrary loan services, and audiovisual services. There are fifty computers for students to use and three for our community members. Three years ago we lost a part-time Technical Assistant position. It has proven difficult to serve so many students and perform all of the needed library services with such a small staff. In 2006, as part of the College Square project, the LRC was refurbished. Our reference collection was reduced and some shelving was removed to make more room for seating. Two group study rooms were added for students along with a new circulation desk and some new furniture. All campus LRCs received wireless Internet access in 2007.

The combined book holdings for all three campuses are 27,174 volumes. WVNCC has about 132 print magazine subscriptions. Audiovisual collection holdings now total 1,164 pieces (LRC Annual Report, 3.d.18). Our first group of eBooks (256) was added in spring 2011. All of our resources can be accessed from the Library webpage on the College website. The library link has now been added to the College Portal system, which gives access to databases and licensed material for all faculty/staff/students. Northern is in a partnership with West Virginia University to house and run library systems. This partnership allowed for the WVNCC Library Catalog to be created and maintained by WVU and to add the Acquisitions module to the library system. The Voyager software from the Exlibris Company is utilized by the library.

Some special collections in each LRC include career information, study skills materials, audiovisual items, and resources for professional development. Access to databases are available both on-campus and off-campus.

The LRC also provides access to twenty online databases from several different companies. Titles available include:

- Student Resources in Context (General Reference Database)
- Business Insights: Essentials (Company and Industry Information Database)
- Health and Wellness Resource Center (Health Information Database)
- Opposing Viewpoints in Context (Social Issues Database)

- Sirs Knowledge Source

    Includes:

    SIRS Researcher (General Information Database)

    SIRS Government Reporter (Government Information Database)

    SIRS Renaissance (Arts and Humanities Database)

- OVID - Nursing - Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins Nursing Collection

- Credo Reference – online reference resources

- World Cat – library holdings worldwide (interlibrary loan)

- OnmiFILE Full Text Mega (H.W. Wilson) (Arts and Humanities Database)

All of the resources listed below are not purchased by the College but by the State of WV.

EBSCOHost Group of Databases:

- Learning Express Library

- Alt Health Watch - Alternative health database

- Health Source - Consumer Edition - consumer health database

- Health Source - Nursing/Academic Edition - database of scholarly medical and nursing journals

- Business Source Elite - database of scholarly business journals

- Regional Business News - database of regional business journals

- Newspaper Source - database of national and international newspapers

- MasterFILE Premier

- GreenFILE

- Library, Information Science, & Technology Abstracts

- TOPIC Search

- Consumer Health Complete

- Points of View

- Student Research Center

- Novelist Plus

- Novelist K-8 Plus

- Nursing - Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins Nursing Collection

The Library/Learning Resource Center is a member of Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) for our cataloging and interlibrary loan services. WVNCC also has access to their WorldCat database available to our students to search resources available worldwide if Northern does not own what students need. In 2011, WVNCC used interlibrary loan (WorldCat Resource Sharing) to borrow 280 books from other libraries, and Northern sent 91 of its own books to other libraries to use. WVNCC belongs to Lyrasis for regional group purchasing and training opportunities.

The Library/Learning Resource Center has continued to evaluate and assess its services

and student usage through surveys and periodic gate counts on the number of patrons coming into the areas at specific times (Gate Counts were done in October 2012, February 2011, and January 2012). 94% of students on the 2011 Fall Student Satisfaction Survey (3.d.1) felt the library met their needs. Similar results have been obtained on past surveys as well. While 87.8% of students noted they were satisfied with the hours the library is open, there were several comments that noted extended hours would be beneficial. Later evening hours for those taking only evening courses and weekend hours for those who cannot access the library through the week were two of the most common suggestions offered by students.

The Director of Libraries and the Staff Librarian in New Martinsville conduct all of the library instruction classes on all three campuses. The majority of these are one class period classroom instruction sessions. Mainly these are done for English Composition I students, but others are done when requested by faculty. In 2011, this included 43 sessions for 810 students (LRC Annual Report, 3.d.18). A document on how to use the library is posted on the Library webpage and is sent to all distance education faculty by email at the beginning of fall semester.

A main area of interaction between the library staff and faculty is through the LRC Committee. This committee meets on the first Friday of the month in the spring and fall semesters on the Wheeling Campus. This is a standing committee with representatives from College staff, faculty, and the students. The purpose of the committee is to:

- Advise the Director of Libraries on policy and acquisitions.
- Promote use of the LRCs and the services of the librarians among faculty, staff, and students.
- Serve as a communication link between the Director and the College community by bringing comments about the functioning of the LRCs from faculty, staff, and students to the Director and taking information from the committee meetings to faculty, staff, and students.
- Support the Director's initiatives when deemed warranted and necessary.

The WVNCC learning resources strongly support student learning and effective teaching. Student resources include a Student Success Center which offers free tutoring and supplemental instruction services. There are numerous retention initiatives which are aimed at improving retention rates and student success.   The library supports instruction and provides students and faculty with a comprehensive database of resources. Additionally, advising, financial aid, disability services, and career services provide students with access to a wide variety of support services. Finally, state of the art labs in Nursing, Mechatronics, Surgical Technology, and Respiratory Therapy provide the students with realistic practice prior to entering the clinical setting and workforce environments.

CONCLUSION

As per its mission statement, West Virginia Northern Community College's mission is to provide higher education empowering individuals to achieve academic and career goals leading to a competent workforce which excels in a global economy. To ensure that it is doing just that, the College has nurtured a culture of assessment and has transformed itself from a teaching to a learning institution. The commitment to assessment is evident at all levels, from the administrative body which allocates the funds for assessment activities to faculty, staff, and students who participate in those activities. The institution itself is learning, and as it learns, it evolves, it changes, and it continuously improves.

Strengths

- Assessment permeates the institution. Student learning is assessed at the course, program, departmental, and institutional levels.

- An assessment plan has been in effect and implemented for several years.

- Learning outcomes have been identified for all program areas.

- Adjunct and full-time faculty are highly qualified and possess degrees appropriate to their teaching assignments.

- WVNCC has a comprehensive system in place for the evaluation of teaching that takes the students' perspective into account.

- WVNCC provides ample resources to help full- and part-time faculty improve pedagogy and incorporate innovative practices that enhance student learning.

- Faculty have used assessment results to improve practice and instruction. There are numerous examples of changes that were made to curriculum or the delivery of curriculum as a result of assessment activities.

- Assessment results from non-academic areas are used to positively impact student learning and to streamline College processes.

- WVNCC provides extensive resources to help students be successful.

- The College provides ample resources to make authentic assessment possible.

Challenges

- It is difficult to achieve accurate job placement data for programs as much of the data collection relies on self-reported surveys.

- Improving response rates for student evaluation of teaching surveys has proven to be difficult.

- State mandates, such as Series 11, which encompass a great deal of time and energy yet do not provide additional resources for staff/faculty.

- Staffing levels and available funding do not permit services such as the library to be open during all times that students' desire.

Future Direction

- The College will continue to investigate ways to enhance the utilization and dissemination of the assessment data generated each year.

- The College will investigate ways to make course and program level assessments, program review reports, student satisfaction and engagement results, and all other assessment data more available to all WVNCC constituents.

- The College will assure continuity of leadership in key academic and assessment positions.

- The Institutional Research/Institutional Effectiveness office will continue to consolidate the collection and distribution of College data.

- Further monitoring will continue over progress in transitional education and retention initiatives as provided for by Title III Grant Funding.
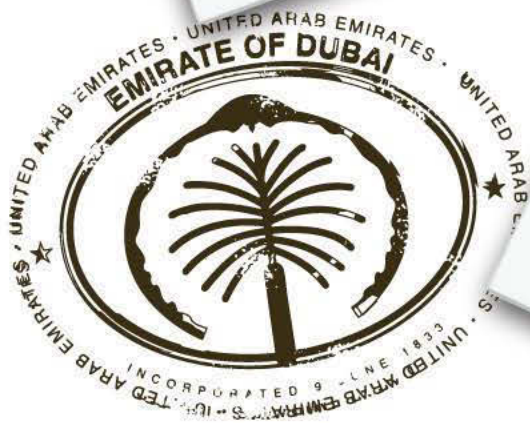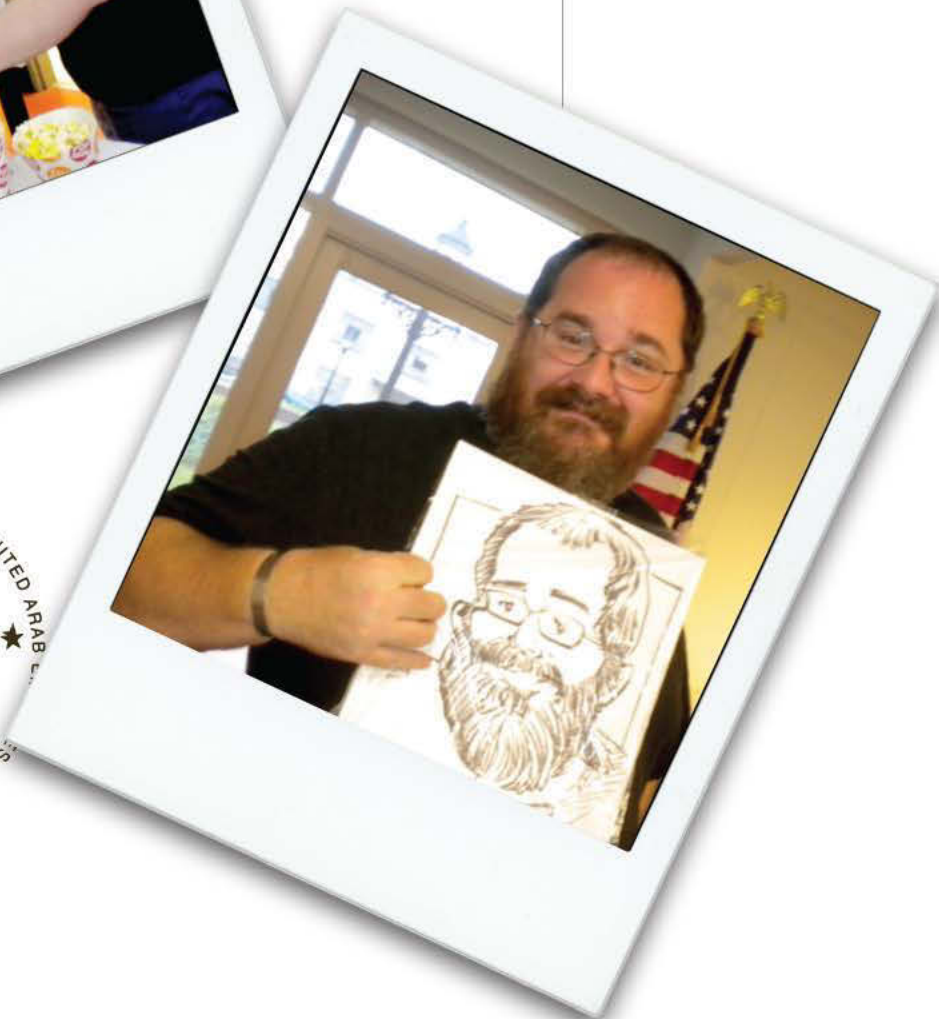
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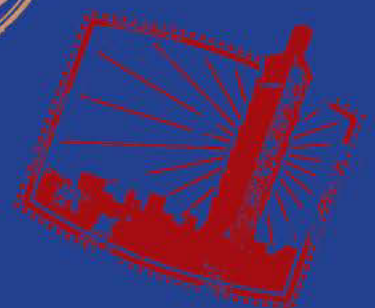
CRITERION 4:
ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

WVNCC promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

INTRODUCTION

The community college offers a unique experience for those seeking a life of learning. Students largely attend community colleges out of necessity more than desire, yet the potential to gain a world of knowledge about academia, social and civic duty, and practical skills application can be highly attractive and pay high rewards for learners. The community college experience is different from that of a baccalaureate institution or an online institution. A community college has a little more of a family atmosphere, the chance to develop a personal relationship between students, faculty, staff, and administration. There are no teaching assistants, no enormous research projects, and little fear of perishing if one does not publish. Though the community college does not focus on research, it does strongly support lifelong learning through cooperative agreements, learning opportunities for various populations and age groups, recognition and appreciation of achievement, and support of professional development and academic support. To that end West Virginia Northern Community College promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component 4a:
WVNCC demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Evidence:

4.a.1   Catalog

4.a.2   Open admissions policy

4.a.3   Academic Freedom

4.a.4   Harassment and Discrimination Policy

4.a.5   Website and College publications

4.a.6   Merit, Dean's, and President's Lists

4.a.7   Leadership awards

4.a.8   Tutor recognition

4.a.9   Honors convocations

4.a.10   Commencement

4.a.11   Employee Recognition Luncheons

Evidence cont.:

The institutional Board of Governors has approved and disseminated statements supporting freedom of inquiry for WVNCC's students, faculty, and staff and honors those statements in its practices. WVNCC prides itself on being an open access institution. According to the College Catalog (4.a.1), WVNCC admits students "regardless of academic background" (20). While students are required to complete enrollment processes to finalize admission to the College, students, regardless of ability or degree objective, are welcome to attend the College to pursue their goals. To that end, Northern also provides academic support services to honor the integrity of helping all students succeed

at an open admission institution. The College offers tutoring services in person and on-line, and these services focus on guidance through course content as well as basic college success skills, like time management and study skills. In addition, the College staffs the office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities so that students with exceptional needs can seek and receive the assistance they need to promote their success in college. These services align with the Rehabilitation Act, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ADA, Amendments Act, (ADA-AA) and go beyond with intensive assistance from supplemental instructors.

In addition to the open admission policy (4.a.2) and practices of the College, Northern's Board of Governors approved NC-3000, a board policy covering Academic Freedom (4.a.3), in March of 2004. This statement derived from the AAUP Statement and HEPC Title 133 Series 9, Section 2. This policy states that faculty members are to hold a "deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge" and to "seek and to state the truth as they see it." Per this policy, faculty are to promote the free intellectual inquiry of their peers, to show respectful criticism of opposing ideas, to encourage the "free pursuit" of knowledge among their students, to promote academic honesty, and to refrain from prejudicial treatment of students, evaluating them purely on their merits. This policy is a direct representation of freedom of inquiry and strongly supports the fact that Northern promotes a life of learning. With this policy, Northern holds its faculty accountable for guiding and teaching students to use free inquiry and to use free inquiry themselves as a responsibility of faculty members. Board members and administrators recognize faculty are equipped to provide education to their students without interference, unless a just cause requires intervention.

Another BOG policy, NC-2024, Harassment and Discrimination (4.a.4), approved in June 2011, delineates that the College is committed to providing a work and learning environment free of all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination. (This policy aligns with Title IX, Education Amendment of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the WV Human Rights Act. Furthermore, "harassment" is defined in the educational and employment contexts.) Discrimination and harassment are strictly prohibited behaviors, as they deny or limit a student's free access to educational benefits, services, and opportunities. This board policy supports the concept that the board promotes a culture of lifelong learning, for such policies prohibit behavior that limits access to free inquiry and lifelong learning. Furthermore, the College spreads awareness of its policies against discrimination and harassment by publishing an anti-discrimination statement on College publications (4.a.5), including program brochures, printed Schedule of Classes, the College website, newsletters, and other such publications. Copies of Board policies and examples of College publications with the anti-discrimination statement are in the Resource Room.

WVNCC publicly acknowledges the achievements of students, faculty, and staff in acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge. WVNCC makes recognition of the achievement of its students, faculty, and staff a highlight of the institution. Each semester, students are recognized for academic achievement through academic honors lists.

The honors include Merit Lists for students with a 3.25 minimum GPA in at least six hours of credit classes; Dean's List for students with a 3.5 minimum GPA with at least nine hours of credit classes; and President's List (4.a.6) for students with a 4.0 GPA in at least twelve hours of credit classes. Fall honors are determined by February 1, with spring honors by September 1. Students who achieve the GPA required for one of these lists are honored in local newspaper releases, the News section of the College website, and during Honors Convocations (4.a.9) in late spring semester. Each campus hosts an Honors Convocation to recognize the accomplishments of students among faculty, staff, family, friends, and fellow students. Celebration of these students' achievements both builds the self-esteem of students and encourages pride and motivation in high-level learning. Copies of honors lists and honors convocation brochures are available in the Resource Room.

Students are also recognized for their leadership achievements in other ways. Students are honored during the spring Leadership Luncheons held on each campus. Faculty and staff are invited to nominate students who have proven to be excellent leaders among their peers. These students often have served as Student Government Association members and officers, tutors, peer mentors, ambassadors, work studies, Student Success Summit participants, and more. Some students are those who have been recognized as proponents of student success, as many have displayed leadership in the classroom setting and were recognized for their motivation and encouragement of student learning (4.a.7). Tutors, who are either students or community members, are also recognized for their service to student success during tutoring appreciation events. These have been held in the spring semester and involve a luncheon and gift given to each tutor. In the 2012-2013 school year, tutor appreciation will be held at the end of both fall and spring, for some individuals tutor in one semester but not the other. These students and individuals are honored for their successes in learning, sharing knowledge, and leadership, showing the institution's value of lifelong learning (4.a.8).

Students in Allied Health programs, including Nursing, Respiratory Care, Medical Assisting, Surgical Technology, Radiography, and Health Information Technology, are honored at a special pinning ceremony held near the end of the spring semester. Students who are provisionally certified to graduate can participate in this ceremony in recognition of their hard work and achievements. In spring 2012, 111 students were pinned during this ceremony.

The College also maintains a chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, a national honorary society for community college students. The Omega Epsilon chapter was established in 1973 (Catalog 49) for students who demonstrate academic excellence, good moral character, and outstanding citizenship. To be eligible for Phi Theta Kappa, students must achieve at least a 3.5 GPA. Students who are invited to join the organization participate in an initiation ceremony in front of family, friends, organization advisors and officers, and employees of the College. Students in this organization are encouraged to continue their academic excellence and to participate in activities that promote their leadership qualities. Again,

this organization and its mission represent the focus on student learning, social responsibility, and lifelong skills applicability.

Progress and success is encouraged through financial aid packages that include grants, scholarships, work study, and loans. College Counselors participate in high school honors ceremonies to carry the institutional value of learning and achievement to the wider community. Furthermore, the institution's commitment to raising and providing institutional scholarship funds to students shows the school's support of lifelong learning, for with these funds, students can better afford to attend college without incurring debt and immediate financial hardship, allowing them to continue their schooling.

The ultimate celebration of student learning is commencement (4.a.10). Northern holds one commencement exercise each year at the end of the spring semester. Students graduating in December, May, or June of that school year are invited to participate. The focus of graduation is on student achievement in learning, and the College especially recognizes the learning achievement of those graduating with more than one credential and those who are first to graduate from college in their families. Furthermore, academic achievement is highlighted by special garb worn by students who are members of Phi Theta Kappa or who receive special honors because of high GPAs.

In addition to the recognition given to students for successes in learning, faculty, staff, and administrators are also honored for their achievements. Each fall, the College hosts an Employee Recognition Luncheon (4.a.11) in honor of those who recently completed a degree, were published, or achieved an honor in another way. Employees are featured in an event brochure and given a certificate of recognition from the College. In addition to the luncheon, employees are given special certificates of completion for attending in-house professional development training that will allow them to improve services that contribute to student learning and experiences. Employees have also been featured in the College's Campus Communicator for their achievements,. For instance, a former faculty member from New Martinsville was highlighted for her innovative activities and strategies in teaching her science courses. Furthermore, special honors received by employees are featured in news releases in local newspapers. For instance, an employee from New Martinsville, Debbie Bennett, was named "Student of the Year" while completing her master's program through Mountain State University in the 2011-2012 school year, and this was announced in local news outlets as well. Copies of news releases, including features of employee achievements, are housed in the Resource Room (4.a.13).

In 2011, two employees from the College were also recognized by administration for their outstanding community service. Shannon Payton and Rebecca Yesenczki, both members of the staff, were nominated for the West Virginia Community College Association Outstanding Contributions to Community College Education Award (4.a.12). Payton was recognized for her efforts in gaining community participation in College activities; Yesenczki was honored for her efforts with the Friends of the College. Both staff members were nominated for this award by the College President, Dr. Martin J. Olshinsky. Both individuals' efforts contributed to lifelong learning for students and the community

at large. Engaging the community in events both exposed the College in a positive way and involved the communities served by Northern in learning social responsibility, the arts, and diversity awareness with diversity programming. Work with the Friends of the College has helped to raise funds to support teaching and learning needs, such as for funding classroom equipment, and to provide scholarships to students in their academic endeavors.

The office of Student Activities plans a wide variety of events for students and their children (4.a.14). Children's holiday parties are an excellent opportunity for young people to make a memory on campus and become acquainted with students and College personnel. During the holiday season, there is a Secret Santa program which allows those who are able to purchase gifts for the children of students who are unable to do so. For some of these children, this is all they receive, so the generosity of faculty, staff, and fellow students is very impactful and teaches students the personal and community value of social responsibility—personal value to the students the program assists and value to the community in improving the quality of life for those in need. Another activity, Kids on Campus, provides the opportunity for area grade school students to attend a summer day camp before other local day camps begin that exposes them to local, regional, and national programming. Campers learn about a variety of topics—from the arts to sign language to animal life. This type of programming for young children fosters an appreciation of learning from an early age that Northern can help continue in their later years, as is described below.

For high school students, the College provides an opportunity for Early Entrance to college, allowing high school students to acquire college credits, often for dual credit, while providing a first college experience which is a confidence builder for high school students. Early Entrance enrollment has declined over the last five years. This is due in part to a rewritten Series 19 from the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and in part to more aggressive marketing to high schools from other local institutions. Courses offered to high school students are largely transferable and students benefit from a State-wide reduced tuition rate. Related to traditional Early Entrance offerings, College 101 is an orientation course which assists students in bridging the gap between high school and college and is taught in local high schools and specifically targets at-risk, rising potential students (Early Entrance Brochure, 4.a.15). Many of these students may not fit the "college bound" standard and would potentially lose the opportunity to learn about college and its opportunities without a bridge course like College 101. College 101 courses teach students essential fundamental skills to help them be more successful in school, such as with lessons in study skills and time management, as well as standard practices, policies, and jargon at colleges and universities. Students also learn about concepts like financial management, a topic that can help them save money for college and spend responsibly while in school. All of these lessons, though, extend beyond the academic setting and can serve students in their lifelong personal and professional endeavors as well, further proving that a program like College 101 exemplifies Northern's commitment to lifelong learning.

Similar to Early Entrance and College 101 courses, the Middle College program allows tenth and eleventh grade high school students to finish their high school studies (and perhaps start a college program) on the college campus rather than in a high school setting; this change in environment seems particularly helpful to some at-risk students. Middle College students may have otherwise dropped out of high school and lost the value of learning. Fortunately, a program like Middle College allows the students it serves to find a close, caring environment of teachers, support staff, and fellow students who encourage continued learning, social acceptance of differences, support channels for individual challenges, and exposure to higher education opportunities that may have been inaccessible to them previously. Students in the Middle College program have often proven to increase their grades and GPAs (4.a.45) (sometimes by an increase of one or more points) and show improved behaviors and decreases in truancy. Once again, a Northern program serves the goal of learning by instilling values and education that will be carried by these students throughout their lives.

Other programs and commercial spots geared to younger adults include the "Booze, Cruise, and You'll Lose" program and television commercials filmed at Northern designed to warn young drivers of the dangers of driving drunk and/or texting while driving. The College has partnered with area businesses to bring in high school and college students to share in these programs. While information about the College is distributed at these events, the priority is that students understand and apply the message of the event, not that they be recruited, focusing instead on learning and social responsibility.

Of particular interest is the EDGE program, also designed to promote learning among high school students. According to the College's Workforce Development website, EDGE stands for "Earn a Degree – Graduate Early and it allows students to take high school courses for community and technical college credit. EDGE was created by the West Virginia Community and Technical College System to provide incentives for more students to continue their education beyond high school. Students who participate in the EDGE initiative can earn community and technical college credit, free of charge, for selected secondary and post-secondary courses identified during the curriculum alignment process. Goals of the West Virginia EDGE initiative are to provide an opportunity for all students to establish a college transcript while in high school, to increase the numbers of students attending community and technical colleges, and to establish a pathway that allows students to obtain an associate degree in a shortened time after high school or along with a high school diploma." (http://www.wvncc.edu/workforce-development/edgetech-prep/132, 4.a.23).

The College also demonstrates its dedication to lifelong learning in its service to college students. Northern serves a mix of traditional and non-traditional students who can enroll in over 70 degree and Certificate in Applied Science programs of study (4.a.1). There are programs for veterans, prison inmates, and displaced workers as well as programs for students who are beginning or returning to college. According to the 2012-2013 Catalog, Northern is "an approved institution through which men and women who have served in the Armed Forces can receive veterans' benefits," and these benefits

can also extend to dependents and spouses of veterans whose service caused death or permanent and total disability. Students may also be eligible to receive up to two credit hours of credit for health and physical education for one year of service by submitting a DD-214. Veteran Services provides guidance to VA students in their rights to benefits and the policies that apply specifically to this special population. Veteran students are encouraged to pursue a field of study so that their learning and experience can continue beyond their service to the country, and VA staff educate students about their benefits and requirements for programs to be eligible for benefits, as well as assure compliance with the GI Bill and other related laws pertaining to veteran's education benefits (4.a.16). Northern's service to veterans proves exemplary, as Northern has been named one of the nation's Military Friendly Schools; this recognition is awarded to only the top 15 colleges, universities, and trade schools in the nation (4.a.46).

In addition to programming for Veterans, Northern offers inmates at the Northern Regional Jail (4.a.17) the opportunity to complete courses in the general education core during their time of incarceration. The program is coordinated by an adjunct faculty member who works in the facility and serves as the instructor of record. The program with inmates further promotes a life of learning for all individuals and proves Northern's commitment and value of a life of learning to the communities it serves.

In response to economic turmoil experienced in the Ohio Valley in spring 2009, Northern initiated a program for dislocated workers that offered institutional funding to cover their tuition when coming to the College (4.a.18). Hundreds of workers in steel mills and other industries in the area lost their jobs, and the need to enhance opportunities for life-long learning to this group became widely evident. Northern answered this call by honoring its mission to serve the community and workforce needs; the displaced workers programming connected workers to enter or re-enter higher education to train for new jobs with promising job outlooks, such as Medical Assisting and other health care fields. To further assist students suffering from the economic crisis, Northern's admission and financial aid staff educated students about financial aid opportunities that could become available through a process of Professional Judgment, a financial aid process that allows students to submit documentation to show their changed situation that could not be reflected in the FAFSA. Northern seeks to remove the barriers to education that various groups face so lifelong learning becomes a reality, not simply a dream, for all people.

For students who are beginning or returning to college, Northern offers a variety of degree and non-degree programs that serve to meet the educational goals of students. Primarily, Northern offers a variety of career and technical education programs that assist students in gaining skills needed for specific careers and industries. Northern's assessment of courses and programs (see Criterion 3a) and advisory committees (see Criterion 4c) ensures that the course instruction in these programs is relevant, current, and promotes learning necessary to success in the workplace. In addition to career-technical programs, Northern also offers general transfer degrees and specialized transfer degrees (see below). Students returning after a break from college can receive credit for these programs from credits previously completed at Northern or other accredited

institutions. Programming to assist students transitioning into college for the first time or for those returning to college include counseling about degree programs, enrollment steps, transfer requirements (as needed), and course placement; placement testing; new student orientation programs to teach students about College services, policies, and practices and strategies for success; financial aid counseling; Workforce Investment Act and other workforce education law guidance; and more (4.a.19).

One unique degree program that promotes lifelong learning for nontraditional students is the Board of Governors, Associate in Applied Science, degree. According to the Catalog, this program is specifically designed for adult learners needing to fulfill occupational goals or employment needs and can be used to establish professional credentials or attain personal aspirations. Students' and the College's appreciation for lifelong learning is realized as students apply experiential credit (through licensures, military credit, certifications, workplace experience, and more) for college credit and/or complete college credit to satisfy up to 39 credit hours of general electives. Students are required to complete at least 21 credit hours of general education core, but the overall goal of the degree is to remain flexible so that adults and students with unique circumstances can achieve their learning potential, earn a credential, continue education at four-year institutions, and/or gain employment thanks to degree attainment in a timely manner.

Distance education allows the College to reach a wide variety of students: traditional and non-traditional, young and old, new and returning. The fall 2012 schedule offered over fifty distance education courses.   The College has entered into an affiliation with Quality Matters, an enterprise of Maryland online. The purpose of this affiliation is to utilize the Quality Matters (QM) faculty-centered, peer review process in order to certify the quality of online and hybrid courses. According to their website, "QM is a leader in quality assurance for online education and has received national recognition for its peer-based approach and continuous improvement in online education and student learning." (http://www.qmprogram.org/)   With the affiliation with Quality Matters, Northern proves commitment to quality of lifelong learning in addition to service to a broad community of learners extending beyond physical boundaries of the Ohio Valley. Distance education provides students from Northern, other colleges, and those seeking learning for personal interest to gain knowledge from experts in a subject, regardless of physical location (4.a.20).

The lifelong learning needs of the community are served in a variety of ways including through campus-housed Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, community education, continuing education, and workforce development courses offered in response to area needs. ABE classes are offered in language arts, social studies, reading, and math. The instructors for ABE programs are paid through the county school systems and are excellent advocates for the College (4.a.21). The program assists students in creating their own pathway to college. Community education varies according to local interest and has covered topics including forensic investigation for kids, grilling, and jewelry making. The Catalog states that these courses are for "personal enrichment, cultural interests, and educational pursuits"; in other words, such courses offer non-academic learning

opportunities that promote community interest in education in a variety of topics. Continuing education courses are offered for those not interested in earning a degree but instead wishing to improve current skills, learn new skills, or even enter the workforce. A brief list of topics includes computer literacy, fine arts, health care, real estate, and natural gas plant operations. According to the Catalog, these courses are for local residents seeking lifelong learning opportunities that provide "job skills enhancement, certification requirements, cultural enrichment, recreation and personal empowerment" (Catalog 293). Some of these courses also offer academic credit or continuing education units for current professionals, but most are not awarded academic college credit (4.a.22). Workforce relationships have been established and fostered with numerous area businesses to provide worksite training to include Northern Panhandle Headstart, Certainteed, and CPI and Dominion. More information about such programs is described below.

Recently, a "Red Hat" class was offered for those gaining entry into the growing coal mining industry. Red Hat training is designed to prepare students for the WV Office of Miner's Health and Safety's certification exam, which is required for a job as an entry-level underground coal miner. In 2012, 44 students participated in Rig Pass training at no cost to them with the exception of the industry-required drug screen. This is an example of WVNCC partnerships—between Northern, the Wetzel County Chamber of Commerce, and Regional Economic Development (RED). These classes are offered by community demand.

The learning needs of transient students are also served by WVNCC. According to the College website, students wishing to take courses through Northern as transients can take any courses throughout the school year that "meet the needs of their academic program." Thus, for students in the higher education community who would like to take courses at Northern to transfer back to their institutions, the College serves their lifelong learning needs by offering a convenient transient student option. Information about transient student procedures is available in the Resource Room (4.a.42).

The faculty and students, in keeping with WVNCC's mission, produce scholarship and create knowledge through basic and applied research. As a community college, Northern does not have a research focus. Instead, the school's focus is on academic and career goals to allow students to excel in the workforce and global economy. Education focuses on fundamental general education and workplace skills rather than scholarly research leading to new findings in a field. Students do, however, learn research skills through general education and technical courses. For instance, a review of the Master Course Guide (4.a.43) for English Composition will show that students are required to conduct research to compose a research paper. Syllabi reflect the outcomes and objectives of the Master Course Guides (4.a.24). Furthermore, the goals of general education include the ability to "employ or utilize information access and literacy skills" (Catalog 86). In addition to the general education goals, research is embedded in departmental coursework. Through their education at Northern, students are taught the practical and responsible application of research and research writing skills.

Even though research is not the primary focus of faculty or staff, both complete research and other scholarly activities, such as through the College's assessment practices. Assessment serves as research at an applied level, and all faculty, staff, and administrators participate in assessment processes (4.a.25) each year. Faculty are required to assess courses according to their divisional course assessment schedule (at least once every three years); programs are also assessed on a rotation. Since the 2009-2010 school year, staff have been expected to participate in assessment through the Staff Unit Assessment, in which a staff member or department is asked to assess an aspect of its services or department. For instance, in the first year of assessment, the Registrar's Office assessed others' understanding of the services provided by the unit. From those survey findings, the Registrar implemented a series of emails featuring services that are provided by or perceived to be provided by the Registrar to further educate the College employees about the services offered through that office as opposed to other offices. Other staff units have assessed how their services promote student learning; for instance, counselors in Wheeling assessed the process of group advising to measure both the satisfaction and learning experienced by students involved in this process. From survey findings, the counselors acknowledged the successes of group advising and provided recommendations supported by the findings. This assessment focuses on the importance of learning and understanding among students, faculty, staff, and administrators as well as the goal of continuous improvement at the course, program, and institutional level.

Faculty members have also contributed to lifelong learning values through research and publication. One faculty member who teaches in the sciences is currently comparing traditional teaching techniques to nontraditional teaching utilizing a constructivist learning tool in terms of student experience, success, and retention, in her Anatomy and Physiology II courses. Another faculty member in Nursing conducted a three-year research study that she used in her doctoral program. A three-year study on Global Collaboration, specifically with India, was conducted by a math/science professor. An adjunct faculty member completed a master's thesis entitled, "A Comparison of Nutrition Habits and Knowledge between NCAA Division II Athletes and Non-Athletes." Northern faculty consistently review textbooks for publishers with whom they have relationships. Additionally, an accounting/economics professor has co-authored two text books, Fundamentals of Macroeconomics and Fundamentals of Microeconomics (4.a.26).

Northern faculty enthusiastically share their knowledge and experience with others through a multitude of speaking engagements at local, State, national, and international events. From a local grade school career fair to the 2009 Blackboard Educational Technology Conference, Bb World Europe, in Barcelona, Spain, Northern faculty enjoy engaging their fields and the global community. Some examples include "Surgical Mistakes: The surgical technologist's role"; "Facilitation and student retention in online courses"; "Student Enrichment Through Global Collaboration"; "Facilitation and Student Retention in Online Courses"; and "Paralegal and Legal Assistant CLE Program at Wheeling Academy of Law and Science" (4.a.26).

WVNCC provides academic support and professional development opportunities and makes them available to all of its administrators, faculty, and staff. Students in Transitional Education programs (sometimes known as developmental education) are prepared for college-level work through such courses as College Reading, Writing Skills, and three basic math courses. Academic Success Centers aim to provide tutors for any students who request them (4.a.27, 4.a.28). In fiscal year 2012, $60,000 in Perkins funding was allocated to pay wages for tutors working in the centers. In fiscal year 2013, $65,000 has been allotted to meet the increasing needs of tutoring assistance on the satellite campuses of Weirton and New Martinsville. In addition to Perkins funding, tutors are hired through the Federal Work Study program when they are eligible; some tutors also volunteer their time. While the increase in funding will help the centers improve the service to students by providing additional learning support, the ability to serve all students seeking assistance voluntarily or as mandated by a course requirement can present challenges. Ninety percent (90.45%) of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the Tutoring Services offered, including center hours, sufficient number of tutors, and resources. Additionally, the staff are deemed friendly and approachable (2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey, 4.a.44). The College has been awarded a Title III grant to provide increased staffing, such as more tutors; improved equipment, such as for Emporium-model, web-based math classes for transitional education courses; and better services for students in transitional education, such as with an Academic Advisor "Student Success" whose role is to serve as first-year advisor to students needing all transitional courses (4.a.31). This individual was hired in April 2012, and specific job duties include advising as well as teaching Orientation 100, College Success, for her advisees and participating in early alert interventions for transitional education students.
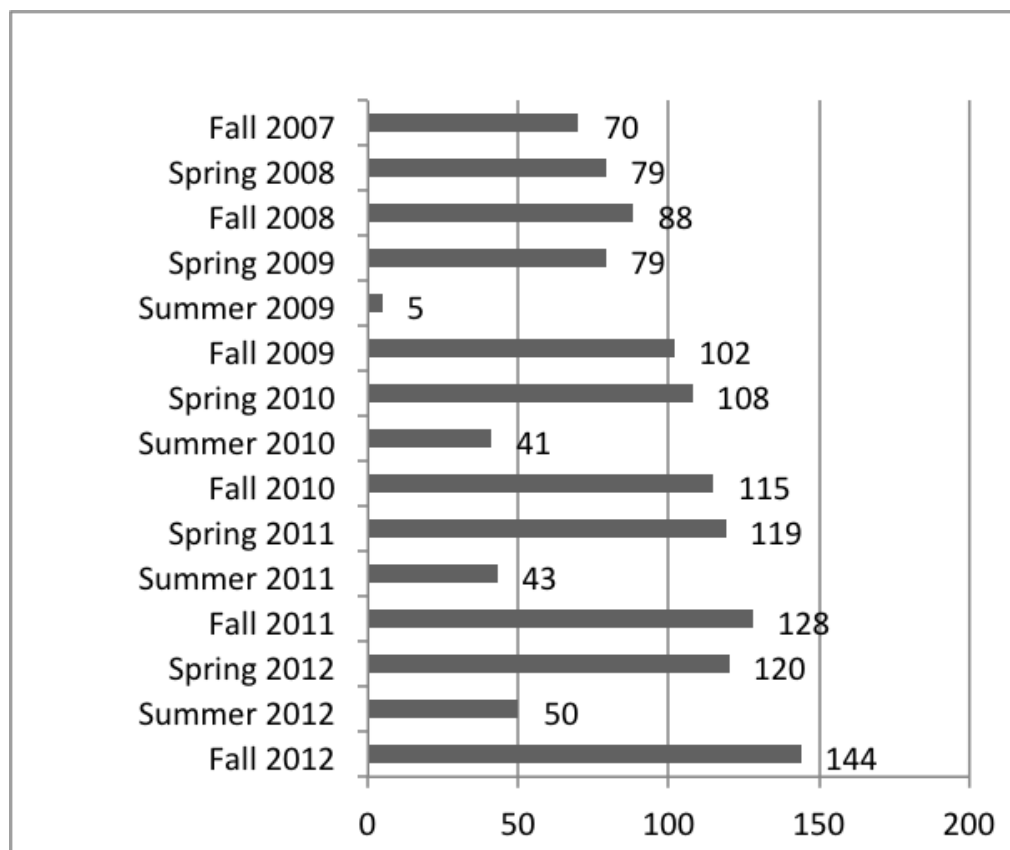
Other efforts resulting from the Title III grant include the design and implementation of a Placement Test Preparation program using Pearson's MyFoundationsLab. The purpose of this program is to provide students who do not pass one or more sections of the placement test with the opportunity to review fundamental skills in reading, writing, and math so students can attempt to retest in those areas, as needed, and, ideally, test out of transitional education. Testing out would remove barriers to timely completion of an academic program and increase retention and success rates of students, meaning that Northern is helping students persist in their lifelong learning goals. The placement test preparation and placement retest are free of charge to participating students. Another Title III effort that will be implemented later includes the implementation of a math boot camp for students who are not successful in a transitional math course. This boot camp will involve intensive review of math content, and students will retest after completing the program, with the ideal result of passing to complete the transitional math requirement they originally failed so they will not be forced to retake the course.

Transitional education at Northern is serving a prime example of innovation in education that seeks to promote and improve student learning. In addition to these Title III programs and resources, courses have already undergone changes to improve success and retention. For instance, English 90, Writing Skills, has been offered using the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) model, allowing students to complete transitional writing

and College Composition I in the same semester with a group of peers who are not also in the transitional writing course. Math courses have been offered in accelerated, half-semester formats to encourage student persistence through more than one math course in a single semester, saving students time and money and allowing them to pursue educational goals in a more favorable timeframe. These efforts, staff, and strategies are being implemented to promote student success and to enhance the learning experiences of students.

Support Services for Students with Disabilities (4.a.30) also provide assistance to students qualifying for assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Amendments Act (ADA-AA). This service provides accommodations for students who need, for example, extended time or isolation for exams and other coursework in compliance with the ADA and ADA-AA. The CARES (College Assistance and Resources for Educational Success) program is designed to enhance the educational experience of ADA students and to provide a welcoming environment for them. The table below shows the number of students served by the Support Services Office over the last five years.

Table 4.1—Total Students Enrolled with Support Services, by Semester

Semester	Students
Fall 2007	70
Spring 2008	79
Fall 2008	88
Spring 2009	79
Summer 2009	5
Fall 2009	102
Spring 2010	108
Summer 2010	41
Fall 2010	115
Spring 2011	119
Summer 2011	43
Fall 2011	128
Spring 2012	120
Summer 2012	50
Fall 2012	144

The College also proves its commitment to lifelong learning through its allocation of financial resources to instruction and academic support. During academic year 2012, over $22,000 was allocated to academic support programs. For academic year 2010, the College spent $2884 per FTE for instruction and $335 per FTE for academic support.

This represents 41% of expenditures for the year as compared to 34% of expenditures at Northern's IPEDS peer institutions (4.a.32).

The Office of Institutional Advancement works in conjunction with the College Foundation to further provide support for learning. First, any employee with a project geared towards teaching and learning can apply for a mini-grant, the Teaching and Learning Grant (4.a.36), through the Foundation and Office of Institutional Effectiveness. In the past, staff have applied for new furniture for the Support Services Office and for funding a free course teaching Financial Literacy and Student Success to at-risk students with low GPAs and financial aid (particularly, loan borrowers). The Master Course Guide for this course is available in the Resource Room (4.a.43). Second, students in emergency situations can apply for financial assistance through the Emergency Assistance Fund. According to the fund application, students can receive up to $1,000 of Emergency Assistance funding (4.a.37) in their time at Northern. This fund has been used to help a student who lost a home in a fire and to assist another student who was robbed. Seven students have received assistance from this program for a total of $3,391.19 between January 2001 and October 2012. These students, facing extraordinary personal challenges, had few resources and places to turn for assistance. This program allows them provisions to rebound personally and to remain in college despite such hardship.

WVNCC supports professional development opportunities (4.a.34) and makes them available to all of its administrators, faculty, and staff. Professional development funding is allocated as part of the College's financial planning process and is available for activities that happen both on and off campus. Additional Professional Development information is covered in 3B.

Board Rule NC-2017, Faculty Professional Development, as well as NC-2023, Sabbatical Leave, also promote professional development as an opportunity and responsibility of the College faculty. The Faculty Professional Development Rule states that "continuous and professional development is the inherent responsibility of each individual full-time and part-time faculty member." Professional development is considered part of faculty members' workloads and serves as a measurement for promotion and merit pay increases. The goal of professional development, per this policy, is to "enhance the professional level and teaching effectiveness of the faculty, including part-time faculty." In addition, the Sabbatical Leave Rule allows faculty members to take sabbatical leave in order to participate in research or another activity that contributes to professional development and/or the faculty member's usefulness to the College. The Rule includes conditions for granting sabbatical leave and necessary forms for review by College administration, and faculty are expected to provide a report to the President once the leave ends. With these Rules, the board has shown its commitment to lifelong learning of its faculty.

Support of professional development is evidenced by the language written into the Title III grant of $1.5 million currently being administered by the College. This grant will provide professional development for full-time and adjunct instructors in transitional education by allowing educators to attend State, local, and national conferences on relevant topics.

Particularly important here is that adjunct instructors will be provided with paid training opportunities, through workshops conducted by full-time faculty on best practices, in the profession. Adjunct and full-time faculty members in transitional education participated in a State-wide meeting on transitional education in March 2012; others participated in the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) conference in spring of 2012, thanks to Title III funding secured by the institution.

Other off-campus activities include Leadership Wheeling, Leadership Weirton, Great Teachers Seminar, and recognition at the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) annual conference. WVNCC participates in the Leadership Wheeling and Leadership Weirton series. Faculty and staff are given the access to this program that focuses on leadership skills and a better understanding of the businesses in the upper Ohio Valley. Tours and meetings are conducted throughout the series and the entire experience is funded by professional development dollars. The West Virginia Great Teacher's Seminar is a summer institute that includes a three-day resident workshop in the southern part of the State. Participants share best practices in pedagogy while attending this conference. NISOD emphasizes the importance of teaching and leadership excellence in institutions of higher education and hosts an annual conference that not only honors those who exemplify those qualities but also provides an opportunity for networking among NISOD institutions. Conference goals from 2012, according to www.nisod.org were:

- To offer an array of presentations that will span the continuum of cutting-edge topics in higher education for faculty, staff, and administrators.

- To provide networking opportunities with other conference participants and NISOD corporate partners.

- To recognize and celebrate outstanding faculty, staff, and administrators with the NISOD Excellence Awards.

In addition to the above activities, academic support services also contribute to supporting learning and professional development. For instance, the Fostering Student Success newsletter was begun in spring 2012 and offers advice for faculty about strategies to improve retention and success in the classroom; the newsletter also informs faculty of upcoming deadlines and online tools like GradesFirst to assist in advising students and keeping students on track through College procedures, like registration. Another resource being developed is an advising handbook, which will be available in electronic format for all advisors. This handbook will include strategies for incorporating the three primary learning objectives—cognitive, behavioral, and affective—in academic advising to help students learn from advising experiences. Additionally, the handbook will include information about College resources, like Northern On the Web (NOW), a records and advising tool, and basic financial aid rules. Furthermore, advisor training opportunities are made available to teach advisors about incorporating coaching strategies in advising, online tools for advising, and more as needs for professional development in advising become evident.

Faculty, staff, and administrators have also participated in various other professional development opportunities. In March 2012, staff and administrators attended a tri-campus training in customer service, and 79% of participants felt the training was either "very" or "extremely" effective in promoting the idea of the information's importance to the success of the College. After completing the program, respondents rated the learning objectives:

Table 4.2—Customer Service Survey Results

	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have an increased understanding of the importance of customer service.	14%	65%	11%
I have an increased awareness of the vital behaviors needed to best serve our customers.	14%	68%	11%
I am better able to apply effective customer practices.	22%	65%	8%
I can more confidently address difficult situations.	27%	60%	8%
I gained ideas to better empower our students when offering service.	27%	60%	10%
I gained ideas to create powerful customer service interactions that contribute to the reputation of the College.	19%	65%	14%

Additional trainings are made available on campuses throughout the year. In August 2011, the College reinstituted "All College Day" (4.a.35) meetings before the start of the fall semester. During All College Day, employees are given information about the College, such as new expansion projects and trends in student retention, to help them better stay informed and to inform and educate others. This day of meetings also included an afternoon of professional development workshops covering topics such as mental health issues of students (and how to cope), use of technology in the classroom, ethics, and retirement options. This range of topics serves the varied lifelong learning needs of

employees. Additional trainings have been offered to faculty during Faculty Week meetings in August and January (schedules of these meetings are available in the Resource Room, 4.a.35).

Finally, employees of the College are eligible to use tuition waivers (4.a.33) and educational release time to continue educational pursuits. Employees and their family members can be granted six credit hours of waivers per semester while taking courses at Northern. The College also has arrangements with West Liberty University to award up to six credit hours of tuition waivers through West Liberty. In addition, employees have the opportunity to apply for tuition waivers through West Virginia University. Students of WVU who are also employees at Northern apply through the department housing WVU's program for tuition waivers, and waivers are normally granted for up to six credit hours of instruction. In addition to waivers, Board Rule NC-2001, Educational Release Time, provides that employees may be granted three hours of release time from regular working hours to attend a course. Employees attending courses at other accredited institutions can also be granted travel time, and course time beyond three hours in a work day could be accommodated with special arrangements in the employee's department. The actions of the board and administration support professional development to assist employees in enhancing their skills and knowledge on the job as well as to further their own educational pursuits in lifelong learning at Northern or other in-state accredited institutions. WVNCC shows its commitment to lifelong learning through the development of cooperative agreements. Students at Northern are provided with a general education core of courses designed to round out technical programs and to promote transfer to four-year colleges and universities. A number of 2+2 programs with area colleges have been agreed upon, including West Virginia University, West Liberty University, Bethany College, Wheeling Jesuit University, Franciscan University of Steubenville, and West Virginia University Institute of Technology. Specialized 2+2 programming includes majors in Business, Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Education, Criminal Justice, Psychology, and Social Work. These 2+2 programs allow students to complete the first 60 or more hours of college credit leading to a bachelor's degree, with students first graduating with an associate degree. The school also maintains general agreements with Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, Strayer University, Marshall University, West Virginia University at Parkersburg, and West Virginia Wesleyan College. Northern is committed to helping students connect to lifelong learning beyond their education at the College (4.a.38).

In addition to the specialized 2+2 agreements and general transfer agreements (4.a.39) held by the school, Northern also identifies core coursework transferrable to other in-state institutions. As published in the Catalog, Northern complies with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Core Coursework Transfer Agreement (4.a.40). Students can also transfer other courses specified in degree transfer programs up to 72 hours of credit. Courses in the core agreement are identified in the Catalog with an asterisk in the Core Requirements section. To further assist students in lifelong learning goals continued at other institutions, the College has appointed a Transfer Coordinator who can closely

advise transfer-out students about the credits they can be awarded at other institutions through the transfer process. This individual, along with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, works with institutions on transfer agreements in developing curriculum and identifying programs that would benefit students and the institutions. Furthermore, the Transfer Coordinator organizes an Annual Transfer Fair so students can learn about opportunities for transferring after graduating from Northern.

Northern's board, administration, and faculty have also developed other unique cooperative agreements. For instance, the Power Plant Technology, Associate in Applied Science, degree provides students the opportunity to be trained in power plant technology in partnership with Kanawha Valley Community and Technical College, which developed the program in cooperation with American Electric Power (Catalog 212). Students can complete core coursework through traditional in-class or online instruction and all technical courses are taught through online learning with KVCTC instructors. All courses, including the core, technical, and internship courses, are registered with Northern, and students graduate with an associate degree from Northern. This program is an example of meeting the lifelong learning needs of students interested in growing fields for which training is not available directly on campus. Instead, Northern has identified a quality program at another institution and has worked collaboratively with that institution to provide students with the training they need to apply their learning in the field.

To further represent cooperative agreements that promote lifelong learning and the College mission are those through the Center for Economic and Workforce Development (4.a.41). Occupational Development programs leading to an Associate in Applied Science are coordinated in conjunction with training approved by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Apprenticeship Training. These programs include general education offered by Northern, technical core courses which are taught in classes as part of the apprenticeship program or through college courses, and on-the-job training through the apprenticeship program. Programs that are currently available through this programming include Building and Construction Trades with the Upper Ohio Valley Building and Construction Trades Council AFL-CIO, Child Development Specialist with Northern Panhandle Apprenticeship Council, Firefighters with Wheeling Fire Department Joint Apprenticeship Committee, and Plumbers and Steamfitters with Wheeling Plumbers and Steamfitters Joint Apprenticeship Committee. The primary learning objectives of these programs are listed in the College Catalog (Catalog 289), and each demonstrates a focus on learning skills and knowledge applicable in the workforce and beyond.

Additionally, the Center for Economic and Workforce Development includes workplace skill credential training. In cooperation with local industry, Northern produces the academic support needed for employers who need credentialed workers, but not necessarily an academic degree or certificate. These programs are short-term and focused on the specific skills needed for students to apply successfully in the field. Examples of this include document specialist training for Williams Lea and Orrick, Herrington, and Sutcliffe's Global Operation Center, rig drilling training, and the Pipefitter Helper training program. Students in the document specialist training are taught document formatting

skills, which are needed when working on legal documents for the law firms served by Williams Lea. Rig drilling training was offered in conjunction with Chesapeake Energy on the New Martinsville campus. Students were taught the basics of drilling and then sent to a Chesapeake Energy site in Marshall County for hands-on learning. The pipefitter helper training program creates a large pool of qualified applicants that will help CB&I meet hiring goals for the $500 million Natrium fractionation facility the company is constructing for Dominion Transmission in Marshall County. The program helps trainees potentially secure construction jobs with CB&I if they meet the necessary requirements, and it will provide them with skills they can use to find employment with other companies in the region.

Core Component 4b:

WVNCC demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Evidence:

4.b.1   Board of Governor's Policy on General Education Curriculum

4.a.1   Catalog

4.b.2   Website

4.b.3   Assessment of general education

4.b.4   Assessment Plan

4.b.5   Series 11

4.b.6   Transfer programs

4.b.7   Service Learning

4.b.8   Career services

Northern integrates General Education into all of its programs to develop the attitude and skills requisite for a life of learning in a diverse society.

The philosophical basis of General Education at Northern is captured by the statement of General Education in the College Catalog (4.a.1). "The aim of the general education component is to teach students to: communicate effectively, think clearly and reasonably, make ethical judgments, develop personal values, apply knowledge constructively, and make learning a lifelong commitment. The College is committed to developing resilient, lifelong learners able to function in a complex, technologically sophisticated world." The goals for General Education, updated on September 29, 2008, outline that students should be able to do the following:

- Communicate effectively in oral and written formats
  Students will demonstrate proficiency in communicating through listening, speaking, reading, and writing effectively.

- Demonstrate problem-solving and critical thinking skills
  Students will demonstrate problem-solving and critical thinking skills by observing and reading critically, planning, reflecting, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information and by identifying problems, analyzing and offering solutions or interpretation, and evaluating their effectiveness.

- Employ mathematical and science literacy skills
  Students will demonstrate the ability to utilize and apply mathematical concepts and skills to solve problems and analyze data and will demonstrate the ability to use scientific principles, experimental techniques, and the scientific inquiry and research.

- Employ or utilize information access and literacy skills
  Students will demonstrate the ability to locate, acquire, evaluate, process, manage, utilize, and appropriately cite information using electronic and non-electronic resources.

- Acquire a cultural, artistic, and global perspective
  Students will demonstrate historical, cultural, artistic, and global perspectives by recognizing differences among cultural groups, exploring literature, art, or music,

and understanding the role of diversity in sociological, political, and economic contexts.

- Demonstrate professional and human relations skills
Students will demonstrate principles needed for professional and personal success through self-awareness, self-discipline, accountability, responsibility, health and wellness, and commitment to ethical standards and utilize cooperation, teamwork, effective leadership, and conflict resolution strategies.

Northern also has a Rule for General Education, which can be accessed on the WVNCC website (4.b.1, 4.b.2). It states:

> "Certificate and associate degree programs are central to the mission of the community and technical college. A prescribed curriculum sets academic standards and goals for achievement for students.
>
> Because of its commitment to the total development of the individual, the College requires all students enrolled in academic programs to complete a general education core curriculum..."

The Board policy was passed in March 2011. It required a minimum of 45 credit hours in general education for the Associate in Arts, 30 semester hours for an Associate in Science, 20 credit hours for an Associate in Applied Science, and at least 6 semester hours for a Certificate in Applied Science. With this Rule, Northern was seeking to ensure that students gained an appreciation for various general education areas, including humanities, social science, mathematics, and sciences, so students would be able to apply broader concepts about the world into their daily lives as responsible citizens.

Since the policy's approval, the State of West Virginia passed new code governing the number of credit hours allowed in degree and certificate programs. The Rule came into effect in the 2011-2012 academic year, meaning that the College needed to adjust credit hours in its programs through curriculum approval processes during the academic year. The Series 11 Rule (4.b.5) limited the number of hours for an associate degree to 60 and for a certificate of applied science to 30, with few exceptions. As a result, Northern's programs underwent several changes in curriculum to meet the requirements of this new law. Because career-technical programs need to maintain a strong focus in technical content to prepare students to enter the workforce directly after graduating with an associate or certificate of applied science, departments focused most of the changes in the general education core of their programs. Per the 2012-2013 Catalog (4.a.1), the following changes to general education came into effect by degree type:

- Associate in Arts: minimum of 41 credit hours in general education

- Associate in Science: minimum of 36 credit hours in general education

- Associate in Applied Science: minimum of 15 credit hours in general education

- Certificate in Applied Science: minimum of 6 credit hours of general education (no change)

Core coursework for associate degrees are required from the areas of humanities, social science, laboratory science, and mathematics, while certificates in applied science minimally require core courses in the areas of humanities and mathematics, with additional general education credit hours optional in laboratory science and social science. More details about the Board policy's vision for general education and specific course options and credit hour requirements are available in copies of the Board policy and College Catalog, respectively, both of which are available in the Resource Room. Furthermore, students and members of the public can view program options and requirements on the College's website (under Programs of Study), and General Education Outcomes are available in the Assessment Plan and as a separate document (both are available on the Assessment webpage).

Per the Assessment Plan and Board Policy NC-3006, general education is to undergo a cycle of assessment:

> "During the five year program review cycle, the College shall assess and document that the purpose, intent and goals of the program are consistent with the degree designation and the full complement of general education courses support program learning outcomes. The College also assesses general education and academic courses on a set assessment cycle." (Board Policy NC-3006, General Education Curriculum)

Using the General Education outcomes, faculty complete assessment of general education by measuring two outcomes per year (4.b.3, 4.b.4).

An area in which pass rates and success in sequential courses has been used as a measure to assess student learning is transitional education. Below is a table reflecting WV HEPC Report Card data for 2006 through 2010.

Table 4.3—Pass Rates for Transitional Courses, Source: HEPC Report Card Data, 2006-2010

Pass rate for transitional courses						
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	WV State Average for 2010
English	49.0%	50.8%	63.3%	56.5%	-	51.9%
Math	55.3%	57.6%	56.1%	56.6%	50.0%	48.8%*
Overall Average	58.2%	67.7%	67.3%	65.4%	52.8%	55.8%
					*Exceed State average for math for last 4 years	
Percent of students enrolled in transitional courses passing subsequent college-level course within two years						
English	32.1%	27.5%	32.4%	51.7%	44.6%	41.9%
Math	10.2%	14.4%	17.1%	13.6%	12.6%	18.9%

While WVNCC has exceeded the State average in transitional math pass rates for the four years shown, this is not indicative of students' success in the next math course which is at a college level. This is where innovations like MyMathLab and MyFoundationsLab come into play to address the deficiencies that have been experienced. The College is committed to tracking these students, determining what needs to change, and making those changes for the benefit of the students.

While Northern's programs have shown how general education is imbedded in the curriculum, one area of weakness is that of information literacy. At this time, there is no College-wide information literacy component on all program curricula. The discussion about information literacy began in 2003 with the LRC Committee. Information literacy was also discussed in February 2005 as a requirement for accreditation, such that College Composition I and II would be used as the vehicle for the requirement. In a related sense, the LRC Committee meeting in April 2005 discussed access to the library for distance education students and its effect on accreditation. During the LRC Committee meeting in August 2007, however, it was decided that the issue of information literacy would be best applied to the General Education classes. The March 2008 meeting of the LRC Committee also discussed the formation of information literacy goals. One year later, in the March 2009 General Education Committee meeting, the Library Director, upon request, discussed the need to have an information literacy component present in all classes. Information literacy was also discussed during the April 2009 meeting of the LRC Committee by the Director concerning distance education. In August 2009, the Director met with the division chairs and concluded that information literacy is the purview of General Education classes. In the early part of 2010, a survey regarding information literacy was sent to the faculty. The response to the survey was voluntary and met with a very limited reply. The survey itself has been described as too robust, but further inquiry is warranted. The results of the survey were sent to the General Education committee, but a response was not forthcoming. In February 2012, the Director met with the Liberal Arts Division to discuss information literacy and the implementation of such components into their classes. Currently, there is no official policy statement on information literacy, but it is recommended that the College establish this to further instill the importance of the information literacy outcome. The College recognizes this as an improvement to make in the curriculum to ensure that students are achieving the learning outcomes defined by the school.

At this time, the Compass test implemented at WVNCC does not contain a section to assess computer skills on the Compass test itself. There is a need to include a computer skills assessment on the Compass test in order to properly and efficiently place students in computing courses that will best serve to foster and increase their knowledge of computing. A keyboard assessment, for example, was recently identified and is used for students who have never taken a keyboarding class but who will need keyboarding skills to be successful in the program. In addition, students would be, with the aid of computer literacy assessment, placed in computing classes that further not only their functional knowledge of computing but will also make them more competitive in today's technological workforce.

Northern offers opportunities for lifelong learning that allow students to gain and apply a breadth of knowledge and skills in curricular and non-curricular offerings. Northern promotes a life of learning by offering students who complete an associate degree opportunities to continue on to complete a bachelor degree. WVNCC currently offers 2+2 agreements with Franciscan University, West Liberty University, West Virginia University, and Wheeling Jesuit University. The College also has general agreements with Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, Bethany College, Marshall University, Strayer University, West Virginia University at Parkersburg and West Virginia Wesleyan College. Currently, the College faces challenges in collecting success rates of students as they attend their transferring institutions (4.b.6).

Service learning opportunities also abound at Northern and promote ability for students to gain and apply a breadth of knowledge and skills. More information about service learning (4.b.7) is available in Criterion 4c. WVNCC sponsors a number of academic and non-academic student clubs and organizations, allowing students to broaden their knowledge in ways that are not possible in a traditional classroom setting. Field trips, conferences, and competitions give students the opportunity to learn as well as apply skills and knowledge. Examples include:

- Campus Activities Board for student-planned events
- Community Outreach Opportunity Program (COOP) to provide opportunities for Community Service
- Phi Theta Kappa, an honorary society that focuses on leadership activities
- WVNCC Nurses Association
- Junior American Culinary Federation
- Student Government Association

The Office of Career Planning and Placement (4.b.8) offers students assistance in making career decisions, exploring career options, and conducting job searches. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Individual career advising, including identification of interests, abilities and values;
- Online career assessments through Kuder Journey, which also allow students to review occupational information such as working conditions, job requirements, job growth, and salary information;
- Seminars on career decision-making, selecting a major, resume preparation and interview techniques;
- Mock interviews which allow students to practice and improve interview performances;
- Career and transfer fairs, on-campus recruiting, and a summer job fair;
- Student and alumni access to College Central, a career management system that connects them with employers; and
- Social media and conducting online job searches.

Currently, the College offers practical experiences in all AAS programs: field placement in Human Services and Criminal Justice; internship in Culinary Arts, Business, and Para-legal; practica in Computer Information Technology; and clinicals in Respiratory Care, Surgical Technology, Nursing, Health Information Technology, Radiography, and Medical Assisting. Evidence of this may be found in the Catalog. Additionally, the College offers in-house labs in association with science classes and health science programs.

Core Component 4c:

WVNCC assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Evidence:

Regular academic program reviews include attention to currency and relevance of courses and programs. The most comprehensive strategy used on an ongoing basis to assess programs at WVNCC is program review as defined by the BOG Program Review Rule (http://www.wvncc.edu/about/board-of-governors---rules-approved/680, 4.c.1). All academic programs must be periodically evaluated using this comprehensive review process which involves a self-evaluation and analysis.   Once this process is complete, the program director submits an evaluation report to the Division Chair, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Program Advisory Committee, and, finally, the President and the Board of Governors. Each program must be evaluated at least once within a five-year cycle. Recently, the CTCS distributed a template for program review documents in order to assure they are receiving information in a consistent format from all of the community and technical colleges in the State.

In the past, the data gathering portion of the program review process was sometimes difficult as all data was not as centralized as it could have been. Many duties, such as gathering placement data, have now been transferred to the Institutional Research Department, and thus, the process has been improved by having a central place for program directors to request the needed data. In order to make the process easier, the IR Department works closely with individual program directors to assist in gathering the data that is required for their program reviews. The IR department has also created a

number of reports that give program directors the ability to gather five-year enrollment and graduation trend data using official census data.

Most of the strengths and concerns noted each year as a result of the program review process relate to issues surrounding academic program continuation and/or improvement as determined by student enrollment, graduation, job placement, and advisory committee and employer feedback. The WVNCC Program Review schedule, Program Review Template, and copies of Program Review Reports are on file in the Resource Room (4.c.1. 4.c.2, 4.c.3, 4.c.4).

At times, the changes that result to keep programs current and relevant are informed by other bodies and processes. For instance, the Nursing program underwent changes as a result of suggestions from the NLNAC accrediting body (a copy of the most recent NLNAC self study is available in the physical Resource Room). This resulted in the inclusion of a Certified Nurses Aide requirement for students seeking entry into the Nursing program. The addition of this requirement also allowed curricular changes in the program, for students were now entering the program with skills sets that were covered in CNA training.

The College uses other measures to assure that its programs are current and relevant such as identifying the percentage of degree and certificate completers who are employed or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation. Northern uses a self-report instrument to collect placement data from students (4.c.5). This survey is sent via email to all students who have been provisionally certified to graduate with a window of approximately three months. The table below offers highlights of this data. A challenge that has been faced with the Graduating Student Survey is that the timing is precarious—if surveyed too early, students are not working in their fields; if surveyed too late, response is very poor. So, it is important to note that students are surveyed often before they have found career placement in order for the College to receive a response. To that end, efforts have been made to enhance the connection that students have with WVNCC. One such enhancement is the issuing of a WindowsLive email to all students. This is an email account that students are able to maintain after graduation so that they are able to stay in touch with the College and so that the College may stay in touch with them. Institutional Advancement is working with the President on strategies to increase communication and to establish a stronger connection with alumni.

Table 4.4—2011-2012 Graduating Student Job Placement Highlights

Programs	Degrees	Responses	Reported Employment	% Employment	Reported Pay
Bus. Career St. Accounting	6	5	4	80%	$10.00
Elementary Education 2+2 WLU	19	12	7	58%	$8.00
Hum. Services Early Child Care Ed.	11	7	5	71%	$10.00
Medical Assisting, Adm. Med. Asst.	37	23	12	52%	$12.00
Medical Billing/Coding Specialist	24	14	8	57%	$9.50
Nursing	49	27	14	52%	$9.40
Highlighted Programs	146	88	50	62%	$9.82

Degrees and Responses are duplicated numbers due to graduates obtaining multiple degrees.

Curricular evaluation involves alumni, employers, and other external constituents who understand the relationship among the courses of study, the currency of the curriculum, and the utility of the knowledge and skills gained. WVNCC recognizes the need for input from the businesses, health facilities, and public entities to ensure its programs meet the needs of its students and the communities it serves. To ensure the programs that the College offers are aligned with what is needed for students, the community, and local employers, the College utilizes Advisory Committees for technical programs (4.c.6). Advisory Committees function to advise and assist in assessing occupational manpower needs; understanding trends that could influence program development; reviewing curricula to ensure their relevancy; and placing interns, cooperative education students, and graduates. While the College does not guarantee placement to its students, the relationship built through these advisory committees and practica serves to benefit completers.

In conjunction with the program's advisory committee, external accrediting agencies (as applicable), and employers, each program is to select the learning outcomes to measure each year. Faculty then use multiple measures to assess student learning, and these measures include pre- and post-tests, external tests (i.e., CIT certification exams), common questions on final exams, and portfolios to measure course success. Program success is also assessed through measures that can include success in sequential courses, capstone course experience in programs with a capstone component, portfolios, and graduating student surveys. Measures are divided by student type—transfer student

and occupational student. Measures used to assess learning for transfer students include graduation rates and transfer rates. Occupational student measures include graduation rates, licensure certification, job placement, and employer satisfaction. Job placement and employer satisfaction have been challenging measures to implement as this requires voluntary reporting from students and employers after graduation. These measures are defined in the Assessment Plan, which is available in the Resource Room (4.b.3, 4.b.4).

The Division of Business and Technology has five Advisory Committees: Computer Information Technology, Business Studies, Culinary Arts, Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating Technology, Appliance Repair, and Paralegal. The Liberal Arts Division has two Advisory Committees: Human Services and Criminal Justice and the Division of Health and Science have six Advisory Committees that include Surgical Technology, Respiratory Care, Nursing, Medical Assisting, Health Information Technology, and Radiography. These committees are composed of program directors, faculty members, current and former students, business partners, and community experts. Some committee members are directly involved in the hiring process at their individual companies, and many have hired graduates or provided internships for current students.

Advisory committees meet in person annually, to evaluate curriculum, discuss the needs of the local workforce, and incorporate new ideas into the program. In 2010, the Health Information Technology advisory committee recommended that the students be required to purchase a RHIT Review book and it is now a requirement for HIT 263. Since then, it has made students aware of the topics covered in the course early on in the program; therefore, the students are more prepared.

The Culinary Arts Advisory Committee's members are regional industry professionals and many are involved in the hiring process. The committee felt that the students needed to be trained in line cooking to meet the needs of the local businesses. As a result, when the Education Center was remodeled, committee input recommended a three kitchen approach to training culinary students – skills kitchen, production (line) kitchen, and bakeshop, which is what exists today.

Recently there were major changes in the State with the passing of Series 11 (4.b.5) that made a requirement of 30 credit hours for certificate programs and 60 for associates. This change has made the use of advisory committees that much more important. During academic year 2011-2012, the institutional Curriculum Committee reviewed, made recommendations, and approved changes to nearly every program the College offers.

In addition to advisory committees, WVNCC uses other measures to ensure that students gain the skills and knowledge they need to function in diverse local, national, and global societies. WVNCC regularly reviews the passage rates on licensure and certification exams and uses these to assess whether or not students in the respective programs are gaining the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. As a State requirement, WVNCC must report these licensure passage rates for WVNCC graduates to the WV HEPC on an annual basis (4.c.7, 4.c.8).

Table 4.5—Certification/Licensure Pass Rates 2012

Program	Number Tested	Number Passed	Pass Rate
CIT (programs combined)	23	11	47.8
Paralegal	12	5	41.67
Refrigeration, Heating, and Air Conditioning, AAS	7	5	71.43
Executive Adm. Assistant, AAS	1	0	0
Culinary Arts, AAS	11	10	90.91
Accounting, AAS	8	4	50
Nursing, AAS	54	54	100
Respiratory, AAS	33	17	51.52
Med Assist, CP	40	39	97.5
Medical Billing and Coding, CP	28	21	75
Clinical Medical Assisting, AAS	8	6	75
Surgical Technology, AAS	9	5	55.56
Totals	234	177	75.64

The College is particularly interested in the percentage of students in Nursing and the health-related fields who pass their licensure and certification exams. WVNCC Nursing students have consistently performed well on the Nursing Council Licensure Examination. According to the WV Board of Nursing, Northern Nursing students have achieved scores on the licensure examination that have exceeded both the State and national averages for eight of the past nine years (http://www.wvrnboard.com/images/2011%20 NCLEX%20RN%20PASS%20RATES.pdf, 4.c.8).

Annually, WVNCC is one of ten other community colleges that reports licensure pass rate data to the WV Higher Education Policy Commission for inclusion in their Annual Report Card. In fiscal year 2011 the pass rate for the State in Nursing was 87.8 percent, compared to 87.4 percent nationwide. WVNCC's Nursing pass was over 92.5 percent in 2011 and was 100 percent in 2012. A copy of this performance report is available in the Resource Room (4.c.7, 4.c.8).

One way the College measures the effectiveness of its transfer programs is by comparing how well WVNCC students perform at four-year institutions compared to native students. They have consistently performed well on this measure. Transfer student success information is available in the Resource Room (4.c.9). Transfer data from the State can be problematic because only in-state, public institution transfer is tracked. Due to

Northern's border location, the College's transfer rate is markedly underreported since data from all receiving institutions is not available. The table below shows how many students have transferred to four-year institutions from 2005 to 2009.

Table 4.6—WVNCC Students Entering a Baccalaureate Institution

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
122	110	116	119	139

WVNCC provides curricular and co-curricular opportunities that promote lifelong learning and social responsibility. WVNCC offers students the opportunity to participate in curricular and co-curricular events on and off of its campuses. These opportunities promote lifelong learning and social responsibility. Students can participate in activities ranging from clubs and organizations to service projects to educational conferences on leadership.

WVNCC students have a tremendous opportunity to engage in activities that utilize what they are learning in the classroom with hands-on application of theory (4.b.7). One example of this would be the annual Health and Wellness fair. Each year, Northern hosts this event on the Wheeling campus and opens the College's doors to the community. Not only does Northern have outside vendors come to provide free health screenings, but the College also has its students in the Nursing, Respiratory Care, Radiography, and Surgical Technology programs conducting screenings and distributing information to the College community and the public. This exposure to the public in a hands-on, practical way provides students with the experience of applying their work to the real world. Before they even graduate, students in these health care programs are given the opportunity to apply their knowledge to real-life situations, requiring that they are able to access that knowledge on the spot and use critical thinking and problem solving skills to answer questions related to their fields.

Our Student Government Association (SGA) (4.c.10) is another extremely active group on campus. Students involved in SGA have the opportunity not only to represent the entire student body but to also explore various areas of leadership and the different roles that come with being a leader. SGA is responsible for being the student voice on campus. SGA officers are elected during the month of April and then are required to attend a mandatory training in July. Students serving as an officer are to be knowledgeable of WVNCC policies and procedures, and are responsible for channeling student's questions and concerns, as well as assisting with the promotion and implementation of student activity events. Every year, the SGA has the opportunity to participate in a State-wide student leadership conference. Students learn about everything from diversity to legal policies, and there is student representation from SGA on every standing College committee. WVNCC students also serve on institutional and State-wide committees ranging from the Board of Governors to the State Advisory Council of Students. Every February, SGA members from each campus attend Higher Education Day (4.c.14) at the State capital with at least one advisor. Students have the opportunity to meet

legislators from the State, tour the State capital building, and interact with other student leaders from across the State. Being involved in such a leadership role, in many ways, mimics the roles students will play in the community and workforce. Students learn how to represent their own views and incorporate them in the context of the greater good while working with individuals with diverse viewpoints. Working for the common good of the student body prepares students to learn how to apply these skills beyond college throughout their lives. In 2008, SGA adopted the then College-used tagline, "Changing Lives; Engaging the Community" for their use as, "Changing Lives. Engaging the Community. Building Leaders."

Another area that WVNCC students are heavily involved in is community service. In fact, Northern's community service efforts have earned national recognition, as, for several years, Northern has been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, for which Northern was the only two-year institution in the State awarded this honor in 2011 (4.c.18). WVNCC is a member of West Virginia Campus Compact. Campus Compact is a State community service organization comprised of various four- and two-year institutions throughout the State. The College has two students that sit on the campus compact advisory board. Internally, the institution has a student organization called the Community Outreach Opportunity Program (COOP) (4.c.13). This student group participates in community events ranging from the United Way Day of Caring to the American Cancer Society Relay for Life events to blood drives hosted on Northern's campuses. Along with service learning, certain academic programs require students to participate in community service. Along with other volunteers, the Student Nurses Association makes tremendous contributions to the Military Mail Call program. Northern also has had its club basketball team and coaches participate in a youth basketball clinic for the past two years held during the summer (4.c.11). Students and coaches take their time to teach underprivileged youth the basic fundamental skills of basketball, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. As one can see, there are many areas and ways that WVNCC students contribute to the local community. Similar to how the leadership opportunity through SGA contributes to lifelong learning, community service again teaches students, in the college context, how to contribute to the community and the importance of doing so. Students can then reflect on these experiences and incorporate what they learn from them into their goals, learning, and practical use in life beyond college.

Often, students who do not possess sound financial resources feel that they have nothing to contribute to the community. Community service provides an opportunity for all students to give of their time and knowledge, regardless of socioeconomic status, in service to others. Social learning through the College in activities like the summer day camp, Kids on Campus, "Booze, Cruise, You Lose," Relay for Life, and Military Mail Call also teach students the importance of lifelong learning and applicability of lessons learned. Since 2006, the College has offered the week-long Kids on Campus summer camp for area children. Northern's own students assist with the camp by watching over children during activities, assisting with events during the week, and helping staff organize the materials and activities for the week. This program fosters a life of learn-

ing in the students who assist, and the program also encourages a life of learning in the children who participate, for during the week, they engage in various programs that are meant to encourage teaching and learning in areas such as math, science, and nutrition. For instance, an animal expert presents the students with various animal life and teaches them proper care and safety as well as the origin and other relevant information about the animals. Children also participate in crafts workshops and learn the basics of sign language, just to name a few learning opportunities. Drunken driving awareness events have been held since 2008. The "Booze, Cruise, You Lose" program was offered in 2009 and 2010 to engage high school students in the importance of not drinking and driving. The program includes crash, emergency response, and trial simulations to expose them to the seriousness of such reckless behavior and the process for due justice when such a crime is committed. After trial simulation, which includes a mock sentencing, students are allowed to ask questions about the program and process. This program is a prime example of how Northern seeks to foster lifelong social responsibility, as does the Relay for Life program. Relay for Life is held in each county in which Northern resides, so students in Wheeling, Weirton, and New Martinsville have the opportunity to participate. Through Relay, students learn the importance of fundraising in supporting the efforts of a foundation like the American Cancer Society. Northern's participation contributes to the community and helps to spread learning about cancer awareness to the population at large. Northern students, faculty, and staff are so enthusiastic about Relay for Life and the idea of cancer awareness that their tent at the overnight event has won a best tent award for the past six years, most recently for best cancer control theme. Additionally, each year Northern excels in its participation in Military Mail Call. Through this program, students, faculty, and staff write letters to military service personnel each holiday season. Students have written anywhere from 15,000 to as many as 18,000 letters to service personnel during the Christmas season. For 17 consecutive years, the efforts of Northern's letter writers have earned the College the first-place award among the nation's colleges and universities from Fan Mail for Our Troops for the number of letters sent nationally and abroad.

Students at Northern also engage in lifelong learning in curricular and co-curricular programs through clinical experiences in health care programs; the Green Initiative, Friends dinner, special luncheons, internships, and more in the Culinary Program; the Nursing Association; hands-on classes, such as in the Criminal Justice program; and Phi Theta Kappa. Through clinical experience, students in the Nursing, Respiratory Care, Radiography, Surgical Technology, Medical Assisting, and Health Information Technology programs learn the skills and practical application of knowledge that they will later use in the workforce. Training through these experiences also helps students gain an appreciation for a continuous life of learning as methodologies change and are taught on the job, just as they are taught through classroom experiences. The Culinary Arts program and Junior American Culinary Federation (ACF) group (4.c.16) also teach students social responsibility and practical application of skills they will use throughout their lives as private citizens and employees. The Green Initiative engages students in efforts to conserve food and waste, produce their own food supply with a garden, and recycle materials to use in the classes and labs. The department has a composter that students

use to recycle waste of all kinds, and recycle bins are placed on the Wheeling campus to collect plastic containers. Not only is this a socially responsible practice for the College community—this also fosters in students an appreciation for decreasing their carbon footprints, personally and professionally. Culinary students also partake in lifelong learning through the practical experiences of the program. Each year, the Wheeling campus hosts the Friends of the College dinner. Culinary students provide food preparation and dining service for this event. Similarly, each semester, the department holds a series of luncheons and dinners as a part of the curriculum in a number of courses, prepared and served by students in the program.

The Student Nurses Association (4.c.17) teaches students to appreciate and engage in lifelong learning as students gain leadership skills in officer positions in the organization and service learning opportunities as members of the organization. Many of Northern's programs incorporate hands-on practices for students so they can think and engage in learning in a practical way that will serve them over the course of their lives. For instance, the Criminal Justice program in Weirton incorporates crime scene simulations to help students learn methods of examining evidence at a crime scene. This practice is featured on the website. Finally, Phi Theta Kappa (4.c.15) engages students in co-curricular lifelong learning by allowing students to adopt leadership roles as organizational officers and by requiring participation in volunteer activities, such as the Better World Books Book Drive.

Other co-curricular programs that foster social responsibility and lifelong learning opportunities include diversity programming. For instance, October is Disabilities Awareness Month, and the Support Services for Students with Disabilities Office coordinates activities to teach students and members of the community about disabilities and an appreciation for the capabilities of disabled individuals. First, all three campuses host the Disabilities Barbeque, where students and employees can enjoy food provided by the office and gather materials to learn about disabilities such as visual impairments, mobility challenges, and various learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. The Support Services office also hosts Deaf Movie Night, featuring a film inspired and created by students in the deaf community. Special events programs are also offered to feature an individual with a disability with a special talent. In years past, the school has hosted a blind magician, a speaker with Aspberger's, and a wheelchair-bound comedian and motivational speaker. Another diversity co-curricular program offered was the New Faces in America play. The play was featured on the Wheeling campus in spring 2011. The one-woman show included a combination of acts exploring the lives of diverse characters found across America, including individuals of Hispanic, African-American, and Appalachian cultures, as well as a disabled veteran. Other diversity programs have included events for Black History Month, which in previous years was hosted by Northern every other February, and Women in History features, which have included a live history performance of a World War II nurse. While Northern's geographic location may lack diversity, efforts to expose students to diversity to foster a lifelong appreciation of individuals of different races and backgrounds lives within the institution and its values.

Core Component 4d:

WVNCC provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Evidence:

WVNCC follows explicit policies and procedures to ensure ethical conduct in its research and instructional activities. Northern expects and requires the ethical treatment of individuals and intellectual property and enforces these expectations through its policies and practices. Board policies that specifically address ethical standards are the Academic Integrity and Student Responsibilities Rule (NC-3001), Harassment and Discrimination Policy Rule (NC-2024), and the Student Code of Conduct Rule (NC-4009).   Student Code of Conduct is made available to students through the College Catalog, Student Handbook, and the College website on the Board of Governors Rules—Approved page (http://www.wvncc.edu/about/board-of-governors---rules-approved) (4.a.1, 4.b.3, 4.d.1, 4.a.4, 4.d.2).

The Academic Integrity and Student Responsibilities Rule, effective since December 6, 2005, addresses academic honesty. Through this policy, the College enforces the idea that students are responsible for their own academic work and behavior; instances of cheating and plagiarism could results in various forms of disciplinary action, ranging from failing grades to dismissal (NC 3001). Plagiarism is also defined as "using someone else's ideas without giving credit to that person in an appropriate citation or using someone else's words without placing them in quotation marks and/or without identifying that person in an appropriate citation." Likewise, cheating is also defined:

> "Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such practices as receiving test answers from or giving test answers to another student, submitting another student's work as one's own work (unless permitted to do so as a result of a joint assignment), stealing tests or test items, or using notes when not permitted." (Academic Integrity and Student Responsiblities Rule, NC-3001)

The harassment and discrimination Rule addresses ethical behavior in the education and employment setting. The policy states that "it is illegal to discriminate against anyone because of race, sex, religious creed, national origin, age (above 40), veteran's status, or

disability," and harassment is identified as a form of discrimination. Key terms to define types of harassment and discrimination as well as standards used are also incorporated in the policy. Furthermore, the policy outlines for students and employees best practices to reduce the risk of engaging in such behavior, what to do if one is accused of harassment, what victims should do, and what witnesses of such behavior should do; the process for reporting a complaint; investigation of complaints; training expectations; and the coordinator for enforcing this Rule.

Student Code of Conduct is another important policy in practicing ethical treatment of individuals and intellectual property. The current Student Code of Conduct Rule became effective in October 2006. The code expresses a desire of the College to foster independence and maturity in its academic programs and adopts a "zero tolerance" of infractions. The policy defines disciplinary sanctions and behavioral conduct with maximum sanctions. Furthermore, the policy outlines the disciplinary procedures for behavioral misconduct, including reporting and reviewing charges and reporting a decision (with timeframes), and the appeal procedure for behavioral misconduct. This policy is available on Northern's website and in full in the Student Handbook available on the Current Students links of WVNCC's webpage. Copies of the policy and handbook are available in the Resource Room (4.d.1, 4.a.4, 4.b.3, 4.d.2, 4.d.3).

In addition to the BOG Rules-Approved page, Catalog, Handbook, and website, many faculty also provide information about academic integrity, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment, and Student Code of Conduct on their syllabi. Per responses on the Faculty/Staff Self Study Survey, employees are instructed and instruct others in responsible use of copyright material in various ways. Many protect against plagiarism by including statements on their syllabi or in classroom lecture and activities. One respondent in the survey stated, "I spend an entire class discussing plagiarism and personal ethics." Others refer to the program and Student Handbook to teach students what plagiarism is.

In addition, English 101, College Composition, courses participate in library training for appropriately conducting research. Instructors in the course teach students appropriate forms of citing copyrighted materials. In English 90, Writing Skills, students are introduced to appropriate forms of paraphrasing and summarizing text written by another source. In Speech 105, proper citations are required as part of student outlines for speeches (4.a.24). WVNCC creates, disseminates, and enforces clear policies on practices involving intellectual property rights. Faculty, staff, and students are required to comply with the Copyright Act of 1976 and its amendments, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), and the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act, all of which cover the guidelines for appropriate use of material created by other individuals. In general, United States government publications, except those of the US Postal Service and materials published in the U.S. before 1923, are not covered by Copyright Law (check the inside cover page for a copyright notice). Northern expects its employees to comply with these intellectual property, copyright, and fair use guidelines.

Per BOG policies (4.d.4) on Academic Integrity and Student Code of Conduct, as well as Information Technology usage Rules outlined in the Student Handbook (4.d.3) and Library/LRC guidelines, illegal copies or sharing of copyrighted software, movies, or music may not be made or used on equipment owned by the College. Employees and students who disregard these Board policies and College practices do so at their own risk and assume all liability for their actions. The Library/Learning Resource Center provides Computer Usage Guidelines to the public, which is also available on the College website. This set of guidelines refers to acceptable use of the internet, prohibits users from using the internet for illegal activities (examples are provided), and requires that users respect the legal protection provided by copyright law. Currently, the College is in the process of reviewing a proposed Rule for internet usage. The College has recently moved to a single sign-on portal for students making it mandatory for students to enter their credentials, student ID and password, in order to access any College computer or wireless device (even those owned by students seeking wireless access on campus). This is one way in which students are taking responsibility for their actions regarding internet use.

The Student Handbook includes the section "Use of Information Technology Resources." This section of the Handbook provides reminders of appropriate use of IT (4.d.5). Students are prohibited from using file sharing programs, seeking to access records within or outside of the College's computer and communication facilities for which the student is not authorized, intentionally introducing malware, viruses or Trojans, or violating any Federal, State, and local laws, including copyright law.

In order to assure that the library complies with the requirements of the Copyright Law of the United States, LRC staff has access to copyright information in the Rules, Procedures, and Guidelines manual. Staff refer all copyright questions to the Director of Libraries. A copyright warning is posted above all LRC copiers. Reserve materials are also approved by the Director in most cases. Northern does not have electronic reserve.

The College is very clear as to what it expects from students in regards to intellectual property rights. As per the Academic Integrity and Student Responsibility Rule, the following acts of academic dishonesty are stated: cheating and plagiarism. The Student Handbook outlines the Student Code of Conduct Rule, which states that students who violate the student conduct code will have appropriate sanction(s) imposed. The Code and Student Handbook includes the disciplinary guidelines and appeals procedures.

Students are expected to do coursework honestly in accordance with the stated requirements of the class. Course outlines usually contain a reference to the Student Code of Conduct, according to several responses from the Faculty/Staff Self Study Survey. Additionally, according to this survey, some faculty use software to protect against plagiarism. Examples are SafeAssign and Turnitin, which are programs that require students to submit work that is then checked for plagiarism. Acceptable limits, often between 6 and 12 percent, are set by instructors as common phrases are sometimes counted as plagiarized when they are actually not. Assignments are submitted to instructors through

these programs so that the instructor can also see the percentage detected. Most use a simple Google search to detect plagiarism.

CONCLUSION

WVNCC shows its commitment to lifelong learning through programs that serve members of its communities. The words "For All Who Wish to Learn" can be found on all three campuses. This motto, prominently displayed over the main entrances of College buildings, sums up the dedication to lifelong learning. The College offers a variety of programs and services for students of all ages, all designed to promote lifelong learning and an interest in the academic world.

Northern is a community of learners. The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administration, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning. The College has a faculty dedicated to lifelong learning, creativity, analytical inquiry, and global social responsibility; an administration that is rooted in the area communities; dedicated staff members who take great pride in the customer service they provide, and a supportive partnership with the Board of Governors. The College is making the transition from teaching to learning, allowing students to stretch their wings and create meaning for themselves with the guidance of dedicated faculty, staff, and administration.

In addition to the focus on learning, students, faculty, staff, and administration feel a sense of responsibility to the community. The faculty and staff make every effort to encourage and provide opportunities for students to practice social responsibility and to use knowledge responsibly in the classroom and in their community. The College promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students and demonstrates that the College's graduates have been prepared for a lifetime of learning.

Strengths

- WVNCC values a life of learning, as evidenced by board policies and procedures, articulation agreements with other institutions of higher education, the variety of programs offered by the College to meet the needs of its diverse constituents, and the support for the professional development of the board, faculty, administration, and staff.

- The College demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs through the variety of programs and courses offered. The solid general education core provides a broad base upon which students can build in pursuit of their academic and life goals. Student organizations provide experience in being both good leaders and good followers while helping students to leverage theory into practical experience while being mindful of the community in which they live, work, and learn.

- Northern assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society through the utilization of strong program advisory committees, and State- and institution-level review and assessment of programs and courses. Student organizations are guided by faculty advisors who serve as models of personal and professional behavior within different fields. Consistent exposure to and interaction with diverse people and situations allows

for a diverse mindset and encourages students to not only think of, but also to seek to understand others and the thoughts and opinions of others.

- WVNCC provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly through support services and education of students, faculty, staff, and administration. Rules, policies, and procedures addressing the responsible use of knowledge are in place and accessible to students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community.

Challenges

- WVNCC currently has a gap in information literacy outcomes. Students are learning how to select, evaluate, and utilize information; however, there is no existing matrix of outcomes and courses that provide opportunities for practice of information literacy skills. It is believed that students are having some success with information literacy, but there are no metrics in place to measure that success.

- As with other institutions of higher education, the College is increasing its technology integration. With this comes the need to assess the technology (specifically computer) skills of students in order to establish what students need to learn to be prepared for some coursework. There is currently no assessment in place to determine students' level of skill regarding the use of computers and technology.

- Northern is currently experiencing a lack of clarity regarding intellectual property rights. There are different views in existence among the constituencies yet no Rule or administrative procedure upon which to base decisions.

Future Direction

- The College will continue to participate in assessment activities including State-level program review and institutional level course, program, and department assessment in order to evaluate outcomes and modify them as needed to improve student learning.

- WVNCC will revisit information literacy and work toward the establishment of outcomes and placement of those outcomes within the General Education Matrix.

- The institution will continue to work on a way to accurately assess the technology skills of new students. Additionally, remediation will be designed and implemented as needed.

- Northern will explore the intellectual property rights rules of peer institutions and use the information to create a Rule that applies specifically to this institution.

Chapter Five

Criterion 5

CRITERION 5:
ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE

As called for by its mission, WVNCC identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

INTRODUCTION

In part, the College's mission statement declares: "The College responds to the educational, cultural and civic needs of the communities it serves by offering an accessible, safe, diverse, and high-quality learning environment." This chapter addresses how, specifically, WVNCC pursues the objectives set forth in this statement.

With three campuses that serve six counties in the Northern Panhandle, WVNCC engages its constituencies by offering a wide range of academic, Continuing Education, and workforce related resources to Northern's students and members of the communities it serves. Northern continually monitors the needs of these constituencies so that the College may provide services that they value. WVNCC has developed the capability necessary to accomplish these objectives while also recognizing the need to constantly engage with these constituencies to better understand their needs and adjust College services accordingly. WVNCC's commitment to meet these needs has always been unwavering. It is why WVNCC is here.

Northern has identified five constituent groups around which efforts and resources are allocated:

- Students comprise Northern's largest constituent group and include students that are pursuing certificate and associate degrees, students attending for specific courses only, and transient students that attend to take a course that will transfer back to their host institutions.

- Transfer students are considered to be a separate constituent group that will move on to four-year institutions or other programs after completing their basic coursework with WVNCC.

- Northern's local public school systems are an important constituent group for which the College provides Early Entrance classes to juniors and seniors at local high schools. Northern also welcomes campus visits for this constituent group, from grade school to high school students. Also, located on the Wheeling campus is the Northern Early Entrance Middle College program, a cooperative program that provides at-risk high school students the opportunity for improving their scholastic performance in a nurturing, non-threatening environment.

- Another vitally important group is the communities the College serves through Community and Continuing Education classes and workforce programs, as well as by making College facilities available for use by groups and organizations. Included in this group are the many employers who hire WVNCC graduates and students and who also contribute to program planning and development.

- The final, but no less important, group is the governmental and political constituents whose relationships to the institution are vital for Northern's ongoing success and achievement of future plans.

Core Component 5a:

WVNCC learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

Evidence:

5.a.1   Environmental scanning for strategic planning with employers for new programs and Workforce initiatives

5.a.2   Office of Development Study

5.a.4   Strategic Plan

5.a.5   Self Study Survey showing employee involvement in communities

5.a.6   WV State Report Card

5.a.7   Community and Technical College System

5.a.8   Higher Education Policy Commission

5.a.9   Involvement in State Committees and activities

5.a.10   Program Advisory Committees

5.a.11   Small Business Development Center

5.a.12   SPOKES program

5.a.13   High School Early Entrance classes

5.a.14   Facility usage for community organizations

WVNCC learns from its constituencies through periodic environmental scanning, meetings, surveys, and memberships in a variety of community organizations and businesses to understand the changing needs of its constituencies and their communities. Before offering new programs, Northern uses environmental scanning to determine the job outlook for the area. Since, per a November 2011 study (5.a.2), 63% of Northern students remain in the areas of West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania most commonly served by Northern, it is important that the College considers the job outlook for prospective new programs to be offered. For instance, before the College developed and began offering its Medical Assisting programs, the school collected input from employers to determine the need for medical assistants in the area (5.a.1). In addition, the College has used environmental scanning among employers for developing Workforce programs. Northern listens to what employers tell the College they most need, and then the College creates the programming to serve those needs after assessing its capacity to offer training. For instance, the College gathered input on the needs for pipefitter helper training, in which WVNCC collaborated with CB&I (Chicago Bridge and Iron) and Dominion (5.a.1). After determining the employers' needs for skills, Northern coordinated a training program leading to a certification for participants. Another example of Northern's use of environmental scanning is in the development of the Strategic Plan (5.a.4). The Strategic Plan committee had access to the WV State Report Card (5.a.6) to help the College create goals and objectives that was supported by the data in that State Report. More information about the Strategic Planning process is available in Criterion 2.

College administrators, staff, and faculty are actively involved with a wide range of community and civic organizations. Results from WVNCC's 2011 Self Study Survey (5.a.5)

show that 42.4% of personnel are actively involved with community-based organizations. The list (5.a.5) is extensive and includes well-known as well as location-specific organizations. From the same survey, 37.1% of College personnel have volunteered for specific community events on behalf of WVNCC (5.a.5). Many of these events are annual and include:

- Relay for Life – all campuses
- Golf Scramble – which has raised more than $25,000 each of the past three years
- United Way Day of Caring
- Friends of the College events, including the fall Friends dinner
- Christmas parades
- Chili Fest
- Italian Festival
- Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours
- MLK Day breakfast served to local children
- Children's parties for Halloween, Christmas, and Easter

College faculty and staff meet with local high schools and county education administrators concerning offering Early Entrance college classes in their schools, allowing WVNCC to understand their needs and analyze the College's ability to serve them. Throughout Northern's service area, the College provides Early Entrance classes, typically taught by high school faculty, which allow students to earn college credit while still in high school (5.a.13).

A recent example of an interaction with high schools was the dialogue that Northern sponsored between high school math faculty and Northern's developmental math faculty. The intent of this meeting was for all faculty to better understand the problem with low math competency that is seen in graduating high school students. With more than 70% (WV 2011 Report Card, 5.a.6) of entering students needing a developmental class, WVNCC faculty wanted to better understand the math education process in high schools, while the high school faculty were able to better understand the problem that underprepared students have in beginning college.

Through involvement in community events, as well as through continual interaction with the businesses in the area, WVNCC actively seeks opportunities that allow the College to provide programs and training to meet very specific needs of its constituents. While this process has been ongoing since the College's inception, several recent examples will illustrate the institution's dedication to providing needed services and to truly being an integral part of Northern's communities.

- In response to the legalization of table gaming in West Virginia, WVNCC, through the Economic and Workforce Development Office, developed and delivered programming to provide a variety of courses for potential employees of the two resorts/casinos in Northern's service area. This was indeed a joint effort that involved funding from the WV Community and Technical College System (CTCS),

table gaming equipment supplied by the casinos, and WVNCC administration of the training program.

- In response to the dramatic expansion of the natural gas industry, WVNCC responded by providing entry-level training for gas rig workers. Rig Deckhand classes have been offered that provide the basic safety training required for potential employees. These classes were organized and provided by WVNCC but were indeed a joint effort that included faculty from Pierpont Community and Technical College and funding provided by the local Chamber of Commerce and the Regional Economic Development Partnership. Thanks to the funding provided, these courses were free to the students.

- Another program that resulted from the gas industry expansion is a joint program among WVNCC, Dominion, and CBI. In response to CBI's need for trained pipefitter assistant workers for the $500 million facility being constructed for Dominion, WVNCC developed and delivered a six-week course, on the Wheeling and New Martinsville campuses, to meet this need. Funding for the program was provided by the WVCTCS' Advance grant program, which assists WV community colleges to rapidly respond to workforce training needs.

- Current multi-million dollar expansions of the Wheeling and Weirton campuses are directed towards meeting the identified needs for expanded workforce development options. Details of these efforts and the partnerships needed to make them happen follow below.

The Community and Technical College System (CTCS) (5.a.7) of West Virginia represents the administrative body responsible for the ten community colleges in West Virginia. It provides policy directives, procedural guidelines, and financial resources to WVNCC. The CTCS provides strategic initiatives to all WV community colleges as they pertain to graduation rates, education costs, and training. It strives to provide high-quality workforce development programs and increase the college-going rate in West Virginia. WVNCC looks to the CTCS for these strategic initiatives as a way in which to develop processes and procedures that support the completion of these initiatives. The Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) (5.a.8) focuses its attention on four-year institutions, but WVNCC does look to the HEPC for State-issued mandates pertaining to funding, procurement, regulations, laws, and operating efficiencies. Both of these organizations oversee State-wide committees, activities, and events. WVNCC understands the importance of these organizations and is an active participant. Some of these include (a more detailed list is available in the resource room , 5.a.9):

- Member of State Compact

- Coordinating member of WV Student Leadership Academy

- WV Association for College Registrars and Admissions Officers (WV ACRAO) (as well as the national organization, AACRAO)

- Senior Student Affairs Officer Advisory Committee

- Campus Safety and Security Conference (leadership role)

- Financial Aid Accessibility Task Force (chair)

- CTCS Master Plan Committee

- State Financial Aid Advisory Board chair

- College Goal Sunday (host site)

- State-wide Developmental Education Task Force
- WV Data Policy Advisory Committee
- WV Association of Developmental Education (multiple offices/multiple years)

Another way in which WVNCC learns from its constituencies about their needs is through Advisory Committees. WVNCC operates an Advisory Committee system to help improve and enhance the quality of the College's programs and services for students and the employers of Northern's service area. These committees function to advise and assist in assessing occupational manpower needs, help understand trends that could influence program development, review curricula to ensure their relevancy, and identify internship opportunities. There are currently thirteen advisory committees that address the academic areas of Business Studies, Computer Information Technology, Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts, Health Information Technology, Human Services (3), Medical Assisting, Nursing, Industrial Maintenance Technology, Respiratory Care, and Surgical Technology (5.a.10).

Located on the Wheeling campus, while providing services to all campuses, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) operates to help individuals start, grow, and maintain small businesses in Northern's area. The SBDC provides expert coaching and needed services at every stage of business development: market identification, business plan development, financial statement preparation and analysis, cash-flow preparation and analysis, and identification of funding sources (5.a.11).

Each campus previously hosted a SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) program (5.a.12). This academic and job preparation skills program is a joint effort of the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, and Department of Health and Human Resources. The intent of the program is to provide assessment, a repeating cycle of modules related to job readiness, work process skills, technology skills, work-related academics, and vocational training in customer service.

WVNCC is committed to serving the many communities of its service area and to work to ensure that it has the capacity required to engage these communities. One important component of having the capacity is the availability of campus facilities, such as rooms and technology resources for constituents, to be able to hold events and meetings (5.a.14). It is a WVNCC priority to make its facilities available to any organization or individual that has need for such facilities. Typically, there is a fee charged for room rental and technology support. In the case of non-profit organizations, this fee is typically waived, which encourages the use of College facilities and results in many people visiting and using Northern's campuses that otherwise might not. Providing access to College facilities is an important way for Northern to increase the amount of interaction with its communities. The following table shows the extent of usage of WVNCC facilities:

Table 5.1—Facilities Usage by Academic Year, Source: Banner

Year	Sessions	Headcount	Contact Hours
2007-08	282	4661	1408
2008-09	312	4828	1283
2009-10	338	4752	1323

Core Component 5b:

WVNCC has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Evidence:

5.b.1   Strategic Plan
5.b.2   Student Activities and departmental events
5.b.3   Martin Luther King Day of Service
5.b.4   CTC Food Drive Challenge
5.b.5   Secret Santa Program
5.b.6   Green Initiative
5.b.7   WVNCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund
5.b.8   Distance Education enrollment
5.b.9   Friends of the College
5.b.10   Service learning opportunities and internships
5.b.11   Leadership Programs

Northern's mission and vision include a commitment to service, and resources are allocated to service activities, as evidenced in the College's Strategic Plan (5.b.1). (For more discussion about the planning process and resource allocation, refer to Criterion 2.) The Office of Student Activities offers a variety of events and other areas of interest for students to attend, and to become involved in during their time at WVNCC. Examples include the Student Government Association (SGA), Campus Activities Board (CAB), recreational and intramural sports, the Community Outreach Opportunity Program (COOP), and student clubs and organizations. There are many events offered on all campuses each semester for student engagement. Some examples include:

- Fall Luau and Discovery Fair

- Tri-campus Scavenger Hunt

- Blood drives

- Chicken Fest

- Heart-to-Heart Walk

- Military Mail Call

- Disabilities Awareness programming

- Job Fairs

- Career and Transfer Fair

- Secret Santa program

- Thanksgiving Feast

- Student Christmas Parties

- Black History Month events

- Mardi Gras celebration

- Children's Halloween, Christmas, and Easter parties
- Women's History Month programming
- Fall and spring barbeques
- Kids on Campus summer camp

A recent highlight of student activities engagement in the community is the Martin Luther King Day of Service hosted by Northern (5.b.3). For example, on the Wheeling campus in 2010, WVNCC organized a drive to benefit the Greater Wheeling Homeless Coalition as well as hosting a children's breakfast, lunch, and a guest speaker. The day began with a children's breakfast for underprivileged youth. Students, faculty, staff, and other community members served well over one hundred children. The children's breakfast has been a part of MLK Day events for several years. During the 2010 year, Northern decided to work with the Greater Homeless Coalition of Wheeling to provide them with necessities for the cold winter months and for everyday needs. WVNCC asked local churches as well as neighboring Wheeling Jesuit University and West Liberty University to be a collection site for these items. On MLK Day, WVNCC had assistance from a local elementary school, a Girl Scout troop, and a local women's organization to sort, label, and box up the items. Some of the elementary school children made Valentine's Day care packages and cards for the homeless. Once everything was organized, the Greater Wheeling Homeless Coalition arrived to take the items to their facilities to distribute. The day concluded with a lunch for the volunteers and a guest speaker who is a leader in the local community. The speaker talked about the works of Dr. King and what his impact has had on people's lives today. The speaker also answered questions from the elementary and high school students. Northern was very pleased with the day's events as well as the impact it had on the local community. For the event, 25 students participated, working 100 service hours, and 12 faculty and staff participated, also working 100 service hours. It is estimated that 800 individuals were served by this effort. This project is just one specific example of how Northern engaged various constituents—from employees to students to other colleges to community service agencies to local youth.

In an effort to further engage communities, including on a larger, State-wide scale, three years ago Northern asked other community colleges from the state to participate in some friendly competition that would benefit local communities. Each year, from the first of November until the week of Thanksgiving, Northern and (usually) three other community colleges in the State compete to collect the most canned food or non-perishable food items. Students, faculty, and staff donate to this competition. All items are donated to the Greater Wheeling Soup Kitchen. This assistance comes at a critical time of the year when, typically, local food pantries are struggling to remain stocked. Although Northern placed second to Blue Ridge CTC for the past two years, the College has successfully donated anywhere from 200-250 items to the local food pantry (5.b.4).

For years West Virginia Northern has participated in some type of program offering assistance to families during the holiday season. A few years ago, WVNCC noticed that

many of its own students were asking for assistance during the holiday season at local charities. At that time, Northern decided to provide assistance to students by beginning the Secret Santa program (5.b.5). This program is for students who need help providing gifts for their children during the Christmas season. Students fill out applications and provide the Office of Student Activities with information about clothing sizes and toys that their children would like for Christmas. Given that most students are financial aid eligible, the College does not do any additional screening for this project. Tags are then placed on a Christmas tree in the College's busiest areas. Tags are taken by students, faculty, staff, Board members, and even community members. On average, the College provides gifts to over 230 children throughout the three campuses. All of them are children of Northern students—students trying to balance the struggle of family, education, and work. Students are always extremely appreciative for the much-needed assistance, and WVNCC is more than happy to assist students during what could very well be a stressful time for them and their families. This program allows the College to engage its communities of students, employees, and the general public in an altruistic way within the means of the College. This program also provides value by adding to the public good, for Northern is serving those in financial need.

In addition, Northern promotes public good and community engagement in other ways. As a direct result of student initiatives and local restaurants' interests, WVNCC, in 2010, began a Green Initiative on the Wheeling campus (5.b.6). The intent was to highlight sustainable practices and to help educate students and the community regarding locally grown produce. Donations by local farmers, students, faculty, the WVNCC Foundation, Elizabeth Stifel Kline Foundation, and individuals from the community made the project possible. The program has evolved from being a recycling program to also cultivating a Culinary Arts garden to additionally acquiring a compost machine. Produce from the garden is routinely used in the Culinary Arts kitchens. This represents an excellent example of a student-inspired idea becoming a beneficial reality.

Another example of the College responding to student needs is the WVNCC Foundation's Emergency Grant Fund (5.b.7). This fund was established for students who have an unforeseen financial emergency, which would otherwise prevent them from continuing in school. Students fill out a form available online for funds that will help them through an unexpected life event. More information is available in Component 4a.

WVNCC offers a wide variety of traditional classes across its three campuses. The number of sections and class enrollments fluctuate as a function of overall College enrollment. However, there is one area where the trend in both sections and class enrollment has consistently increased in recent years. The College made the decision to increase its online course offerings beginning in fall 2007, and this decision has allowed the College to increase engagement with students in the online community. At this time an instructional designer and distance education coordinator was added whose mission was to increase online course offerings. The number of course sections for non-continuing or community education increased by 330.95% from the 2007-2008 school year to the 2010-2011 school year. Section offerings for degree-seeking courses increased from 42 sections to 181

over this period. Course enrollment numbers increased even more dramatically with a 421.66% increase from the 2007-2008 school year to the 2010-2011 school year. Below is a table that shows student enrollment and section count, with increases, in distance education courses, excluding Continuing Education and Community Education courses:

Table 5.2—Distance Education (Campus 4) Courses (CE/CD Excluded)

School Year	Student Enrollment	Section Count	Headcount 3-year Increase	Section Percentage Increase	From School Year to School Year
0708	637	42	NA	NA	NA
0809	1,833	116	188%	176%	0708 to 0809
0910	2,522	145	296%	245%	0708 to 0910
1011	3,323	181	422%	331%	0708 to 1011

This calculation uses live Banner Data and is accurate as of 11/21/12. Section Count equals the Campus 4 (Distance Education) courses marked as "open" in Banner. Student enrollment includes the total number of students enrolled in each section. This is a duplicated count. Students count one time for each online course they are enrolled in.

Another example of the College's ability to expand its program offerings to take advantage of technology assets is the use of remote course delivery options. Historically the College has offered several courses each semester via electronic or video means. Courses that might be cancelled due to low enrollment on the New Martinsville or Weirton campuses are made available to all campuses in specially equipped classrooms that utilize video conferencing technology. This idea has been expanded to include offering some Early Entrance classes to remote high schools while the instructor is based on a WVNCC campus. This allows an Early Entrance class to be offered that otherwise would not be due to a lack of faculty at the high school. In essence this option allows students to take Early Entrance courses that would not be available otherwise. Technology resources allow Northern to expand its capacity and prove its commitment to engage its constituents.

One of the advantages of making the College's facilities available to its constituents, as discussed earlier, is that this practice invariably brings groups to the campuses that might otherwise never visit and would not know about the College and its programs. For example, the Lunch and Learn programs, sponsored by a local law firm, bring a wide variety of individuals to the Wheeling campus. Similarly, the Lunch 'n' Lecture programs of the New Martinsville campus bring many people that are new to the campus. There are many other examples, such as the following:

- The Wetzel County Chamber of Commerce holds its monthly Board of Directors meeting on the New Martinsville campus. Several members of that board have subsequently brought other groups to campus to use Northern's facilities. Most recently, a Wind Symphony was visiting the city and needed a place to hold a reception after its performance. A member of the Wetzel Chamber of Commerce Board asked to use the College's facilities, and Northern provided the appropriate space and support personnel.

- The Ohio County Relay for Life executive committee has hosted its kickoff and other meetings on the Wheeling campus to plan for the event and involve College members. In fact, for several years, Northern's Wheeling campus has coordinated a team to participate in this event. Furthermore, WVNCC employees have served on the executive planning committee.

- In March 2012, Northern's Wheeling campus hosted Title IX training to college personnel across the state. This was coordinated through Northern's Title IX Coordinator and Chief Human Resource Officer.

- Every fall, Northern hosts the High School Guidance Counselors workshop. Counselors from high schools across the counties Northern serves, as well as occasional participants from Ohio, attend this training each November so that Northern's Financial Aid staff and a representative from the HEPC can train counselors and others on financial aid updates. Other colleges in the area, including Wheeling Jesuit University, partner with Northern to host this event.

- Each campus of WVNCC hosts regular blood drives with the Red Cross and the Central Blood Bank.

- The annual fall Resource Fairs also engage constituents, including students and community members. Each campus hosts a Resource Fair to spread awareness of service agencies in the communities served by Northern.

- Northern also hosts Job Fairs across the campuses in the fall and spring and coordinates the spring Transfer and Career Fair, which brings various four-year colleges and employers onto the Wheeling campus to build awareness of transfer options among students and community members.

The Friends of the College (FOC) (5.b.9) is a community-based organization comprising interested individuals representing business, industry, education, and community service sectors. Each campus has a Friends of the College group. Due to the unique nature of each campus, the FOC groups develop and deliver their programs and activities to match local needs. These groups work to support projects that will assist and improve their respective campus and its students. Events held include the annual dinner for the Wheeling campus, membership drives, special theme dinners, and general fundraising events. All proceeds provide for student assistance in the form of scholarships or other needed aid.

Service learning programs and internships (5.b.10) are also incorporated into the educational experience of Northern students to enhance engagement of students with the community. WVNCC's Culinary Arts program participates in service learning opportunities for its students. For instance, student members of the Junior American Culinary Federation (Junior ACF) have volunteered to serve at the Martin Luther King Day Breakfast and Day of Service. Additionally, Junior ACF members volunteer at the Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, preparing and serving food to children and others who participate in the event. In a similar vein, Junior ACF members have also served for Big Brothers, Big Sisters. In Human Services, students volunteer for community Sleep Outs, which are events to promote awareness of homelessness and to fundraise for homeless coalitions. These volunteer experiences allow students to practice skills they learn in their majors while providing a service that engages the community. In addition to these co-curricular experiences that enhance student involvement in the community,

internships provide another opportunity for students to learn skills important to their field while also engaging the community. For example, the following table indicates the number of internships held by students in Human Services and Early Childhood Care and Education, Criminal Justice, and Sign Language programs from 2009-2012:

Table 5.3—Sample of Internships by Program in Liberal Arts Division

Program	Total Internships
Human Services & Early Childhood Care and Education	34
Criminal Justice	34
Sign Language	3

Like Service Learning programs, internships provide students an opportunity to learn more about their chosen occupations while also engaging the community of employers for whom they are working (5.b.10).

WVNCC is proud to be part of three very special leadership programs – Leadership WV (LWV), Leadership Wheeling, and Leadership Weirton (5.b.11). The LWV program selects fifty individuals from all around West Virginia each year to take part in an eight-session, eight-month program that visits sites around the State. There is a special theme for each session, and these include topics such as energy, tourism, health care, economic development, education, and the judicial system. WVNCC has had two administrators selected for this program in the past four years. Leadership Wheeling is a similar program that is based in the Wheeling area, and Leadership Weirton follows the same model in the Weirton area. Participants take part in a variety of trainings regarding the local business environment. WVNCC has had six participants in Leadership Wheeling in the past ten years (a list of attendees is available in the resource room , 5.b.11); the College has also had three representatives from the Weirton campus participate in Leadership Weirton . These programs provide selected employees the opportunity to interact and engage with people from a wide range of life and work experiences.

Northern engages internal and external communities in other ways as well. Each spring, Northern hosts the Benefit Fair for public employees. State employees can come to the Wheeling campus to meet with representatives of various benefit providers. Students engage with external constituents as well. For instance, three representatives of Phi Theta Kappa attended an organizational meeting of the honorary society in Cincinnati in fall 2012. Students participated in discussion with Phi Theta Kappa members and leaders from other community colleges and engaged in the dance competition hosted during the meeting.

Additionally, Northern connects to its constituents through cultural engagements. For instance, the annual Upper Ohio Valley Italian Festival includes special participation from Northern employees and students. Leading up to the event, the Culinary Arts Depart-

ment offers a series of features on Italian Cuisine broadcast on local television stations. Furthermore, staff and students participate by working in the Little Italy section of the festival. Students and Culinary Arts instructors help prepare and serve food to the public throughout the weekend. In addition, a Northern student just served as an intern for the Italian Festival planners, helping to prepare marketing materials for the event (5.b.10).

Another example of cultural diversity events are those hosted in honor of Disabilities Awareness Month (October) (5.b.2). In 2011, the College invited a wheelchair-bound comedian and inspirational speaker to the Wheeling campus. In 2012, Northern hosted the Dancing Wheels Company, which includes dancers both with disabilities and without disabilities. Support Services for Students with Disabilities has also participated in and invited other groups to campus to spread awareness about disabilities and to form partnerships. The Student Disabilities Coordinator is a Lions Club member and often advocates for assistive services and technology through involvement with this group. Furthermore, as a member, the Coordinator also volunteers for Lions Club events on a regular basis. Support Services has also hosted visits from other college representatives, such as Mountwest CTC, to explore and learn from WVNCC's services, as well as other organizations, like The Arc, an organization that promotes the human rights of individuals with disabilities and helps them be active participants in communities throughout their lives, to create mutually beneficial partnerships.

Northern's Student Activities Office has also offered events to engage Northern's constituents in and out of the organization. For instance, in October 2010 and 2011, Northern hosted a Fall Concert on the Wheeling campus. In honor of Women's History Month, Northern has hosted grant-funded theatrical programs that highlight women in history on all campuses. These events are open to the public at no cost. The children's parties at Easter, Halloween, and Christmas invite students and employees to bring their children on campus to engage the youth and offer entertaining and educational activities for families. For several years, the office has also coordinated the summer camp Kids on Campus. This camp is also open to the communities served and allows the chance to bring young people to campus for week-long events focused on educational and cultural enrichment as well as entertainment. All of these examples further support the assertion that Northern has the capacity and commitment to engage students, employees, community members, the youth, and many others.
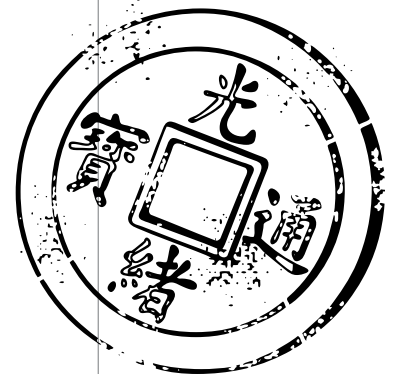
Core Component 5c:

WVNCC demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on its service.

Evidence:

  5.c.1 2+2 Articulation Options

  5.c.2 EDGE Program

  5.c.3 Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts hosted degrees

  5.c.4 Middle College

  5.c.5 WVNCC Foundation

  5.c.6 WV State Report Card

  5.c.7 Title III Grant for developmental education

  5.c.8 Center for Economic and Workforce Development

  5.c.9 Small Business Development Center

  5.c.10 Center for Excellence in Workforce Education

  5.c.11 Workforce partnerships

WVNCC offers several programs for its students that engage other education partners. These programs include 2+2 articulation agreements, Early Entrance courses offered at high schools, and the EDGE program.

Students who complete an associate degree have many opportunities to continue on to complete a bachelors degree. Currently there are twenty majors available through articulation agreements between WVNCC and four-year institutions (5.c.1). The institutions include Franciscan University, West Liberty University, West Virginia University, and Wheeling Jesuit University. The specific degree programs available include:

- Accounting/Business Administration

- Business Administration

- Business Studies/Business Administration

- Computer Information Systems Specialization

- Computer Information Technology

- Criminal Justice

- Early Childhood Education

- Elementary Education

- Mental Health and Human Services

- Psychology

- Psychology with Social Work

- Respiratory Therapy

- Social Work

- Teacher Education, Pre-Secondary, English Concentration

- Teacher Education, Specialization in Social Studies

All of Northern's 2+2 programs are listed in the College Catalog and on the website (5.c.1). To transfer credit from Northern, students without holds on their accounts can request an official transcript through Northern On the Web, a letter submitted by facsimile or postal mail, or a Transcript Request Form available on each campus. The first transcript is free; each additional request costs $5, with additional fees for faxing or expediting transcript delivery.

WVNCC provides the EDGE (Earn a Degree, Graduate Early) program (5.c.2) in the College's service area. EDGE is a State-wide community college initiative that recognizes specific high school classes for free community college credit. More than seventy classes are recognized by WVNCC for credit. These classes are typically in the career-technical tract and can be applied to a certificate or associate degree program. Data on the number of students reporting EDGE credit has shown a decline since 2007 (table available in the resource room, 5.c.2). This may be because students are not reporting EDGE credits to Northern, they may be attending other colleges, or they may be delaying entry to college. Furthermore, governmental funding for career technical programs had declined and then been eliminated in recent years. Thus, fewer high school students may be taking advantage of programs with tighter resources in the high schools. Even so, over the past three years (since the 2009-2010 year through the 2011-2012 year), EDGE programs within the high schools have enrolled 7,043 students (or 2,348 students per year) in Northern's service area, a significant amount of enrollment demonstrating how the program has responded to the needs of high school students in receiving technical education (5.c.2).

To further solidify the connection between EDGE and college credit, Northern has developed a Northern Panhandle EDGE District Consortium with several high school representatives, College representatives, career-technical/EDGE recruiters, and a part-time coordinator. This group meets multiple times throughout the year to receive updates, discuss programs, and devise ideas focused on EDGE, College 101, and Career Technical education. The EDGE recruiters and coordinator also conduct campus visits and financial aid sessions. On a yearly basis, Northern's campuses host visits to approximately 39 groups, reaching nearly 780 students, as well as 130 individual student visits through the EDGE and career-technical programs in the high school each year. The consortium also coordinates 45 Senior Success sessions in the high schools and career centers for over 1000 students to assist EDGE students in connecting EDGE credits to community colleges. Financial aid sessions, with about 11 visits per year, serve 451 students; high school guidance counselors are also engaged through the High School Counselors Financial Aid Workshop, which is hosted on the Wheeling campus each fall with over 50 guidance counselors and college representatives in attendance (5.c.2).

Each of the campuses coordinates and offers Early Entrance classes for local high school students. These classes are college-level courses typically taught by qualified high school faculty in their schools. The program allows juniors and seniors to obtain college-level credits while still in high school. The number and specific courses offered differs depending on the campus and local schools' needs. Early Entrance students pay a reduced

credit hour rate for these classes. Early Entrance is further discussed in Component 5a and Criterion 4.

In addition to opportunities for high school students, select four-year institutions offer bachelor and master degree completion programs on WVNCC campuses from time to time. In previous years, Mountain State University had offered its Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership (all campuses) and its Master of Arts in Strategic Leadership (Weirton and New Martinsville campuses). This type of opportunity offers not only Northern students the option of continuing their education locally, but it also provides an opportunity for people from the community to come to a local WVNCC campus to obtain a higher degree. Wheeling Jesuit University and West Liberty University, for the current school year, plan to offer Bachelor of Arts programs on the New Martinsville campus. West Virginia University has also held classes for Extended Learning Programs on WVNCC's campuses (5.c.3). By partnering with these institutions, WVNCC aids its students and provides opportunities for those in surrounding communities (5.c.3).

In 2009, WVNCC received grant funding for $275,000 to develop and create a Middle College on the Wheeling campus (5.c.4). The Middle College concept targets high school students who have the potential for academic success but perform at a higher level only in a student-centered environment. To provide a student-centered environment, the program moves them to a college site that enhances self-esteem and encourages students to attend, to achieve academic success, and to pursue career goals that would have been challenging, if not improbable, in a high school environment. The Middle College at WVNCC is the only one in West Virginia. The program began with twenty-eight students. At the end of the first year, these students had reduced their absenteeism from 761 absences during the previous year at their high schools to 295 for their first year of Middle College. This group of students had an average GPA of 1.89 at their high schools and an average GPA of 2.4 after their year at WVNCC. Collectively, they earned 83 college credit hours. The program will expand to the Weirton campus in January 2013 as a result of additional grant funding. This program is also discussed in Components 2a and 4a.

WVNCC further demonstrates responsiveness to constituencies through activities of the WVNCC Foundation (5.c.5). The WVNCC Foundation exists to seek, receive, and manage private funds to increase the College's capabilities in the areas of institutional development, professional development, capital facilities and equipment, and financial assistance to students. As discussed in Criterion 2, the Foundation operates independently of the College and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. From 2007 through 2010, donations to the Foundation increased 473% to a total of $1,478,540 in 2010. The number of donors, during the same period, increased 157%, indicating that more donors were donating larger amounts. The increase in new, first-time donors was 187%. All are indicative of a growing, prospering foundation. Funds were distributed for these uses in 2010:

- Culinary Arts Green Initiative
- Several scholarships

- Kids on Campus program

- Middle College Early Entrance High School

- Governing Boards Capacity Building

- Disabilities program

- Allied Health program

- Workforce Training programs

- "Booze, Cruise, You'll Lose" event

- Developmental Education Boot Camp

- Social Justice Initiatives

One of the most challenging problems for new students is the need to take developmental classes before they can begin taking college-level classes. According to the State Report Card, over 70% of new, first-time WVNCC students are required to take a developmental class, or classes, before they can progress to a level of college-ready competency (5.c.6). In order to help reduce the number of students that need these courses as well as to increase success rates, the College responded to this demonstrated student need by applying for and receiving a Title III "Strengthening Institutions" Grant, for $1.5 million over five years. The program began in the fall of 2011 and has provided for additional developmental education faculty, additional tutoring services, a new counselor devoted exclusively to developmental students, increased capacity for academic support services, increasing tutoring center program associates (coordinators) to full-time, and added professional development for staff and faculty (including adjuncts). Equipment dollars are invested in expanding web-based math classes on all campuses and student tracking and alerting software. There also is now a software-based test preparation program aimed at reducing the number of students that test into developmental education classes (5.c.7).

The Center for Economic and Workforce Development at WVNCC (5.c.8) contributes to economic development for the service area by enhancing the regional workforce through training, continuing education and consulting for individuals and employers. Using a team approach within the Center and a reliance on partnerships with external groups, the Economic and Workforce Development Center responds to the needs of individuals, employers, communities, and economic development agencies with a flexible learning methodology that allows for customized solutions to meet the training and education needs of WVNCC's constituents. The Center addresses workforce development needs of the emerging, existing, entrepreneurial, and transitional workforces through specific programs in continuing education, technical education partnerships, the Small Business Development Center, and customized training. In addition, the Center is responsible for the College's flexible degree programs. There are several components that make up the Center:

- Small businesses are the cornerstone of economic growth in West Virginia. The West Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) (5.c.9) helps individuals

start, grow, and maintain small businesses in the state. Details regarding the SBDC were provided in component 5a, above.

- The Center for Excellence in Workplace Education (CEWE) (5.c.10) is a unique workforce delivery mechanism for the Northern Panhandle formed through a partnership with WVNCC and local manufacturing companies. CEWE provides tri-state area companies with customized, flexible training programs and services, such as the following:

    o Instructor-led classroom training

    o Computer-based, multimedia training

    o Individualized, one-on-one training

    o Distance learning, through teleconferencing, multimedia or the internet

    o Facilitated team training

CEWE has access to many capable skilled trades and professional development trainers with an average of 20-plus years of experience. It has access to the many resources and experiences of an educational institution that has been providing practical instruction to people of this region for dozens of years. In addition, new, future-reaching training technologies are constantly being developed. These evolving resources, combined with a unique, customer-focused approach to training, has created a synergy that enables WVNCC to provide a positive, dynamic training resource to companies and institutions in the area.

- WVNCC offers community education courses and seminars for personal enrichment, cultural interests and educational pursuits. Community education offerings are arranged on each campus to meet local needs. Courses are short-term and noncredit.

- WVNCC's Continuing Education programs help individuals upgrade their job skills, enhance their professional development, and explore their personal interests, plus the program assists employers in improving the quality of their workforces. A variety of classes, workshops and seminars are designed to help individuals stay current in their fields, to acquire certification or credentialing for career advancement, or to meet licensing requirements. WVNCC can provide customized courses and programs for employers to meet the needs of their specific workplace. Continuing Education programs strive to meet the community's needs for life-long learning.

- In order to enhance Northern's ability to provide online training to individuals and businesses, WVNCC has partnered with the ACT (American College Testing) Corporation to form an ACT Center at the College. Through the Center, individuals can access over 2,500 course modules in Adult Literacy/Employability Skills; Computers and Information Technology; English as a Second Language (ESL); Industrial Technology and Safety Skills; Management, Leadership, and Small Business Operation; and Professional and Personal Development. For employers, Northern can enhance the value of computer-based instruction by offering a variety of supporting activities. The ACT Center makes training available any time, any place, at any pace.

- WVNCC offers courses through the 'ed2go' system. There are hundreds of engaging online courses for adults, covering every topic from anatomy to web design.

- WVNCC offers a Continuing Education online medical transcription training program that is a fully integrated, comprehensive, independent study course. The purpose of the course is to provide training for the workplace. The course is a

comprehensive program designed specifically to train individuals for entry-level employment as medical transcriptionists.

- WVNCC offers a Paramedic Technology program that provides didactic training in advanced life support aspects of emergency pre-hospital care and includes Divisions I, II, III, IV, V, and VI of the National Standard Curriculum for EMT-Paramedics by the Department of Transportation.

The key to the success of the Center for Workforce Development rests on the number and quality of the partnerships that exist between WVNCC and businesses and organizations in the area. These partnerships run the gamut from a specific, short-term arrangement for a particular class to ongoing relationships that have existed for years. Examples of some of these partnerships include the following:

- Northern Panhandle Workforce Investment Board to provide service through the WorkForce West Virginia Career Center,

- Mountaineer and Wheeling Island for table gaming training,

- Arcelor Mittal Steel Corporation to develop the Steelworker of the Future program,

- Pipefitter Helper training with CB&I and Dominion (started in spring 2012),

- Partnership with the oil and gas industry, Pierpont Community and Technical College, and the CTCS to develop a program in Petroleum Technology to address needs in Marcellus shale gas development,

- Partnership with Weirton Medical Center to provide an LPN to RN program for laid-off nurses,

- Partnership with several long-term care facilities to provide sanitation training for food handlers, and

- Partnerships with all local K-12 school systems in Tyler, Wetzel, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke and Hancock counties, with regards to the EDGE program.

The list of Workforce partnerships is available in the resource room (5.c.11). Participation in Workforce programs has been strong for the last ten years and further indicates the College's responsiveness to constituents who depend on it for service. Below is a table that highlights enrollment in total Workforce programs since the 2001-2002 school year:

Table 5.4—Workforce Enrollment Summary

Year	Number Sessions	Headcount	Person-Hours
2001-02	NR	1855	35,558
2002-03	NR	1987	48,663
2003-04	NR	1625	42,427
2004-05	281	2014	66,928
2005-06	327	2215	80,046
2006-07	292	2683	130,281

Year	Number Sessions	Headcount	Person-Hours
2007-08	560	4258	199,279
2008-09	312	2864	147,880
2009-10	354	3151	96,076
2010-11	369	3666	75,295
2011-12	NR	3499	114,274

Since the 2001-2002 school year, headcount in Workforce programs has nearly doubled, showing the growing need for workforce training in the College's communities and Northern's ability to respond to those needs.

Thanks to bond fund financing made available through the CTCS, WVNCC has been able to meet the immediate needs of its constituents, particularly students and industry. First, a $1.05 million expansion of classroom space at the Weirton campus was completed early in 2012. This expansion provided an additional 9,590 square feet of facility space that includes two classrooms, two laboratories, for health science classes, and a laboratory for the new Mechatronics program, which will provide an Associate in Applied Science degree designed to prepare individuals to be electrical and mechanical maintenance technicians. This new program resulted from an ongoing partnership with Arcelor Mittal Steel Corporation and is an excellent example of how WVNCC strives to meet the needs of its constituents.

Another expansion, financed similarly by bond funds for $2.1 million, allows for needed expansion on the Wheeling campus. These funds provide for the purchase of and renovation to two buildings adjacent to the B&O building. This expansion will allow the Refrigeration, Heating, and Air Conditioning, table gaming, and select Workforce staff to move to the new building. The second building will be used by Barnes and Noble to move their bookstore from the B&O building to the newly renovated building, and will include a student center on the second floor. These additions and renovations display the College's response to workforce needs and the necessity of expanding training facilities to enhance opportunities for students.

Core Component 5d:

Internal and external constituencies value the services WVNCC provides.

Evidence:

5.d.1   Fall Satisfaction Survey

5.d.2   CCSSE

5.d.3   Community Self Study Survey, mailing, and press release

5.d.4   Graduating Student Survey

5.d.5   Student Self Study Survey

5.d.6   CB&I, Dominion, and Northern Partnership

5.d.7   Table games training

5.d.8   Displaced workers program

5.d.9   Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B) class

5.d.10   Employment by the College

5.d.11   Philanthropic efforts

5.d.12   Fitness centers partnerships

5.d.13   Foundation Teaching and Learning Grants

5.d.14   Foundation scholarships

5.d.15   Scholarships awarded by other agencies to students

5.d.16   Paragon Award

5.d.17   Presidential Volunteer Service Award

5.d.18   Institutional Advancement/Foundation Office Report

Northern uses various measures to assess its value to its constituencies. One of those ways is through the Fall Satisfaction Survey, which was most recently completed in fall 2011. Students were asked, "Has your college experience met your expectations?" Overall, students felt that their expectations were met or exceeded expectations:

Table 5.5—"Has your college experience met your expectations?" Responses, Source: Fall Satisfaction Survey

Survey participants were also asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the institution.

Answer Response	Response Percent
About what I expected	38.3%
Better than I expected	31.0%
Much better than I expected	18.5%
Total	87.7%

Below represents the responses to the survey item, "Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience at WVNCC."

Table 5.6—"Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience at WVNCC." Responses, Source: Fall Satisfaction Survey

Answer Response	Response Percent
Very Satisfied	39.3%
Satisfied	47.6%
Dissatisfied	9.3%
Very Dissatisfied	3.8%
Total	100%

Another item on this survey asked, "If you had to do it over again, would you enroll at WVNCC?" In response, 60.6% of respondents answered "definitely yes and only 6% answered "definitely not."

As these survey results show, students are highly satisfied with their experience at Northern, and this supports the claim that internal constituents value the College's services. The 2011 Fall Satisfaction Survey is available in the resource room (5.d.1).

Another way in which Northern measures its value to its constituents is through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). In a summary of the data collected from the CCSSE for recent cohorts (see Summary of CCSSE Data for WVNCC for 2005 Cohort, 2008 Cohort, and 2011 Cohort for WVNCC in resource room, 5.d.2), students answered questions related to satisfaction with services as well as the overall college experience. The table below represents examples of satisfaction with services using the WVNCC mean, the 2011 Cohort mean, and the mean for WV Community and Technical Colleges:

Table 5.7—CCSSE Summary Data

Survey Item:	WVNCC Mean	2011 Cohort Mean	WV CTCs Mean
13.2 How satisfied are you with the services?			
Academic advising/ planning	2.29	2.23	2.24
Peer or other tutoring	2.37	2.18	2.16
Financial aid advising	2.48	2.23	2.26
Transfer credit assistance	2.28	2.07	2.08
Services for people with disabilities	2.17	2.03	2.05

Survey Item:	WVNCC Mean	2011 Cohort Mean	WV CTCs Mean
13.3 How important are the services to you?			
Academic advising/ planning	2.59	2.55	2.59
Peer or other tutoring	2.24	2.14	2.13
Financial aid advising	2.7	2.46	2.54
Transfer credit assistance	2.24	2.24	2.18
Services for people with disabilities	2.11	2.05	2.09

In the above examples, Northern meets or, in most cases, exceeds the cohort and WV CTCs means. By assessing the value of WVNCC's services, the College can recognize those services that are meeting the needs of College constituents and those that need improvement. Northern meets the requirement of Criterion Five by offering services that are both important to students and with which they are satisfied.

In spring 2012, Northern also conducted a survey among the communities it serves (5.d.3). Overall, the survey had a low response rate despite being available for a significant period of time as well as efforts to promote participation, which included a postcard mailing (available in the resource room, 5.d.3), press release (available in the resource room , http://www.wvncc.edu/news/reaccreditation-feedback-sought/1673, 5.d.3), and direct solicitation with community members visiting the College for meetings, trainings, and the like. Survey items included those asking for feedback about satisfaction with the website, facilities, and services provided by the College. The table below highlights some of the findings for various survey items (the complete Community Self Study Survey is available in the resource room, 5.d.3).

Table 5.8—Community Survey Results Regarding WVNCC Website

Survey Item	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Does Not Apply
Level of Satisfaction concerning WVNCC's new webpage:						
Navigation	5.5%	1.8%	5.5%	16.7%	61.2%	9.3%
Ease of Use	5.5%	5.5%	7.4%	12.9%	59.4%	9.3%
Usability	7.4%	0.0%	9.3%	12.9%	59.4%	11.0%
Reliability	3.7%	0.0%	11.0%	14.8%	53.8%	16.7%

Table 5.9—Community Survey Results Regarding Customer Service to Students

How would you rate the customer service we provide to our students?	
Answer Response	Response Percent
Very Poor	0.0%
Poor	0.0%
Good	24.6%
Very Good	56.1%
N/A	12.3%
Total	100.0%

Table 5.10—Community Survey Results Regarding Customer Service to Community

How would you rate the customer service we provide to the community?	
Answer Response	Response Percent
Very Poor	0.0%
Poor	0.0%
Fair	3.5%
Good	19.3%
Very Good	75.4%
N/A	1.8%
Total	100.0%

Comments from community members reflect a high level of satisfaction with the institution's services, just as is supported by survey response data. Comments included, "Always open and interested in partnering," and, "When I meet people at job fairs and meetings they are always very nice, polite, and informative."

The Community Self Study Survey also asked respondents if they were aware of the credit and non-credit courses offered at reduced or no cost to the communities the College serves. An overwhelming majority (93%) answered that they were aware of these programs, and one person commented, "The relatively low cost of WVNCC makes it one of the most attractive options for financially strapped students." Furthermore, when asked if respondents had used Northern's facilities for non-credit courses, 100% of respondents replied that facilities were of use to them and met their expectations. Regarding whether respondents felt that the College was important to have in the communities they serve, 93% felt that the College is "very important" to have in the communities they serve, and the remaining 7% felt the College is "somewhat important" to this end. Finally, when asked if they support the College mission, 100% of respondents responded "yes" (5.d.3). The facts that community members are so well aware of the College's course offerings, facilities were useful and met expectations, the College is viewed as an important part of the community, and the mission is unanimously sup-

ported by respondents illustrate the value that they place in Northern's services. Had Northern not offered valuable programs to the community, respondents would not have responded as being so aware of these services. Surveys like these help Northern stay in tune with the level of awareness and satisfaction that internal and external constituents have with College services.

The Graduating Student Survey (5.d.4) is another tool the school uses to gather feedback from constituents—namely, Northern graduates. WVNCC's Institutional Research Office collects data on the total number of graduates receiving a degree (available within the Institutional Warehouse) and information reported by survey participants, including employment and pay. This data allows Northern to identify programs that appear to lead to employment for all, most, or few of WVNCC's graduates. This suggests the level of value that these programs have to the College's students. For instance, in the 2011-2012 Graduating Student Survey, 51% of graduates reported being employed on a full- or part-time status at the time before or of graduation, with 40% of those reporting full-time employment declaring that their jobs were related to their majors (compared to 63% of those reporting part-time employment declaring that employment related to their program at Northern). Because this survey was completed in a time period falling before graduation through a time shortly after graduation, it is not surprising that only a small majority reported having employment and that the percentage of those in occupations related to their majors represented smaller percentages than would be expected of graduates. However, these statistics may highlight the need for further promotion of Career Services programming that assists students in job searching and securing employment. These efforts have been rejuvenated since the 2011-2012 school year, and continued assessment of Graduating Student Survey data can correlate to the success of career programming with job attainment in students' majors. Furthermore, continuous implementation of this instrument will allow Northern to better identify if academic programs lead effectively to employment, thus correlating to the value that these programs offer. Additional data from this survey displays top employers for students in the communities served, suggesting the positive contributions and the inherent value of Northern to particular employers. The summary report, comments, and job placement reports from the 2011-2012 Graduating Student Survey are available in the resource room (5.d.4).

Another tool Northern has used to measure its value to its constituents is the Student Self Study Survey, administered in the spring 2012 semester (full survey results are available in the resource room , 5.d.5). On this survey, students were asked about their satisfaction with and participation in services. While participation in some services, like Student Activities events, was somewhat low (37.6% of respondents replied that they participated in an event sponsored by Student Activities), the satisfaction with various aspects of the events is overwhelmingly positive:

Table 5.11—Student Satisfaction with Services, Source: Student Self Study Survey

Answer Options	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Not Applicable
The number of events held on your campus	11.9%	61.8%	26.3%
The sports that are offered at WVNCC	20.2%	32.9%	46.9%
Promotion of Student Activities events	10.6%	61.6%	27.8%
Educational entertainment programming (Diversity programs, Women's history…)	10.7%	53.0%	36.3%
Entertainment programming (Fall Concert, Dueling Bulls)	12.7%	53.5%	33.8%

For those who participate in Student Activities events, their value to students is demonstrated by the satisfaction survey above. As for the lower participation rate, some student comments highlight the reasons students have for not participating more frequently. According to some respondents, "I have two children in addition to my college courses; time isn't something I have an abundance of," and, "I have two children and a job; no time." The lives of community college students often are complicated with additional responsibilities outside of school—from taking care of dependents to working and other roles they must fill. The College tries to respond to various populations' needs by offering a variety of programs at different times of the year and day, but ultimately, participation may not reach higher levels as students focus on academic, family, and work obligations.

WVNCC contributes to the economic development of the area by adding to the skills of the workforce, which helps businesses become more competitive in the local and global economy. According to the Community Self Study Survey (5.d.3), when asked "Have you ever hired a WVNCC graduate?" 58.6% of respondents indicated that they had hired a graduate. All of those who reported hiring a graduate also felt that the graduates were either "acceptably prepared" (20.7% of total respondents), "well prepared" (24.1% of total respondents), or "very well prepared" (13.8% of total respondents). Overall, Northern contributes to economic development in its communities by preparing graduates that employers will hire and will know have the skills needed to perform the

job. Furthermore, for employers who offer tuition reimbursement, 77% allow employees to use tuition reimbursement at WVNCC, showing the confidence employers have in the College's ability to graduate well-trained students enhancing economic development.

The Community Survey (5.d.3) also highlighted other data points to show how constituents value College services in promoting economic development. When asked, "Have our workforce programs been of use to your company?" respondents answered as follows:

Table 5.12—"Have our workforce programs been of use to your company?" Responses, Source: Community Self Study Survey

Answer Option	Percent Response
Yes	48.3%
No	24.1%
I was not aware that WVNCC had a workforce program.	27.6%

The "yes" responses to this item could be improved, in part, by increasing awareness of workforce programs among employers and the community or by the College better understanding the needs of employers. While survey responses suggest that Northern is well represented in the community (with 92.9% feeling that the College is well represented), there may be a lack of awareness of the specific programming that Northern provides. Even so, of those who were aware of programs, many felt that workforce programs were useful to their companies, again proving that Northern offers significant contributions to the economies it serves.

Northern responds readily to the workforce needs of the communities it serves through various workforce programs. For instance, in the spring 2012 semester, Northern provided training to students seeking work in the natural gas industry. Northern partnered with CB&I and Dominion to establish a training program for the petrochemical construction industry focusing on pipefitter training (5.d.6). In December 2011, WVNCC held its first training session at its New Martinsville campus for those wanting to obtain a Rig Pass Certification for entry-level jobs on gas drilling sites. Topics covered during the class included general safety, first aid, CPR, basic knowledge of the actual drilling process, and career opportunities in the field. Articles about this program are available in the resource room (5.d.6). Another example of training offered by Northern to meet regional economic needs includes table gaming classes (5.d.7) first offered in 2007 when the State approved table gaming legislation and a displaced workers training programs offered in the 2008-2009 school year focused on programs with high employment needs in the area (such as Medical Assisting) (5.d.8). In February 2012, the community was offered the opportunity to participate in an Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B) class leading to a certification (5.d.9). An announcement about this program is available in the resource room (5.d.9).

In conjunction with the benefit of workforce training, Northern also contributes to economic development of its communities by helping graduates train for jobs that will earn them higher wages with a degree versus without a degree. According to the 2011-2012 Graduating Student Survey (5.d.4), respondents reported earning wages ranging from a low of $7.50 per hour up to a high of $16 per hour at the time before, during, or immediately after graduation. Northern can gain a better sense of the economic benefit to the community and its students by gathering longitudinal data of students' wages. Generally, recent graduates tend to begin at entry-level jobs in their fields, which may suggest that future reports from these graduates will show increases in wages over time and with experience in addition to educational credentials. Additionally, wages reported by respondents could include those for jobs that are not directly related to the graduates' majors. Additional follow up with respondents could clarify some of these data points. The full 2011-2012 Graduating Student Survey is available in the resource room (5.d.4).

The College also contributes to the economy by being a significant employer in the area (5.d.10). The College employs almost 150 full-time employees across its three campuses; Northern also employs over 100 adjunct faculty a semester. Others in the community are hired on a part-time, temporary basis in various positions, including academic advising, secretarial, sign language interpreting, supplemental instruction for students with disabilities, and other areas as needed. Furthermore, the College employs students through Federal Work Study opportunities in various departments as well as through temporary, part-time employment in Academic Success Centers (Tutoring Centers) as peer tutors. Moreover, the College contributes indirectly to the economy through its yearly operating expenditures by updating its resources, such as the addition of new facilities that require renovation and updates to current resources, including facilities and information technology needs. See Criterion 2 for additional data.

The College also contributes to the economy through philanthropic efforts in the community (5.d.11). Northern's Wheeling and New Martinsville campuses have participated for the last 16 years in the annual Relay for Life event held in a community served by that campus. Weirton campus teams have also participated for the last two years. Teams raise funds to donate to the American Cancer Society. In addition, each campus offers a Secret Santa program, asking for volunteers to buy presents as "Secret Santas" for students' children. Classified Staff Council has offered fundraisers to secure funding for students who cannot afford to participate in graduation because of the cost of graduation regalia. The Office of Development constantly pursues fundraising efforts, such as through the annual Golf Scramble and Friends Dinners, to raise money for scholarships and the Emergency Assistance Fund, which provides up to $1000 per lifetime to a student for an emergency that may otherwise cause the student to quit school due to financial strain. Through these and various other efforts, Northern contributes altruistically to the community it serves to help individuals and the economy.

Northern has supported economic development in other ways as well. In the 2010-2011 school year, Northern created a partnership with CentreTown Fitness in Wheeling. Any Wheeling campus student receives total access to CentreTown for a fee of $37.50 per

semester. This partnership has supported the wellness of students and supported a local industry. Similarly, Northern also partnered with Prodigy Wellness Center in New Martinsville. For the same fee, students receive an all-access pass to the center. This again shows Northern's contribution to economic development by supporting a family-owned gym in the community (5.d.12).

WVNCC is also highly valued by the constituents it serves. The awards that Northern's organizations, students, faculty, staff, and departments have received support the claim that the College is supported by its constituents. The WVNCC Foundation, for instance, raises funds for student scholarships (5.d.14) and "teaching and learning grants" (5.d.13), for which employees can apply in order to support a project. For instance, in 2011, the Foundation awarded a grant application for a financial literacy and student success course offered at no charge to students. Through the grant, staff members in financial aid and student success/retention designed, recruited students for, and taught a class of students on each campus in both fall and spring semester in the 2011-2012 school. This represented a significant amount of support, for the grant paid the tuition for all students in the course, as well as all course related costs and faculty travel. Many other teaching and learning grants have been approved by the Foundation, showing the support and value that the Foundation board places in the College. Copies of approved grant applications are available in the resource room (5.d.13).   The Foundation also shows its support of College services by providing scholarships and academic awards to students every year. The Foundation awards scholarships recognizing academic excellence and the potential for academic excellence. The full list of WVNCC Foundation scholarships is listed on pages 38-39 in the College Catalog (available in the resource room, 5.d.14).

Furthermore, other groups display value for the institution by providing awards and scholarships. For instance, the Friends of the College groups provide a scholarship for each campus to a recipient with at least a 2.5 GPA. Another organization, the Wheeling Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, provides a scholarship to a student who has already earned at least 30 credit hours. The Weirton Woman's Club awards a scholarship to a full-time female student living in the Weirton area. The Lions Club presents a scholarship to a qualifying student with a disability. As demonstrated by these examples, various organizations support the efforts of Northern students with financial support, and by doing so, they illustrate the fact that Northern is valued by its constituents (5.d.15).

Other awards that College members have received include the Paragon Award (5.d.16) and the Presidential Volunteer Service Award (5.d.17). After Northern redesigned its website with Technology Services Group, Inc., the College earned a top award from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations for outstanding achievement in communication at community and technical colleges. This honor, the Paragon award, is a one-of-a-kind recognition for excellence among marketing and PR professionals at two-year colleges. An article documenting this is available in the resource room (5.d.16). Another exemplary recognition of how constituents value Northern is through the receipt of the Presidential Volunteer Service Award given to Northern's Continuing

Education Coordinator, Darryl Clausell. Darryl was nominated by a local agency, Youth Services System, for his more than 1,000 volunteer hours to YSS and the YSS Safe Place program (see the article "Darryl Clausell Honored..." in the resource room, 5.d.17). Such a prestigious honor awarded to a Northern employee from the nomination of a community agency partnered with the College represents a prime example of how constituents value the College.

Another example of the value displayed by constituents for Northern includes the donations that have continued to increase over the years. According to the Institutional Advancement/Foundation Office Reports and Comparisons, 2007 – 2010 (available in the resource room, Faculty Document Center, 5.d.18), total donations have grown by more than five times the amount received in 2007 (compared to 2010). Total donors, as well as the number of new donors, also more than doubled between 2007 and 2010. Corporations and individuals represent the highest categories of donors, and donors also include employees and the Foundation. This growth in donations and representation from various constituents shows that the institution is valued by those it serves. The growth in the assets of Institutional Advancement as well as the tremendous growth in the number of donors indicate a high value and confidence in the College.

CONCLUSION

WVNCC is committed to serving its constituents. Northern has identified five primary constituents: students pursuing certificates and associate degrees, as well as those who attend for specific courses only and transient students; students who plan to transfer after completing coursework at Northern; local high schools, including high school students and Northern's Middle College students; those served by community, continuing education, and workforce education, including local employers; and governmental and political members of the community that support WVNCC's focus on higher education. Northern's IR Office gathers input and feedback from constituents about their needs and satisfaction with the College's programs. WVNCC's service learning efforts offer evidence of the College's commitment to engage with its constituents and communities. Furthermore, through 2+2 programs, programs for high school students (like Early Entrance, EDGE, and Middle College), the Center for Economic and Workforce Development, and the Small Business Development Center, Northern shows responsiveness to those groups that depend on its services. Finally, feedback from various surveys, increasing donor pool and donations, and awards given by community groups to members of the organization show that both internal and external constituents value the College's services. Ultimately, Northern evinces its commitment to serving its identified constituents in ways that those groups value.

Strengths

- WVNCC has a proven record of creating partnerships with employers and high schools to offer academic preparation, workforce training, and a commitment to the public good.

- Through involvement in community and civic organizations, Northern gathers the input it needs to create and deliver programming that meets the needs of its constituents. Furthermore, Northern successfully allocates its resources to be able to meet the needs of its constituents within its physical, financial, and human resource capacities.

- WVNCC offers numerous service learning groups and experiences through Student Activities and co-curricular programs, such as service learning components embedded in Liberal Arts programs and the Culinary Arts Green Initiative. Examples of ways in which the school engages the community pervade the institution.

- Northern has a long-standing commitment to engaging the community through activities planning, diversity programs open for free to the public, and programs focused on lifelong learning for constituents young and old.

- Northern's constituents, as evinced in surveys directed at and general feedback solicited from its various constituents, express resounding pride and satisfaction with the programs, resources, services, and relationships WVNCC provides.

Challenges

- WVNCC needs to continuously and purposefully gather data and assess the community through environmental scanning which plays a key role in institutional planning that carefully considers its capacity. Additional scanning of graduates over time, for instance, could allow the school to better determine the value of its programs in securing well-paying jobs and employment in students' majors of study. The Institutional Research Office works on gathering this data, and the College will need to continue to support efforts to increase response rates.

- WVNCC needs a more systematic way to gather data and feedback from external constituents so that community members, including employers and others, can provide inputs that allow Northern to clearly and distinctly identify areas of strength and weakness, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and needs that are met versus those that are unmet.

- WVNCC needs to continuously strive to gather feedback from graduates for data on post-graduate employment, transfer activity, salary, and more to better inform its curricular and co-curricular programs of strengths and areas needing improvement.

Future Direction

- WVNCC needs to continue its assessment of programs that link service to the community to determine the impact that services, like Workforce training programs, have for students, employers, and the community at large.

- WVNCC's IR Office will continue its efforts to collect follow-up data from previous graduates to assess the economic benefit of its programs over the long-term.

- WVNCC needs to assess its ability to maintain current and newly developed programs from a financial, physical, and human resources perspective to ensure that it can continue to serve the public good and offer services of value to the community.

- The College needs to review its processes for environmental scanning, particularly examining how this data is used in planning service to the community.

- WVNCC's IR Office will continuously collect data related to all of its programs, including Student Activities, service learning, community involvement, institutional advancement, and others to further prove its contributions to overall institutional effectiveness.

- WVNCC's IR Office will gather and maintain data in a consistent manner and centrally house the data within Northern's IR department. This will allow the College to show evidence of its commitment to service for the public good.

Conclusion

CONCLUSION AND REQUEST FOR CONTINUED ACCREDITATION

Conclusion

West Virginia Northern Community College is a learning-focused institution whose mission is "to provide higher education empowering individuals to achieve academic and career goals leading to a competent workforce which excels in a global economy" by "offering an accessible, safe, diverse, and high-quality learning environment." To that end, the institution has used its self-study process to reflect on its successes in achieving that mission and in fostering a culture that values both quality in education and continuous improvement in academics and services.

Regarding mission and integrity, Northern's strengths include a mission that aligns with State goals for higher education, the various cultural programs that promote diversity awareness, a Board of Governors that operates autonomously and with integrity to provide leadership for institutional governance, and collaborative processes that promote engagement from all constituents. In planning for the future, Northern has built a sound financial base that provides reserves and processes for needed changes, shown that it can respond to societal needs, expanded its physical base to further technical programming, increased focus on data-driven decision making to promote Institutional Effectiveness, and aligned planning with the College mission. To promote student learning and effective teaching, Northern has created a culture of assessment across course, program, department, and institutional levels, hired full-time and adjunct faculty with the degrees and qualifications necessary to provide excellent education, provided resources to help faculty improve teaching and enhance student learning, and offered extensive resources to promote student success.

Furthermore, Northern supports lifelong learning by providing support to faculty, staff, and students to acquire, discover, and responsibly apply knowledge; proves the importance it places on acquiring a breadth of knowledge and skills by instilling in academic programs a philosophy, policy, and practice of general education; offers students chances to participate in lifelong learning through curricular and co-curricular programs; and assesses the usefulness of curricula through program advisory committees and State and institutional reviews. Northern also engages its constituents to serve their needs, such as through workforce partnerships, collaboration with the K-12 community, and involvement with civic organizations, and its services are clearly valued by those the College serves, which is evinced through surveys and other feedback methods that show pride and satisfaction with College services and programming.

Of course, Northern also faces challenges, and the self-study process has helped the institution honestly identify those issues and present a future direction for the College to meet those challenges. The Institutional Research Office has made tremendous strides in collecting the data that has driven decision making, and this office, with the support of

the institution, will continue to work on gathering feedback and data from external constituents, such as graduates and transfer institutions that do not report to agencies like the Clearinghouse, to further inform planning. WVNCC currently does not have a tool to assess computer literacy and preparedness, which is an area the College will need to focus on in order to serve the needs of students in an increasingly technological (higher education) world. Additionally, communication within the College has proven to be a concern among the College employees, and this is an issue which the College has been addressing and will need to continue to address. Moreover, impending budget cuts from the State will impact the College's ability to expand programming, meaning Northern will need to increase its pursuit of outside funding to support its continued growth and sustainability of programming.

Ultimately, WVNCC is an institution of higher education worthy of its regionally accredited status. The College meets and, in many ways, exceeds the Criteria for Accreditation. While Northern faces challenges, these trials are natural to the world of post-secondary education. Furthermore, Northern offers multiple examples of programs, curricular and co-curricular, that show the drive for excellence in innovation, quality instruction, and a culture of continuous improvement. With the help of this self-study report, Northern will continue to make student learning the cornerstone of its purpose and, to that end, will work to progressively assess and evaluate itself on a course, program, departmental, and institutional level.

Request for Continued Accreditation

This self study provides evidence that West Virginia Northern Community College meets the Criteria for Accreditation of the Higher Learning Commission. The College has made a thoughtful effort to identify its strengths, challenges, and future direction to promote quality in education and focus on continuous improvement. WVNCC respectfully requests placement in Open Pathways and continued, ten-year accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.