

Year One Peer Evaluation Report

Green River Community College

Auburn, Washington

Spring 2011

*A confidential report of findings prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*

Eligibility Requirements for Candidates for Accreditation and Accredited Higher Education Institutions

INTRODUCTION— Green River Community College (GRCC) is in the Spring 2011 reporting group which did not receive directions to address Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3 in the Year One Report. However, the College did provide information as indicated below.

2. **Authority**—Green River Community College began as an offshoot of the Auburn School District with the Washington State Legislature approving startup of a community college in 1959. In 1963, the State Board of Education approved establishment of Green River Community College. The College currently operates as a comprehensive community college under the governance of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. It is further governed by a five-member board of trustees who are appointed by the governor. The *Carver Policy Governance Model* was adopted by the Board in 2004 which allows the Board to focus on larger issues by setting policy and delegating to the College President how those policies are carried out.

3. **Mission Statement and Core Themes**—The mission statement and core themes adopted by Green River Community College are clearly defined, have been adopted by the Board of Trustees, and are consistent with legal authorization. They are appropriate for a community college that grants certificates and degrees. The mission statement supports the educational interest of its students and the principal programs lead to recognized degrees.

CONCLUSION—The Evaluation Panel is satisfied that Green River Community College meets Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3.

Standard One

Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

INTRODUCTION—Green River Community College (GRCC) offers courses and programs in a variety of associate degrees and certificates in both transfer and professional/technical fields. The College also offers developmental and basic skills programs as well as a many continuing education noncredit courses. GRCC enrolls approximately 17,700 students (over 8,800 FTE) in transfer/liberal arts education; professional/technical and workforce education; and developmental, adult basic and English for Speakers of Other Languages education.

1.A – Mission

- 1.A.1 Green River Community College first adopted its mission statement in January 2005, and it was reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees in March 2010. The original adoption received review by the Board, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community members. The mission statement was also reviewed in 2008 as part of the strategic planning process.

The mission statement is appropriate for a community college, and it gives direction for improving the lives of people in its diverse community, for delivering quality education and training, for helping students to define and reach educational goals, and for providing innovative programs and responsive services.

The mission statement is published in the *College Catalog*, but there is no indication in the report that it is widely published as required by Standard One. However, after sending a draft copy of this evaluation report to GRCC for factual review, the College reported to the Panel that the mission statement is also published on the College Website, on posters in all classrooms and office locations, in the *Student Handbook*, in a report that is mailed to approximately 750 community members, on the HR Web site, in the Policy Manual, and as part of the “Strategic Directions for 2005 and Beyond” handout distributed at various staff and community functions and included in the new employee orientation packet. The Evaluation Panel is satisfied that the Green River Community College Mission Statement is widely published.

- 1.A.2 Green River Community College has developed a scorecard system to evaluate performance of its mission. Criteria for evaluation are based on institutional, state, and national trend data.

1.B – Core Themes

- 1.B.1 The College has chosen core themes that represent student goals: transfer education, professional/technical education, basic skills/developmental education, and continuing education. Under the scorecard system, each core theme is assigned a weight based upon its share of the total full-time equivalent enrollment over a seven-year period. The core themes exhibit essential elements of the mission of Green River Community College.
- 1.B.1 Objectives for each core theme have been identified, and achievement indicators have been established. The achievement indicators are common or similar for the core themes, which makes the plan easy to understand and measure. Indicators are appropriate for Core Themes one through three, but indicators for the core theme on continuing education were harder to evaluate. Admittedly, measuring outcomes for continuing education is difficult because of the nature of the courses, the changing offerings, the diversity of students enrolled, and a host of other variables. In the end, the Evaluation Panel decided that, taken together, the three indicators could provide a reasonable measure of success for the continuing education core theme.

CONCLUSION—Green River Community College did an outstanding job of satisfying the new requirements of Standard One. Furthermore, the Year One Report is clearly written, and it shows direct links and rationale for core themes and assessment indicators.

The mission statement is appropriate for a community college, and it gives clear direction to its constituencies. Core themes are directed to and for the students and the community the institution serves.

Commendations:

1. Green River Community College is commended for writing a Year One report that presents and precisely explains the mission, core themes, and evaluation indicators for the institution.
2. Green River Community College is commended for its clear understanding and implementation of the new NWCCU Standard One.