



8060 165th Avenue N.E., Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052-3981
425 558 4224
Fax 425 376 0596
www.nwccu.org

April 23, 2019

Bayta L. Maring, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Institutional Assessment and Data Management
Student Learning and Success
Shoreline Community College
16101 Greenwood Ave North
Shoreline, Washington 98133

Dr. Maring,

This letter is in response to Shoreline Community College's Substantive Change request to modify its existing Mission and Core Themes and Indicators. A panel of three peer-experts was convened and met several times as a group, and panel representatives met with you and institutional leadership as part of the approval process.

The panel was able to review the materials submitted as part of the Substantive Change form, as well as Shoreline's 2018 Fall Ad Hoc report addressing the remaining four recommendations from Shoreline's 2012 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report and visit.

As I shared in our conversation on April 17, 2019, both the panelists and NWCCU staff have reviewed all of the materials and are tremendously impressed by the institution's commitment to student achievement, particularly the institution's measures and focus around access, equity, transfer, and career development.

As I also shared in our conversation on April 17, 2019, both the panelists and NWCCU staff have ongoing concerns about the institution's direct and indirect measure of student learning. During our call, you shared that the institution was collecting direct evidence of learning in all of the institution's general education programs, and that a system of analysis was in place to track the cumulative improvement in outcomes for selected bands of students taking varying number of courses. The notion of a "value add" measurement is interesting and innovative in the Northwest region, and everyone who has reviewed your work looks forward to the long-term results of the positive value that the work of your faculty brings to the classroom.

During our conversation, you suggested that while Shoreline was continuing to develop and deploy program learning outcomes and institution-wide assessment efforts, it would be helpful to resolve the issue of the Core Themes and indicators, and to move forward with your comprehensive efforts around assessment.



8060 165th Avenue N.E., Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052-3981
425 558 4224
Fax 425 376 0596
www.nwccu.org

In consultation with the panel, and NWCCU staff and leadership, I am pleased to share with you that the panel has agreed to accept the Core Themes put forward by Shoreline College.

However, as the institution continues to engage in planning and assessment activities, the panelists and NWCCU remain concerned about methods and thresholds related to student learning. The target correlations set for measuring learning within your model (for example, $r=0.21$) do not appear to possess an aspirational target that fosters continuous improvement, the panel strongly recommends that the institution establish higher levels of predictability and significance for these critical measures of student success.

That your work represents a measure of institutional student learning, and not individual student learning per se, is an issue that will likely continue to raise questions. As we discussed, I am happy to partner you with a colleague from a comparative institution to help create collaboration and communication that could benefit Shoreline and our region. I will leave that decision in your hands and stand by to assist.

Thank you for keeping the Northwest Commission on Colleges and University apprised of the ongoing changes at Shoreline Community College. and all of my colleagues wish you the best in your continued efforts toward institutional mission fulfillment.

Sincerely,

Mac Powell, MBA, PhD
Senior Fellow
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

cc: Dr. Cheryl Roberts, President, Shoreline Community College
Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, President, NWCCU