



SEVEN YEAR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

2025

skagit.edu/accreditation



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INSTITUTIONAL REPORT CERTIFICATION FORM

Please use this certification form for all institutional reports (Self-Evaluation, Annual, Mid-Cycle, PRFR, Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness, Candidacy, Ad-Hoc, or Special)



Institutional Report Certification Form

On behalf of the Institution, I certify that:

- There was broad participation/review by the campus community in the preparation of this report.
- The Institution remains in compliance with NWCCU Eligibility Requirements.
- The Institution will continue to remain in compliance throughout the duration of the institution's cycle of accreditation.

I understand that information provided in this report may affect the continued Candidacy or Accreditation of my institution. I certify that the information and data provided in the report are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Skagit Valley College

(Name of Institution)

Dr. Christopher Villa

(Name of Chief Executive Officer)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ch M Villa', is written over a horizontal line.

(Signature of Chief Executive Officer)

February 28, 2025

(Date)

PREFACE

Located within Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties, Skagit Valley College (SVC) is one of the 34 community and technical colleges located within Washington state. The college's 2,000-square-mile district encompasses a diverse range of communities and offers classes across the district from a variety of locations. The original college campus was established in 1926 as Mount Vernon Junior College, the second independent junior college in Washington state. In 1948, the college was renamed Skagit Valley Junior College and in 1958, adopted its current name of Skagit Valley College. The campus is located on 96 acres on the east side of the city of Mount Vernon, WA. The Whidbey Island campus, located in Oak Harbor, WA, was opened in 1970 and currently offers a full range of academic-transfer and basic skills classes, as well as a limited number of professional technical degree options. The San Juan Center began serving students in 1975 and is located in Friday Harbor, WA, and offers academic-transfer classes and running start, and the Marine Technology Center in Anacortes, WA, offers comprehensive training programs in marine maintenance technology.

SVC entered the 2024-25 academic year with 1,129 employees, including 102 full-time instructors, counselors, and librarians and 388 part-time instructors.

STUDENTS

SVC had a total unduplicated 2023-24 enrollment of 7,357 students. Below is the gender, race, program of study, and other demographic information for students in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Demographic Parameter	Students
Total Headcount	7,357
Full time	47%
Part-time	53%
First-generation	39%
Financial aid recipients	53%

Degree Program	Students
Academic Transfer	46%
Professional Technical	34%
Basic Skills	17%
Bachelor	1%
Other	2%

Race/Ethnicity	Students
Students of Color	43%
American Indian	>1%
Asian	4%
Black/African American	2%
Multi-racial	6%
Hispanic/Latino	30%
Pacific Islander	>1%
White	43%
No answer	15%

Gender	Students
Male	36%
Female	49%
Non-binary	>1%
No answer	15%

The communities that SVC serves have become increasingly diverse in the last seven years, and SVC's student body has continued to mirror this increased diversity. In 2015, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) first identified Skagit Valley College as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with 15% of full time equivalent (FTE) degree seeking students identifying as Hispanic/Latino. In 2024, [HACU identified SVC](#) as having met the criteria to be designated as an HSI with 25% of degree seeking students identifying as Hispanic/Latino. In January of 2025, SVC President Christopher Villa announced that the college was officially considered an HSI and listed several ongoing and future initiatives to continue to serve our diverse student body.

ENROLLMENT TREND

The last seven years have presented significant challenges for SVC, mainly due to a fairly continuous decline in college enrollment that has persisted since before 2012. This trend was mirrored in the Washington State Community and Technical College system, although SVC experienced a greater drop in enrollment compared to the system as a whole. The college's enrollment had nearly stabilized by 2018-2019; however the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic extended the decline for an additional three years, and SVC again experienced a greater decrease in enrollment than the system as a whole. However, a positive shift began in the academic year 2022-2023 when the college experienced an 8% enrollment increase from the previous year (compared to 2% for the SBCTC system as a whole). This trend continued for the 2023-2024 academic year when the college experienced an 11% increase in enrollment from the previous year (compared to 8% for the SBCTC system as a whole). As of now, the outlook for the 2024-25 academic year continues to be strong, with summer, fall, and winter quarter enrollments displaying increases of 6%, 6%, and 9% respectively. This upward trajectory indicates a hopeful future for the college's enrollment and fiscal stability.

CHANGES

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

The college's new Strategic Plan was adopted in November of 2024, following a year-long process involving faculty, staff, community members, and the Board of Trustees. SVC anticipates that this Strategic Plan, specifically the plan's five strategic priorities, will drive improvements in various areas, beginning with fostering a shared understanding of the organization's goals and objectives. By aligning resources more intentionally with these goals, the college aims to achieve higher levels of institutional effectiveness as an ultimate outcome. This process has been accompanied by sweeping changes to the institution's operational planning process and its use of data to understand, promote, and guide the planning process.

ACADEMICS

In May of 2023, SVC was approved to offer its first direct entry four-year degree program, a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) by the NWCCU. The BSCS will join the college's five Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree options and add to the

college's growing focus on offering pragmatic four-year degree options to its students and community. Additionally, faculty and instructional administrators successfully revised the faculty evaluation process, which resulted in a competency-based framework that fosters faculty agency, professional development, and continuous program improvement. The framework focuses on five competencies: instructional excellence, student learning assessment, program and course assessment, student advising, and service to the college. Relatedly, the college has implemented a professional development training series that spans three years and is required of all tenure-track faculty. The first Community of Practice in the series, the New Faculty Academy, orients faculty to the college's mission, its services, and its focus on teaching and learning. The Inclusive Pedagogy Community of Practice and Integrative Learning Community of Practice follow the New Faculty Academy and provide training that promotes equity-oriented teaching practices and inter-disciplinary curricular and pedagogical design.

CEO LEADERSHIP CHANGES

SVC has experienced many changes in our executive team membership. In August of 2022, Dr. Tom Keegan retired as the college president after having served for ten years in the position. In September of 2022, the college welcomed Dr. Christopher Villa, Ed.D. to serve as the seventh president of SVC by the SVC Board of Trustees. Dr. Villa previously served as president at Portland Community College (PCC) Rock Creek. He earned his bachelor's degree in social ecology from the University of California, Irvine, a master's degree in public administration from University of Southern California, and a doctorate in educational leadership and policy from University of Utah. In addition to his extensive administrative experience, Dr. Villa has served as an adjunct faculty in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at California State University, Northridge.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CHANGES

In January of 2023, Dr. Gabriel Mast, Ph.D. joined Cabinet as the associate vice president of planning and effectiveness. This was a new position the college instituted in response to feedback and institutional effectiveness data on the need for increased data and planning capacity. Dr. Mast has been with the college since 2015 and previously served as the executive dean for instruction and dean for arts and sciences. In July of 2023, Dr. Mast was appointed the accreditation liaison officer for the college, and in July of 2024, Dr. Mast was appointed the vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness. Dr. Mast's doctoral training and research is in the field of institutional effectiveness. In July of 2023, Carolyn Tucker, MBA was promoted from associate vice president of human resources to vice president of human resources and became a member of the President's Cabinet and a direct report to the college president. Also in July of 2023, Dr. Darren Greeno, Ed.D. was appointed the interim vice president of instruction after our previous VPI, Dr. Kenneth Lawson accepted the position of president at Columbia Gorge Community College. In March of 2024, Dr. Greeno was named vice president of academic affairs at SVC. Dr. Greeno has been with the college since 2015 and was previously

executive dean for instruction and dean for workforce education. Finally, in January of 2025, Dr. Michael Cogan, Ph.D. succeeded Dr. Eduardo Jaramillo as vice president for administrative services at SVC. Dr. Jaramillo had served in the role since 2016. Dr. Cogan brings extensive financial and operations experience, having spent more than 20 years at multiple colleges and universities, followed by eight years in higher education consulting before joining SVC.

RESPONSIVENESS TO EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

SVC has not been immune to the national trends of increases in the number of resignations and retirements, as well as small applicant pools for job postings. We saw the peak of our resignations in 2022 and 2023 with around 220 and 200 employment separations during each of those years, respectively. This period of time was during the post-pandemic's 'Great Resignation' and also followed the go-live of ctcLink, the new enterprise-wide software system used for Human Resources, Student Services, and Business Operations. Resignation feedback from senior staff in Financial Aid, Enrollment Services, and the Business Office cited workload stress and compensation below the market rate. We also experienced significant turnover in Human Resources, Facilities, Head Start, and Student Services continuing through the end of 2024. In a concerted effort to fill critical vacancies, the Human Resources department, in collaboration with President's Cabinet, reviewed administrative exempt compensation and approved increases to be more competitive. In addition, Cabinet approved new positions to support the ctcLink stabilization and on-going technical needs. Human Resources worked with individual departments to review positions with lower salaries and high turnover, and initiated reclassifications, position increases, and retention adjustments for classified and administrative exempt positions. Since these changes, we have seen more robust and competitive recruitment pools and tapering in the number of resignations. For 2024, our termination rate was down 18% from 2022.

RESPONSE TO TOPICS PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED BY THE COMMISSION

YEAR SIX FINDING: 2.C.4 STUDENT RECORDS

Finding: The listing on the Washington State Records and Retention Schedule is recent, detailed, and clear. The reviewers did not find evidence for SVC's policy/practice related to reliable data backup and retrieval.

Skagit Valley College adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provisions for reliable and retrievable backup. SVC securely stores files in fire-proofed, locked areas and removes paper records as prescribed in the Washington state record retention schedule, then shreds these at the appointed timeline. The college electronically maintains all student records through the student management and financial aid management ctcLink systems used by all Washington state community and technical colleges, and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) facilitates system maintenance and backup.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the confidentiality of student information. The registrar and dean of enrollment services and veterans education serve as SVC's FERPA officers. All student rights are clearly outlined on the college website and in the catalog; both contain an overview of FERPA. The catalog includes the list of directory information items that may be released without written authorization from the student. Additionally, SVC blocks release of directory information for students who request information not be disclosed. All new employees must complete FERPA training as part of their on-boarding process. The college limits access to student management system data and restricts employee access to electronic files.

STANDARD 2.C.4 EVIDENCE

- [Washington State Records Retention Schedules](#)
- [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\), Policy 5200](#)
- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\), catalog description](#)
- [Computer Information Systems Resources \(CISR\) Acceptable Use Procedure, Policy 8000](#)

YEAR SIX FINDING: 2.G.4 PROGRAM LICENSURE AND EMPLOYEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Finding: *Reviewers found that only two programs listed that licensure would be awarded. For these programs the licensure requirements were included. Reviewers did not see a complete listing of other programs that lead to or do not lead to licensure. Information on whether the licensure was transferable more broadly was also missing.*

Upon receipt of the year six finding on 2.G.3, the college realized that although we had clear descriptions of unique requirements for employment for each appropriate professional technical program, this information was not uniformly distributed on our website and in the catalog, and there was inconsistency in where the information could be found. Since then, the college has worked to update the website and catalog to more systematically and consistently display this information. Licensure and entry requirements are now provided to students on program description web pages and in the SVC catalog. Advisors discuss specialized admissions and licensure requirements with students. Many programs also offer info sessions and program briefings to prospective students, and these sessions provide information on specialized admissions requirements for program eligibility and licensure requirements to enter related professions.

Standard 2.G.3 Evidence

Program	Language about Licensure/Certification Requirements	Link to more information
Nursing	Graduates who complete the Associate in Nursing DTA/MRP degree are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) exam to become licensed as a Registered Nurse. Passing the NCLEX-RN exam and completion of this transfer degree provide the general education and nursing courses for direct transfer with only one additional year of study to complete the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree at four-year institutions in Washington state.	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/nursing/nursing-advising.html
Nursing Assistant	The Nursing Assistant course is designed to comply with the Nursing Home Reform Act (OBRA 1987) and prepares candidates for the Nursing Assistant Certification in Washington. Students who successfully complete the course work and testing will receive a Certificate of Completion from DSHS and eligible to take the NNAAP (National Nurse Aide Assessment Program) examination in Washington State.	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/nursing/nursing-assistant-certificate.html
Medical Assisting	Upon successful completion of the Medical Assistant Certificate or AAS Degree program, graduates are eligible to take the national Certified Medical Assistant certification exam offered through the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA). Upon satisfactory completion of the exam, graduates will be qualified to use the credentials of Certified Medical Assistant (CMA, AAMA). The CMA credentials are recognized nationally; however, each state mandates the scope of practice for Medical Assistants. In the State of Washington, you will be qualified to apply for the Washington State MA-C certification. This certification is required to work as a medical assistant in Washington State (RCW 18.360; WAC 246-827). Employers prefer to hire certified workers who have passed the national exam.	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/allied-health-education/medical-assistant.html
Billing and Coding	Medical Billing and Coding students enrolled in the AHE 240 class will be taking the American Association of Professional Coders national examination to become a Certified Professional Coder Apprentice (CPC-A). AAPC credentialed coders have proven mastery of all code sets, evaluation and management principles, and documentation guidelines. Employers prefer to hire certified workers who have passed the national exam.	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/allied-health-education/medical-billing-coding.html
Dental Therapy	Upon successful completion of the AAS degree in Dental Therapy, graduates are eligible to be certified/licensed by regional certification/licensure boards.	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/dentaltherapy/
Pharmacy Technician	Upon successful completion of the Pharmacy Technician Certificate, graduates are eligible to take the national Pharmacy Technician certification exam offered by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB). Upon satisfactory completion of the exam, graduates will be qualified to use the Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) credentials. These credentials are recognized nationally; however, each state sets its own scope of practice for Pharmacy Technicians. In Washington State, graduates will be eligible to apply for state Pharmacy Technician certification, which is required to work as a pharmacy technician in Washington State (RCW 18.64; WAC 246-945).	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/health-sciences/allied-health-education/pharmacy-technician.html

Program	Language about Licensure/Certification Requirements	Link to more information
Early Childhood Education	<p>Early Childhood Education (ECE): All ECE certificates and degrees are designed with Washington State licensure requirements in mind. Guided by the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has defined the requirements for “stackable certificates” that allow ECE professionals to add skills while working in the field. SVC certificates and associate degrees meet the NAYEC standards and the credit thresholds and requirements set by DCYF. Certificates meetings Washington DCYF standards will transfer to most, but not all, other states under the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Interstate Agreement; however, several states offer an accelerated certification option rather than full reciprocity for ECE licensure. In addition, New Mexico, New York, and South Dakota have not signed the NASDTEC and have limited reciprocity.</p> <p>The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Early Childhood Education prepares graduates to earn a Residency Teaching Certificate in Washington State with an endorsement in ECE. Admission to the program requires passage of the WEST-B test of basic skills or an alternate assessment approved by the Washington Professional Educators Standards Board. Furthermore, earning the content endorsement in ECE required to teach in Washington requires candidates to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. pass the NES assessment of content knowledge in Early Childhood Education; or B. demonstrate proficiency in the content areas by compiling a portfolio of teaching materials for Skagit Valley College’s case-by-case exception process. <p>Candidates generally take the NES assessment in their second year in the program. Furthermore, earning a Washington teaching certificate requires fingerprinting and successful passage of background checks from the Washington State Patrol and the FBI. Individuals who hold a Washington Residency Teaching Certificate may also teach in Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, and Oklahoma. Other states do not have direct reciprocity with Washington, but a Washington teaching certificate may be used for accelerated licensure in many states; please see the Education Commission’s 50 State Comparison for more detail.</p>	<p>https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/education/early-childhood-education/</p>

Program	Language about Licensure/Certification Requirements	Link to more information
Fire Prevention Technology and Emergency Medicine Technician	<p>The Fire Prevention Technology program aligns with the standards of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and the U.S. Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) model curriculum. In Washington State, IFSAC testing is coordinated by the Washington State Patrol and its network of partners. Students can earn multiple IFSAC certificate seals during their time in the program. IFSAC certificates have excellent transferability across state and even international lines. However, there may be a small handful of jurisdictions that do not have reciprocity and require certification under Pro Board or other standards.</p> <p>The Basic and Enhanced Emergency Medical Technician Micro-Certificates both conclude with the National Registry Emergency Medical Technician certification practical examination for EMT. Successful completion of this exam—coupled with paid or volunteer affiliation with a licensed county, aid, or ambulance association—allows individuals to become certified as a Washington State EMS Provider, a certification that is generally transferrable to all other states so long as it is kept active.</p>	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/public-service-social-science/fire-science/
Human Services	<p>The Substance Use Disorder Counseling certificate and AAS degree both meet the education requirements set by the Washington State Department of Health for graduates to become a Substance Use Disorder Professional Trainee. Additional hours of clinical practice and passage of an examination by the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC) or other certified organization are required before graduates may earn their Washington Substance Use Disorder Professional (SUDP) credential. A list of states that have substantially equivalent licensure requirements may be found on the Washington Department of Health website.</p>	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/public-service-social-science/human-services/
Parks Law	<p>SVC's Parks Ranger Law Enforcement Academy (PRLEA) is one of six programs in the US certified by the US National Park Service (NPS) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center to provide the basic training required to prepare students for careers as NPS law enforcement rangers. Graduates successfully passing all PRLEA exams are eligible for an NPS law enforcement commission and can apply for a seasonal position with the NPS. Obtaining such a position also requires that candidates be 21 years of age or older—and that they pass a physical fitness examination, drug screening, and background check—so these are also pre-requisites for entry into the academy.</p>	https://www.skagit.edu/academics/areas-of-study/public-service-social-science/park-ranger-law-enforcement-academy/

OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATION: LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

NWCCU Recommendation: *Adopt a strategic and institutional process by which to meaningfully assess its learning support services in support of continuously improving student learning outcomes. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1;1.C.7)*

COLLEGE TUTORING SERVICES

SVC has implemented program review for learning support services, including tutoring and library services, consistent with the broader assessment work taking place across

the college. Since the last accreditation visit, tutoring has been administered through Student Services and Library Services continues to be administered through Academic Affairs, with college librarians reporting to the executive dean for arts and sciences. Each of these areas participated in annual program review cycles aligned with college assessment and operational planning in their respective areas. The key findings from these program reviews indicated the following: a) a lack of adequate, consistent funding to support tutoring needs, particularly in: gateway courses, higher level science courses, and bachelor's programs; b) a decentralized administrative oversight; c) concurrent tutoring activities offered in many disparate areas on campus with little to no coordination, e.g. Math center, Writing center, Library tutoring, nursing tutoring, TRIO tutoring, science tutoring, peer tutoring, etc.; and d) limited staffing support. This feedback was put through the operational planning process and resulted in the college deciding to invest in the development of a new Learning Resource Center led by a newly funded dean of libraries and learning resources. The goal is to more effectively track and integrate tutoring demands in the context of institutional goals around student success (completion) and equity, with more adequate funding and administrative oversight guiding these programmatic goals and outcomes, and deeper coordination between various divisions across the college.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Since the Comprehensive Year Seven Evaluation visit in 2018, SVC has developed and implemented a faculty-led, comprehensive Academic Affairs program review and assessment cycle. Through this process, faculty analyze data on access, achievement, learning, and student satisfaction to establish strategic goals for continuous improvement. As part of the Academic Affairs division, SVC Libraries actively participate in this review cycle, drawing on their dual role in instruction and learning support. In addition to evaluating data on access, achievement, learning, and student satisfaction, library usage data plays a critical role in their program review analysis, ensuring informed decision-making in resource allocation and academic support.

During the first program review cycle, SVC Libraries applied data-driven insights to guide strategic decisions on subscription adjustments, acquisitions, course offerings, faculty training, and collection development. By analyzing usage data, they identified underutilized subscriptions, enabling informed budgetary choices regarding resource reductions and additions. Additionally, their review of General Education Outcome data led to key projects, including faculty training on information literacy, the expansion of Library 201 offerings, the diversification of collections, the decolonization of subject headings, and a collaboration with the English department to integrate scaffolded literacy instruction into ENGL& 101 and 102.

Participating in the Academic Affairs program review has deeply embedded the libraries within SVC's essential teaching and learning dialogues and spaces, achieving a level of integration previously unattained. One of the faculty librarians serves on the Program Review and Assessment Committee and provides an important voice to the design,

maintenance, and implementation of Academic Affairs program review. Moving forward, the college has committed to hosting several student focus groups in the near future to better understand some of the critical feedback gathered on the library from the Noel Levitz Ruffalo SSI survey. From this, the library will continue to incorporate library-specific student feedback into the process of continuous program improvement.

OTHER LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

In addition to Library and Tutoring Services, SVC is proud to have three equity-based cohort programs that also focus on and contribute to learning support services, including a TRIO Student Support Program, CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program), and CAP (Cardinal Achievement Program). TRIO and CAMP are federally funded programs, both of which participate in annual program assessments and federal reporting. Both programs have met or exceeded the goals and outcomes established in their grant awards. In addition, SVC created a “home grown” Cardinal Achievement Program (CAP), which now supports 160 students identified as first generation, to assist in high school to college transitions and provide targeted, proactive advising support and culturally responsive programming. Each of these cohort programs partner with tutoring services at the college and the next cycles of program review will assess tutoring demand and effectiveness for these programs, as well as for broader student populations at SVC.

STANDARD 1: STUDENT SUCCESS, INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, AND EFFECTIVENESS

STANDARD 1.A. INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

STANDARD 1.A.1 INSTITUTIONAL MISSION STATEMENT

The institution’s mission statement defines its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement.

The Skagit Valley College community defines the mission statement as a rationale for why the college exists while the vision statement defines who we are. The Strategic Priorities operationalize and define how we fulfill our mission. Each of the five strategic priorities includes multiple outcome-based objectives that give the institution objective goals to attain by the end of the (five-year) Strategic Plan. The outcomes, targets, and key performance indicators (KPIs) associated with each strategic priority allow us to measure progress toward our long-term strategic goals and guide the college’s annual operational planning and program review processes. Together, these high-level statements, priorities, and goals are captured in the Board of Trustees approved [Strategic Plan](#) and define how we as a college community conceptualize, measure, and evaluate Institutional Mission Fulfillment.

Skagit Valley College Mission Statement: *Skagit Valley College provides opportunities for students in pursuit of their educational and employment goals, while contributing to the economic and cultural enrichment of our communities.*

Skagit Valley College Vision Statement: *Skagit Valley College is dedicated to the success of our students. Our work is guided by a set of shared principles and our decisions are based on strategy and evidence. We are committed to quality, innovation, equity, and lifelong learning of students and employees.*

Table 1. Skagit Valley College Strategic Priorities

Skagit Valley College Strategic Priorities	
1. Student Success	■ Improve completion rates for all degree-seeking students
	■ Maintain strong employment rates for workforce and bachelors of applied science program completers
2. Equity	■ Eliminate opportunity (equity) gaps in student success
	■ Achieve and maintain HSI status and apply for and receive federal Title V funding
	■ Increase employee diversity
	■ Improve employee sense of belonging

Skagit Valley College Strategic Priorities	
3. Enrollment	■ Increase overall enrollment (FTEs)
	■ Achieve goals for targeted student populations
	■ Achieve and maintain 25% or greater degree seeking students who identify as Hispanic/Latino
	■ Create pipeline to increase Native American student access
4. Institutional Capacity	■ Improve employee climate satisfaction
	■ Increase student participation/response rates to annual surveys
	■ Maintain indicators of strong institutional fiscal health
	■ Improve staffing turnover rates
	■ Improve culture, organization, resources, and/or efficiency in the following college support service areas: HR, IT, Business Office, Institutional Research, Marketing, grants, budgeting, and the college website
5. Community Engagement	■ Improve College visibility and reputation in the community
	■ Maintain and increase strong community partnerships

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

In 2024, SVC Board of Trustees approved a new four-year Strategic Plan for the college. In the upcoming 2025-2026 academic year, SVC has committed to rewriting its mission statement to more specifically focus on student achievement and learning.

STANDARD 1.B. IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

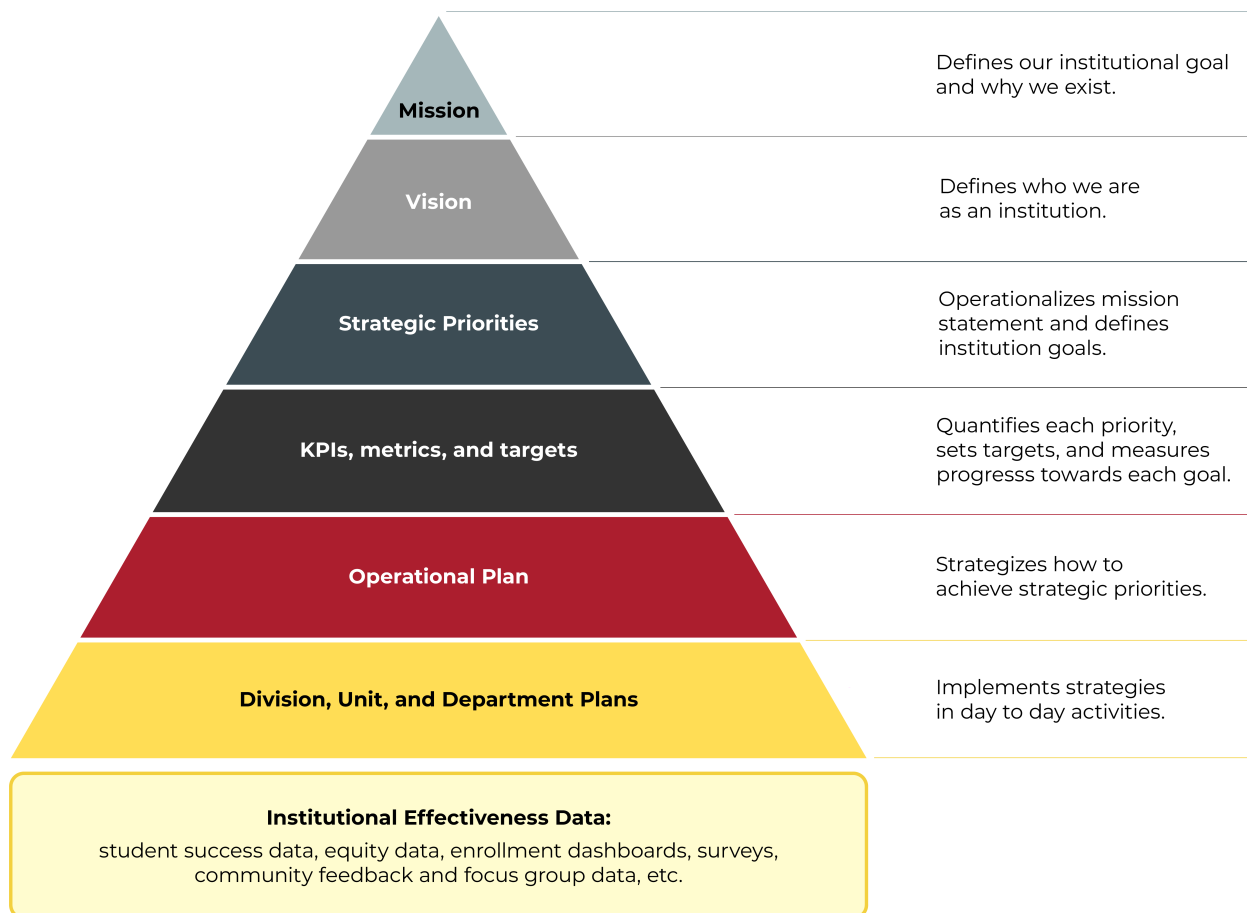
STANDARD 1.B.1 ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

SVC has established an integrated planning system that ensures alignment from the college’s mission statement down to unit-level planning. This approach ensures that all planning at the college is integrated, clearly defined, systemic, and focused on achieving the objective outcomes of the [Strategic Plan](#). The [planning pyramid](#) (below), adopted in 2023, illustrates the hierarchy of planning elements, their respective purposes, and the alignment of all planning at the institution with mission fulfillment.

Skagit Valley College Planning Pyramid



At the top of the pyramid are the mission and vision, which state our institutional goal and define why we exist and who we are as an institution. Next, the five college-wide strategic priorities operationalize our mission statement, define our institutional goals, and provide a guide and focus for the work of the institution. The next level of the pyramid highlights the KPIs associated with each strategic priority goal and offers detailed metrics and objective targets that provide the foundation for all operational planning and program review. Moving down the pyramid to another level, the operational planning process provides initiatives, processes, resource allocation and policies designed to support and realize SVC's strategic priorities, goals and objectives. Finally, the institutional Operational Plan guides the formation of each Division, Unit, Area, and Departmental plan, which are designed to address specific areas of the college (e.g., academic, facilities, strategic enrollment plans, etc.).

All SVC Divisional, Unit, and Department plans align their strategies, activities, and goals to specific institutional strategic priorities. The difference between long-term (four-year) strategic planning and annual operational planning is that Operational Plans, both institutional-wide and within specific divisions, involve narrower, more limited, and more specific actions that areas take to fulfill objectives during a given year. However, each of these is designed to move the institution one step closer to achieving one or more of its strategic priority goals. Since all operational planning objectives flow from one or more strategic goals, and each strategic goal operationalizes SVC's mission and vision, this integrated planning process allows SVC employees to see how operational planning within any given area connects directly to achieve SVC's mission-based goals. Furthermore, during the program review process, employees can find points of collaboration where other areas are working on overlapping or related objectives.

Undergirding the entire pyramid is SVC's [Institutional Effectiveness Data](#). These data are available college-wide and range from high-level strategic priority KPI data to specific data on financial aid, departmental enrollment, and individual courses. Integrating systemic use of these data into each level of the institution is the goal of the current plan. This integrated planning approach ensures that all planning elements, from the broad college mission to the individual Unit plans, are interconnected and carefully align to contribute to achieving SVC strategic priorities. By defining clear goals, detailed objectives, and targeted strategies, the college can effectively work towards its mission and continuously improve its operations, services, and educational offerings.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

MISSION FULFILLMENT

SVC's five Strategic Priorities create the framework for assessing overall institutional effectiveness at the college. Together they cover the areas of 1) Student Success (including student learning and achievement), 2) Equity, 3) Enrollment/Student Access, 4) Institutional Capacity, and 5) Community Engagement. Each Strategic Priority has multiple goals with associated KPIs, metrics, and objective targets to achieve by the end

of the four-year Strategic Plan. These targets represent the highest-level objective data that demonstrate our effectiveness as an institution. Each strategic priority is formally assessed annually in a [performance report](#) presented to the SVC Board of Trustees. These reports include not only data on progress toward final objective targets, but also context from local and national peer comparisons, longitudinal data on progress over time, lessons learned, obstacles encountered, and strategies for immediate and long-term improvement. The data from these reports are widely shared throughout the college. The college president engages in six college-wide meetings during the year and shares out the data from one strategic priority at each meeting. The sixth meeting covers the overall process of strategic and institutional planning, including program review and shared governance approaches. The strategic priority performance report data also serve to guide all other assessments of institutional effectiveness throughout the organization.

AREA PROGRAM REVIEW

SVC has a strong institutional commitment to continuous program improvement and has expanded its program review process to encompass all areas of the college. [Area program review](#) is integral to both assessing institutional effectiveness and to the college operational planning process. Program review processes are divided into three broad college areas 1) Academic Affairs, 2) Student Support Services, and 3) College Support Services.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

In the [Academic Affairs Division Instructional Program Review](#) includes four main components. A critical review of 1) student access, 2) student achievement, 3) student learning, and 4) student feedback (student voice). These areas within each instructional program review were established with knowledge of, in coordination with, and in support of the achievement of institutional strategic priorities and metrics. The Instructional Program Review in Academic Affairs occurs over a four-year cycle, with an annual examination of program effectiveness (examining access, achievement, student voice, and one third of learning outcomes) and a four-year comprehensive review process.

STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Assessment of student learning outcomes is embedded into the academic affairs program review process under the third area, “student learning.” Student Learning is SVC’s comprehensive assessment of all program, course, and general education learning outcomes. Every SVC instructional program has established [clearly identified learning outcomes](#). The SVC [website](#) has descriptions of each type of learning outcome assessed at the college. Each year, faculty formally assess one third of their program and general education learning outcomes. Over the course of three years, all general education and program learning outcomes are formally assessed. In Year Four of the Academic Affairs Program Review process, results from learning outcomes are integrated into an analysis of the other three areas of instructional program review: student access, student

feedback, and most importantly, student retention, transition, and completion data. In this way, an assessment of student learning is integrated into an assessment of student achievement at the program level. These data are then integrated into a larger analysis and assessment of institutional completion rates, opportunity gaps, and progress toward institutional strategic targets in student achievement and equity.

Program faculty complete [annual evaluations](#) on student learning and achievement; the results of these evaluations are used to make improvements in curriculum, learning assessment, and program and course structure. Operational planning needs are submitted to instructional deans for integration into the college's annual operational planning process through the vice president of academic affair's office.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Support Services currently performs annual [program review](#) in eight functional areas including 1) Enrollment Services, 2) Financial Aid, 3) Advising, 4) Tutoring, 5) Student Life, 6) International Programs, 7) Disability Access Services, and 8) Student Communications. Program review in student support services is centered on functional services rather than discrete units and departments to more effectively assess services provided to students. Each assessed area uses the KPIs and one or more targets from a single institutional strategic priority as their overall outcome metric of "effectiveness" (e.g. Enrollment Services is centered on student access and Advising is centered on student success). Within this context, Student Support Services also has a wide range of more specific data with which to track strategies and interventions. These include data around use of drop-in advising services, open rates of text and email messaging through our CRM tool, TargetX, and student engagement data using our Cardinal Connect platform that populates clubs, events, and activities in which students participate.

COLLEGE SUPPORT SERVICES

The newest area of the college to undergo [program review](#) is College Support Services. These are the areas of the college that make possible the work of teaching and learning and student support. Facilities, IT, HR, Business Office, Marketing, Institutional Research, Office of Equity and Inclusion, grants, and budgeting all fall under College Support Services. SVC is doing a phased in approach to program review in this area. Currently, program review is occurring in the areas of Human Resources, Business Office/Business Services, IT, grants, and budgeting. These areas were chosen because they represented the most pressing need for improvement. College Support Services are aligned with the Strategic Priority of Institutional Capacity and were created in response to that priority. The focus of program review in these areas is in providing excellent and useful service to other areas of the college in support of achieving our institutional priorities. College Support Services currently undergo program review on a biennial timeline.

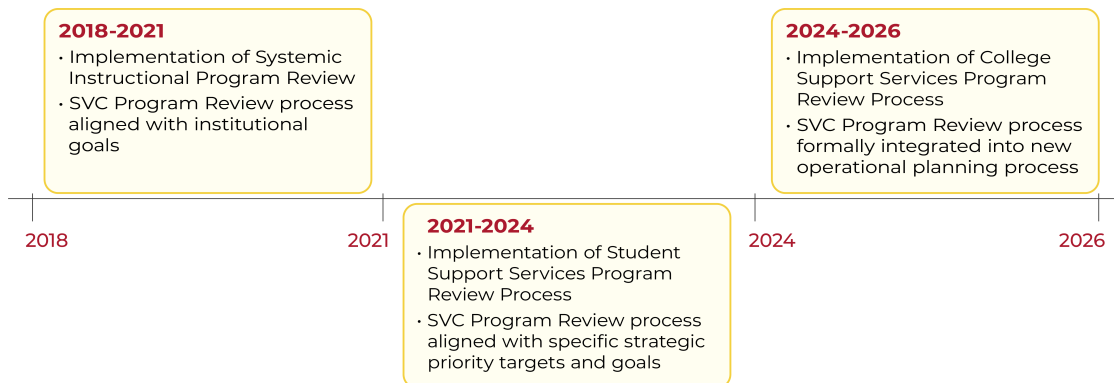
SVC is currently transitioning to an annual planning model in which all operational planning requests will result from the program review process. In this way, the college can ensure 1) all requests for funding, positions, interventions, etc. are specifically linked

to one or more Strategic Priority, and 2) that before a planning need is submitted, the area or Unit has had a chance to evaluate the effectiveness of its activities in the context of its measured output, which in turn is aligned with one of the strategic priorities. Requests for funding, positions, interventions, activities, etc. from all areas of the college can then be assessed in terms of their impact on achieving strategic objectives within the larger institutional framework.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

SVC is excited to continue the process of integrating the results of area program review into our planning process and assessment of institutional effectiveness. While the college has a strong tradition of effectively assessing mission fulfillment, we have struggled to systematically 1) share these assessments with the wider college community, and 2) integrate the results of institutional assessment data into the college planning process. Over the last several years, the college has not only revised its Strategic Plan, but also the operational planning process that seeks to accomplish the strategic goals of the institution. The implementation of program review in both student support services as well as College Support Services, along with a focus on internal data (see 1.D.2 Opportunities and Next Steps for a further discussion of institutional data capacity) will help to better assess mission fulfillment and better inform the planning process. The college still has exciting work to do to better link the results of area program review with both overall institutional effectiveness and operational planning. Beginning in 2023, the college started the process of moving all operational planning requests through the program review process. 2024-2025 will be the first year that college support services will engage in program review, and only a subset of areas will engage in that process. Over the next few years, all college support services will begin engaging in area program review. The highlighted milestones of the SVC institutional program review system’s evolution are depicted in the following chart.

Implementation Timeline for Systemic Institutional Program Review



STANDARD 1.B.2 DEFINITIONS, METRICS, AND GOALS FOR IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND INDICATORS

In the fall quarter of 2024, the SVC Board of Trustees adopted a new [Institutional Strategic Plan](#). This strategic planning process was the result of more than a year's worth of input from and consultation with students, staff, faculty, administrators, board members, and communities we serve. The process was deeply informed by a comprehensive examination of our internal and external environments including data on student success, employee sense of belonging, student enrollment data, and the NWCCU accreditation standards. The [2024-2028 SVC Strategic Plan](#) is comprised of 1) the college mission statement, 2) the college vision statement, 3) five institutional strategic priorities, and 4) outcome statements, KPIs, metrics and targets (goals) for each strategic priority. As described in section 1.A.1, the mission statement outlines our reason for existing as an institutional of higher education, the vision statement helps to define who we are as a community, and the strategic priorities operationalize and define how we will fulfill our mission. Each of the five strategic priorities include specific outcome-based objectives that give the institution objective goals to attain by the end of the (four-year) Strategic Plan. The outcomes, targets, and key performance indicators (KPIs) associated with each strategic priority allow us to measure progress toward our long-term strategic goals and guide the college's annual operational planning and program review processes.

The Strategic Plan is SVC's guide to achieving its institutional mission for the next four years and beyond. Together, the Mission and Vision Statements, the five Strategic Priorities, and the outcomes, KPIs, and targets, and the annual Strategic Priority Performance Reports (formerly Core Theme Progress Reports) define how we, as a college community, conceptualize, measure, and evaluate mission fulfillment. The current plan defines mission fulfillment as meeting or exceeding targets from the KPIs embedded within each of the five Strategic Priorities. As the college pursues mission fulfillment, the President's Cabinet, the Board of Trustees, and the college community review annual performance reports demonstrating progress toward achieving each strategic priority. The following table illustrates how the Strategic Priorities are operationalized and how they function to guide and assess Institutional Effectiveness and Mission Fulfillment. This information is also found in the [Institutional Program Review](#) section of the college's website.

SVC Strategic Priority Outcomes Statements, KPIS, Metrics, and Targets

Strategic Priority: Student Success	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #1	Improve completion rates for all degree-seeking students
KPI	Completion rates for degree seeking students
METRIC	Percent of degree seeking students who successfully complete a degree, certificate, and/or transfer to a four-year institution within three years of initialing enrolling at Skagit Valley College
TARGET(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase overall completion rate by 6% from 36% (2024) to 42% (by 2028) ■ Increase completion for students enrolled in Professional Technical programs by 5% from 45% (2024) to 50% (by 2028) ■ Increase completion for students enrolled in Academic-Transfer programs by 6% from 32% (2024) to 38% (by 2028) ■ Increase completion for students enrolled in bachelor’s programs by 10% from 70% (2024) to 80% (by 2028)
OUTCOME STATEMENT #2	Maintain strong employment rates for workforce and BAS program completers
KPI	Employment Rates
METRIC	Percentage of professional technical or bachelor’s degree graduates who are employed nine months post degree completion
TARGET	Maintain a minimum of 75% of students will be employed nine months post completion from SVC

CONTEXT

Three-year completion rates were analyzed in the context of 1) SVC’s selected cohort of local peers, SVC’s cohort of national peers, 3) the Washington State Community and Technical College system average, and 4) an internal analysis of SVC completion rates. Post-completion (nine-month) employment rates were analyzed in the context of 1) historical post-completion employment rate trends, 2) the Washington State Community and Technical College system average, and 3) the employment rate within the college’s district and the state.

Strategic Priority: Equity	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #1	Eliminate opportunity (equity) gaps in student success
KPI	Opportunity gaps in student completion rates

Strategic Priority: Equity	
METRIC	Three-year completion rates for all degree seeking students disaggregated by race/ethnicity
TARGET	Decrease Hispanic/Latino equity gap by 8% from 11% (2024) to 3% (by 2028)
OUTCOME STATEMENT #2	Achieve and maintain HSI status and apply for and receive federal funding
KPI	Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status
METRIC	HSI designation and Title V funding eligibility
TARGET(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listed as an HSI by national high education Latino advocacy non-profits (e.g. Excelencia in Education, Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU)) ■ Apply for eligibility and receive federal Title V funding
OUTCOME STATEMENT #3	Increase employee diversity
KPI	Campus climate employee sense of belonging
METRIC	Biennial results of HEDs survey identifying employee sense of belonging
TARGET(S)	Increase SVC employee sense of belonging by 15% from 50% (2023) to 65% (2027)
OUTCOME STATEMENT #4	Improve employee sense of belonging
KPI	Employee diversity
METRIC	Diversity metrics for SVC employees (e.g. age, race, gender)
TARGET	A diverse population of employees that understands the lived experiences of our students and community

CONTEXT

An internal analysis of equity gaps by race/ethnicity demonstrated that students who identified as Hispanic/Latino have the largest and most persistent gap for all categories. Therefore, the college has prioritized addressing this gap in the current four-year Strategic Plan. SVC also analyzed equity gaps for Hispanic/Latino students in the context of SVC’s selected cohort of local and national peers as well as the Washington State Community and Technical College System average. SVC has the largest percentage of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Hispanic/Latino degree seeking students in Western Washington. The college identified a goal of becoming an HSI in 2012. HSI status, focus, identification, and funding will help to address the large equity gap in student completion in students who identify as Hispanic/Latino.

In April 2022, SVC administered the first nationally normed survey of student and employee sense of belonging, equity, and inclusion (HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus

Climate Survey). Previously SVC utilized its own survey of employee satisfaction (SVC Employee Vision and Climate Survey). The results of this (previous) survey tended to indicate an employee/climate satisfaction of 80% or greater. There was widespread campus distrust in this instrument. The HEDS instrument allowed the college to analyze the results of the survey in the context of other community and technical colleges across the nation. In spring of 2024, the college implemented its first professional development institutional day to support professional development of all employees. Given the HEDS survey results, the college prioritized institutional day to focus on building a supportive place to work and identify interventions surrounding bias, and specifically diversity, equity, and inclusion topics. Part of the outcomes under the Equity Strategic Priority is to improve employee sense of belonging and have a college employee workforce that is diverse by understanding the lived experiences of our students and communities.

Strategic Priority: Enrollment/Student Access	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #1	Increase overall enrollment (FTEs)
KPI	Total Institutional enrollment
METRIC	Total annualized student Full Time Equivalent (FTE); State annualized FTE
TARGET(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase total FTES by 1,131 from 3,269 (2023-2024) to 4,400 ■ Increase State FTES by 1,322 from 2,544 (2023-2024) to 3,866
OUTCOME STATEMENT #2	Achieve goals for targeted student populations
KPI	Four targeted tuition bearing student groups
METRIC	Annualized FTEs for: 1) state tuition students, 2) Running Start students, 3) international students, 4) bachelor's students
TARGET(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ State Tuition: increase of 161 FTEs from 1,884 (2023-2024) to 2,500 ■ Running Start: increase of 76 FTEs from 539 (2023-2024) to 615 ■ Bachelor's: increase of 76 FTEs from 54 (2023-2024) to 130 ■ International: increase of 35 FTEs from 42 (2023-2024) to 77
OUTCOME STATEMENT #3	Achieve and maintain 25% or greater degree seeking students who identify as Hispanic/Latino
KPI	Hispanic/Latino degree seeking students
METRIC	FTE percent of degree seeking students who identify as Hispanic/Latino (IPEDS definition)
TARGET(S)	25% or greater FTE degree seeking students who identify as Hispanic/Latino
OUTCOME STATEMENT #4	Create pipeline to increase Native American student access
KPI	Pathways to college for potential students who identify as Native American/American Indian

Strategic Priority: Enrollment/Student Access	
METRIC	Headcount of degree seeking students who identify as Native American/ American Indian
TARGET(S)	A substantial increase in the number of SVC students who identify as Native American/American Indian

CONTEXT

SVC surveyed national and local (state) enrollment trends to set our enrollment targets for the end of this Strategic Plan. For the last two years, SVC has outperformed the enrollment increases seen at the state and national levels. The college's state allocation is set at 3,692 State FTEs and this was also taken into account when setting these targets. Overall, the institution is moving toward an enrollment strategy that is increasingly more dynamic, less reactive, and modeled on optimal levels of enrollment needed to provide our students with the services they need to be successful. An internal analysis of disaggregated student enrollment and completion rates struggled to document the experience of students who identified as Native American because too few students were enrolled in programs. SVC was deeply honored to host the first Government to Government Summit between Pacific Northwestern Tribes and Colleges for the North region in spring 2023. This historic event aimed to build and sustain meaningful relationships and was part of a collaboration with the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to advance local indigenous knowledges and improve access to post-secondary education, career, and technical training.

Strategic Priority: Institutional Capacity	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #1	Improve employee climate satisfaction
KPI	Measures of campus climate and employee satisfaction
METRIC	HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey
TARGET(S)	Increase percentage of SVC employees reporting a positive campus environment by 7% (to 1% point above the community college national average of 79%) from 73% (HEDS 2023) to 80%
OUTCOME STATEMENT #2	Increase student participation/response rates to annual surveys
KPI	RNL Student Satisfaction Inventory
METRIC	Measures of student satisfaction
TARGET(S)	Increase student response rate by 15%, from 5% (2024) to 20%; identify series of questions on the SSI survey to baseline positive campus climate to at or above average of west coast community colleges/Washington state community college group

Strategic Priority: Institutional Capacity	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #3	Maintain indicators of strong institutional fiscal health
KPI	Composite Score of Key Financial Health Indicators
METRIC	The CFI is a comprehensive measure that combines multiple financial ratios—including primary reserve ratio, net income ratio, return on net assets, and viability ratio—into a single score. A score above 3.0 indicates strong financial health, while a score below 1.0 signals financial stress.
TARGET(S)	Maintain a CFI score of at least 3.0 each fiscal year , ensuring the college maintains financial stability and long-term sustainability. This will require continued fiscal oversight, controlled expense growth, and diversified revenue streams.
OUTCOME STATEMENT #4	Reduce staffing turnover rates
KPI	Staffing/position sustainability
METRIC	Annual and/or average turnover rate
TARGET(S)	Achieve staff turnover rate of less than 30%; establish baseline turnover rate by 2025
OUTCOME STATEMENT #5	Improve culture, organization, resources, and/or efficiency in the following college support service areas: HR, IT, Business Office, budgeting, grants, Institutional Research, Marketing/Outreach
KPI	Efficacy of college support services
METRIC	Program review data establishing, reviewing, and creating improvement plans for the effectiveness of targeted areas: Human Resources, Information Technology, Business Office, Grants and Budgeting, Institutional Research, Admin Support Services, and Marketing/Outreach
TARGET(S)	Demonstrated improvements in culture, organization, resources, and/or efficiency in: HR, IT, Business Office, Institutional Research, budgeting, grants, the college website

CONTEXT

In the latter half of the accreditation cycle, employee turnover became more prevalent due in part to COVID and the “great resignation.” As noted in the Preface, SVC saw a sharp increase in employee separations between 2022 and 2024. This trend in high turnover has also been noted by many of our peer colleges (e.g. Mount Hood Community College). SVC recognizes the importance of tracking staff turnover rates, as they are a strong predictor of employee satisfaction, workplace culture and the overall health of an organization. High turnover can be costly due to recruitment and training, loss of productivity and loss of institutional knowledge. By benchmarking our turnover rates to peer colleges, and through analysis of department trends, SVC hopes to demonstrate to our employees and community that the retention of employees is a strategic priority.

During the current accreditation cycle, SVC had continued to survey its faculty and staff biennially through the SVC Employee Vision and Services Survey. As a “homegrown” survey internally it did not yield data that were able to be compared in context to other similar institutions. Results of the EVSS survey were not widely trusted or shared throughout the college, and they tended to show high faculty and staff satisfaction rates. In fall of 2021, in response to Washington SB 5227 (Diversity in Higher Education), the college committed to using the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey. The survey was administered in spring of 2022 and results became available to the college in fall of 2022. Data from the survey indicated that SVC faculty and staff were significantly less satisfied with the campus climate overall and indicated a reduced sense of belonging compared to peer intuitions. Fiscal stability was selected as a strategic priority to ensure a transparent and data-informed approach to financial stewardship. By sharing key metrics such as the Composite Financial Index (CFI), net tuition revenue trends, and deferred maintenance values, we have the ability to provide a clear understanding of the institution’s financial health. This commitment enables informed decision-making, promotes accountability, and supports long-term sustainability. During the process of creating a new Strategic Plan for the institution, meetings with employees yielded consistent feedback on the lack of support provided by college support services, which in turn gave rise to feelings of frustration and a sense of being overwhelmed. Many staff and faculty shared stories of either wanting to leave their positions, or stories of others who had left the college because of this lack of support. These same conversations were happening at the mid-level management level between Deans and Directors and VPs, as well as at the Cabinet level. “Death by a thousand cuts” became the SVC shorthand for this phenomenon. Through this feedback process, the college committed to improving college support services and functions, both by adding “Institutional Capacity” to the strategic priorities, as well as specifically highlighting the need to implement program review into this area of the college.

Strategic Priority: Community Engagement	
OUTCOME STATEMENT #1	Improve College visibility and reputation in the community
KPI	College visibility and reputation in the community
METRIC	Feedback and input from a newly established community taskforce; community focus group data
TARGET(S)	Maintain and improve reputation for effectively serving the community and its needs
OUTCOME STATEMENT #2	Maintain and increase strong community partnerships
KPI	College and community partnerships
METRIC	1) number, funding, and hours for Job Skills Programs (JSPs); 2) total assets for SVC Foundation.

Strategic Priority: Community Engagement

TARGET(S)

Maintain the number and quality of JSP projects. Approximately five projects per year and approximately \$500,000 per year in awards. Increase in foundation endowment of \$7 million, from \$28 million (2024) to a target of \$35 million by the end of 2028.

PRIOR STRATEGIC PLAN INDICATORS

PLANNING

The 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, adopted in November of 2024, includes five strategic priorities that enhance, build on, and ultimately replace the previous three Core Themes of 1) Equity in Access, 2) Equity in Achievement, and 3) Equity in Community. The previous Core Themes each had one or more objective statements associated with them as well as indicators of achievement. However, the Core Themes only had a threshold measure that the college aimed to stay at or above in order to satisfy mission fulfillment and lacked specific targets. This lack of specificity in outcomes led to difficulty in planning priorities. For example, Objective 1 of the Core Theme of Achievement stated that “students should achieve their educational goals.” Two indicators focused on workforce and transfer student completion. However, the threshold defined for achievement of the outcomes statement was to “be at or above the WA SBCTC system average” for completion. This is a difficult measure to plan to achieve, as the results of system averages are available about a year after the fact. The new strategic priorities utilize data from local and national peers, as well as internal data on student completion, to set a specific goal for improving student completion by 8% in four years’ time.

ASSESSMENT

Data were systematically used to annually assess institutional effectiveness in the previous strategic and operational planning process. Available data were largely high-level measures adequate for assessment of institutional effectiveness, and for comparisons with other institutions. These data were able to inform institutional level planning. However, data for internal interventions and specific Unit and program level planning were not widely available, accurate, or systematically discussed.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PEERS

SVC selected [regional benchmark institutions](#) from the following characteristics: degree-granting four-year, primarily associates, 2021 Carnegie classification of Associates Dominant, public and enrollment of similar size, geographic locations, and institutional demographics. Because SVC has just become a Hispanic Serving Institution, HSI or emerging HSI status was also considered. The following are regional peer colleges that SVC uses to benchmark its metrics: Centralia College, WA, Columbia Basin College, WA, Yakima Valley College, WA, Peninsula College, WA, Wenatchee Valley College, WA, and Whatcom Community College, WA. Our comparison data is drawn from the Tableau dashboards maintained by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

SVC uses data provided by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to benchmark its performance against national peers. SVC uses the IPEDS Compare Institutions Tool to pull metrics of interest. National benchmark institutions were selected from the following characteristics: degree granting four-year, primarily associates, 2021 Carnegie classification of Associates Dominant, public and enrollment of a similar size. SVC would like to note there is ample peer reviewed published literature discussing the difficulty in comparing community colleges from different state systems. Unlike traditional four-year colleges and universities, which are fairly uniform in structure, function, and composition nationally, community colleges vary greatly based on how a given state has structured their system. Given this, choosing national peers remains something of an art and not a science. That said, these are the following national peer colleges that SVC uses to benchmark its metrics: Chemeketa Community College, OR, Clackamas Community College, OR, Mt. Hood Community College, OR, North Idaho College, ID, Pima Community College, AZ, and Scottsdale Community College, AZ.

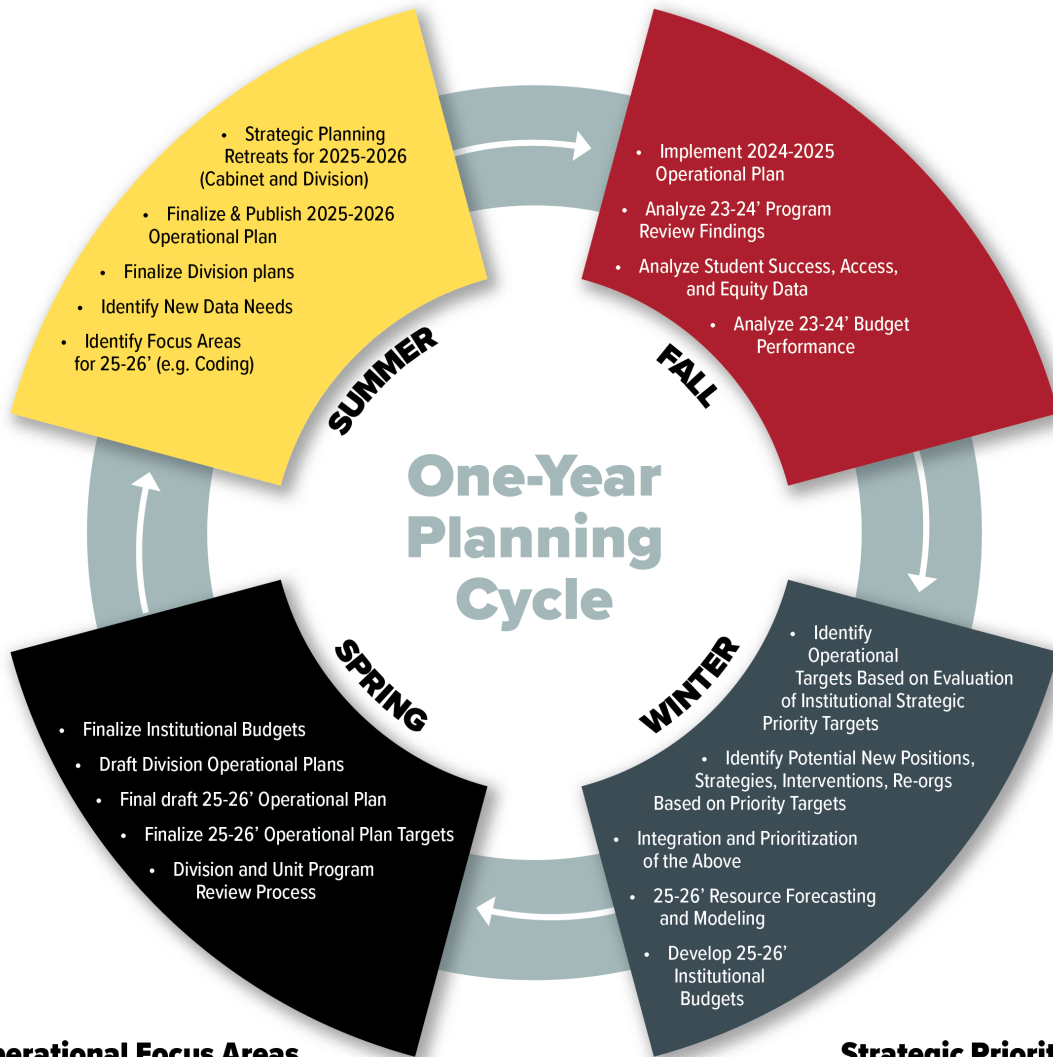
EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

SVC evaluates mission fulfillment through our Institutional Effectiveness process. Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness is the culminating part of a college-wide area program review and an institutional focus on continuous program improvement. The SVC webpage on [Institutional Program Review](#) demonstrates how the assessment of overall institutional effectiveness toward mission fulfillment is part of an institutional focus on assessing effectiveness (defined by an achievement of the college's strategic priorities) at each level and in each area of the college.

Reports utilizing internal, system, and peer data on the effectiveness and achievement of each priority in the Strategic Plan are presented annually to the SVC Board of Trustees and shared widely with the SVC community. These [Annual Strategic Priority Performance Reports](#) (previously [Core Theme Progress Reports](#)) demonstrate SVC's progress toward achieving its strategic priorities and provide comprehensive analysis of each objective within the core theme, telling our story of mission fulfillment, and providing a framework for future planning and resource allocation. The college has regularly published these reports since 2013 on its website. Reports from before 2017-18 will be provided upon request.

[Standardized institutional data](#) are available at both institutional, area (e.g. academic affairs, student support services, college support services), and individual division, Unit, and department levels and used to both inform and direct strategic and operational planning as well as the [institutional program review process](#). SVC's current operational planning process formally integrates these data annually at the start of the planning process.

2024-2025 SVC Operational Planning Cycle



Operational Focus Areas

1. Coding
2. Food Services
3. Strategic Grants

Strategic Priorities

1. Student Success
2. Equity
3. Enrollment
4. Institutional Capacity
5. Community Engagement

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

SVC has made steady progress in improving student completion rates. In comparison to the [Washington State SBCTC system](#), SVC three-year completion rates have improved by 14% over the last decade, versus 3% in the SBCTC system. SVC completion rates currently average 5%-8% points above the system average; a decade ago we consistently averaged at least 5% below the system average. Furthermore, this improvement holds true across a wide range of disaggregated student demographics, including race/ethnicity, gender, age, and first-generation status. For example, students of color currently average 5% points above the system average, part-time students average 9% points over the system average, Hispanic/Latino students average 10% points above the system average, and low-income students average 4% above.

However, while celebrating this significant improvement, the college continues to be committed to ameliorating [opportunity gaps](#) in terms of absolute measures (rather than only comparatively), which remains a significant challenge to our institution. As discussed above, the college's new Strategic Plan has moved from a "maintenance model" where adequate Mission Fulfillment was determined relative to being "at or above the system average" to an outcomes improvement model that aims to both dramatically improve student success rates as well as to eliminate equity gaps across a wide range of student demographics. We believe the creation of clear, measurable targets that drive the operational planning process will significantly enhance the success we've seen in student success over the last decade. Furthermore, the college also recognizes that it has more work to do in terms of our utilization of national and regional cohorts. While the college did utilize these peer cohorts in the setting of targets for student success and equity, we recognize more is to be done in terms of evaluating success against these cohort groups. We are committed to creating a process that regularly reviews and updates these institutions to ensure that they provide more meaningful and appropriate comparisons.

STANDARD 1.B.3 INCLUSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The institution provides evidence that its planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

BROAD-BASED PLANNING PROCESSES

Skagit Valley College is committed to engaging its stakeholders at all levels of planning. The college recently adopted our new Strategic Plan. This process was the result of input from and consultation with students, staff, faculty, administrators, board members, and communities we serve. The Strategic Plan is SVC's guide to achieving its institutional mission for the next four years and beyond. While the Strategic Plan is developed at the institutional level, operationalization and implementation primarily occur within various Units throughout the college, leading to a process that is broad-based and open to input from appropriate constituencies.

STUDENTS

Student feedback undergirds all SVC planning processes. We use the Ruffalo Noel Levitz [Student Satisfaction Survey \(SSI\)](#) to annually assess student satisfaction and feedback in relation to achieving educational goals, student support services; physical facilities and campus safety, climate assessment of belonging and core diversity indicators, overall college experience, achievement of degree outcomes, and access to high impact practices. Additionally, students are represented in all shared governance standing committees as well as in all tenure committees.

CLASSIFIED, ADMINISTRATIVE, FACULTY, AND EXEMPT STAFF

Employee feedback is a key factor in achieving our Strategic Priorities, especially in the areas of Institutional Capacity and Equity. One of the primary methods for gathering systematic feedback is through the biennial administration of the [HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey](#) along with representation on [Shared Governance Councils](#). The purpose of the HEDS Survey is to gauge and assess employees' perceptions of and experiences at SVC in the context of other community colleges. The college has also conducted several follow up focus group sessions among targeted groups of faculty and staff provided by an independent provider. This feedback provides invaluable data to assist in the shaping and optimizing of institutional goals, and well as an evaluation of mission fulfillment and effectiveness.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

As evidenced by our strategic priority of community engagement, SVC consistently seeks opportunities to be involved with and contribute to advancing education attainment and economic development within our local community. The college maintains strong and systemic engagement with community K-12 partners, four-year institution partners, and business and industry leaders. The SVC president meets regularly with all local school superintendents and with higher education presidents in our community. Additionally, SVC gathers feedback from community members through ongoing collaboration with local community organizations, nonprofits, businesses, and government agencies to establish feedback channels and gather input from a broad range of community members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. For example, as part of our process to become a designated HSI, the college created an HSI Taskforce composed of key positions inside the college as well as community partners from local school districts, non-profits, and community leaders. The taskforce met over the course of several months to discuss how best to support enrollment, engagement, and completion of Latino students in the college's culture, programs, and support services. Recommendations from this task force were delivered to the college president to inform the institution's next steps in becoming an HSI. Similarly, in the spring of 2023, SVC was deeply honored to host the first Government to Government Summit between Northwestern Tribes and Colleges for the North region. This historical event aimed to build and sustain meaningful relationships between Tribes and institutions of higher education and was part of a collaboration with Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

(SBCTC) to advance local indigenous knowledges and improve access to post-secondary education, career, and technical training. Finally, all SVC professional technical and bachelor's degree programs have community/industry based Advisory Committees that are a mechanism for engaging with employers and other industry stakeholders to ensure program alignment to workforce needs. SVC convenes advisory committees for each of its workforce degree programs to provide regular input on employer demand and needs in their areas of expertise.

The table below provides an overview of faculty, classified staff, administrative-exempt, and student representation on shared governance councils and committees.

Shared Governance Councils and Committees	Members
<p>PRESIDENT'S CABINET/EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM Cabinet is the chief administrative body of the college and assists the president in decision-making and in the leadership and management of the college. Cabinet also serves as the major planning and policy body of the college, and is responsible for operational planning, policy development, institutional effectiveness, budget oversight and coordination of the shared governance system within the college. Cabinet reviews measures of mission fulfillment, strategic priorities, KPIs, targets, and indicators of effectiveness. Cabinet is responsible for producing annual performance reports on each strategic priority for the Board of Trustees and the college community (Mission Fulfillment).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ President, Skagit Valley College ■ Vice President of Academic Affairs ■ Vice President for Student Services ■ Vice President of Administrative Services ■ Vice President for Equity and Inclusion ■ Vice President of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness ■ Vice President of Human Resources ■ Vice President for College Advancement ■ President's Executive Assistant

Shared Governance Councils and Committees	Members
<p>INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP Instructional Leadership provides training, support, evaluation, and vision for the academic affairs division, to ensure effective instructional programs. IL provides collaborative leadership for the college and community to foster equitable learning environments and the achievement of the college’s strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vice President of Academic Affairs ■ Executive Dean for Arts and Sciences ■ Executive Dean for Workforce Education ■ Dean of Basic Education of Adults and English for Academic Purposes ■ Dean of Health Sciences ■ Dean of Libraries, Learning Resources, and eLearning ■ Associate Dean of Workforce Programs ■ Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences ■ Associate Dean of Workforce Education Pathways
<p>STUDENT SERVICES LEADERSHIP Student Services Leadership provides leadership, administration, and evaluation of policies, programs, and strategic activities relevant to Student Services at SVC. SSL coordinates and implements programs and activities that help achieve targets and goals set through overall strategic and operational planning processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vice President for Student Services ■ Dean of Enrollment Services ■ Dean of Advising and Student Success ■ Associate Dean of Student Support Programs ■ Executive Director of Financial Aid ■ Director of Student Life ■ Director of Workforce Grants
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE LEADERSHIP Administrative and Finance Leadership oversees the alignment of funding, technology, facilities, and equipment with the college’s strategic priorities. This team ensures the efficient allocation and management of resources to support the college’s goals, fostering a sustainable and effective environment for student success and institutional growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Administrator (1) ■ Exempt Professional Staff (6)

Shared Governance Councils and Committees	Members
<p>GOVERNANCE STEERING COMMITTEE The Governance Steering Committee (GSC) receives and distributes requests for changes in governance policy. Specifically, the GSC: 1) Receives issues and distributes to the appropriate standing committee(s) requests for changes in governance. If the request is determined to be a non-governance issue, the GSC notifies the original requestor, and the president; 2) Reviews reports and recommendations of committee(s) or individual(s) to ensure that the charge has been carried out using the appropriate governance procedures; and 3) Monitors the overall effectiveness of the governance structure, processes, and procedures and makes recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of college governance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Administrators (2) ■ Faculty (2) ■ Classified Staff (2) ■ Exempt Professional Staff (2) ■ Students (2)
<p>STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE The Student Services Committee develops policies and procedures in the area of student programs and services. Specifically, the SCC: 1) reviews and makes recommendations related to Special Programs/units associated with supporting student success; Student Activities; Academic Records and Academic Standards; Matriculation; and Student Rights and Responsibilities; 2) collaborates with the Curriculum Committee where both committees have a vested interest in and responsibility for policies and/or procedures. Selects a representative to participate in the In-Service Planning Committee; 3) addresses other Student Services-related policies and procedures as requested through the GSC by the president or the vice president for student services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Student Services Administrators (2) ■ Student Services Exempt Professional Staff (2) ■ Faculty (2) ■ Student Services Classified Staff(2) ■ Students (2)
<p>EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE The Equity and Social Justice Committee provides expertise and leadership to the college and larger community regarding district-wide policies and practices that promote equity, accountability, and a sense of belonging for the global majority. The work of the ESJ is directed towards a college environment that is inclusive, resulting in policies and practices that are anti-racist and equitable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vice President for Equity and Inclusion ■ Faculty (2) ■ Classified Staff (1) ■ Exempt Professional Staff (1) ■ Administers (2) ■ Students (1)

Shared Governance Councils and Committees	Members
<p>PROGRAM REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE The Program Review and Assessment Committee oversees and helps coordinate the college’s assessment of course, program, and general education learning outcomes, including the use of assessment results in planning and improvement. PRAC reviews and makes recommendations on academic standards, policies, and practices as they relate to learning outcomes assessment. Specifically, the Program Review and Assessment Committee: 1) reviews and makes recommendations on academic standards, policies, and practices as they relate to the assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, and general education levels; 2) assists with the training and coordination of student learning outcomes assessment and supports the role of assessment in the program review process; 3) collaborates with the Curriculum and General Education Committees to ensure meaningful assessment of student learning outcomes and to plan for improvement; and 4) addresses other instructional policies and procedures as requested through the GSC by the president or the vice president of academic affairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Faculty Assessment Liaison ■ Instructional Dean (1) ■ Faculty (4) ■ Library Faculty (1) ■ Students (1)
<p>SAFETY COMMITTEE Meeting as required by statute and rule, the Safety Committee provides expertise and leadership to the college in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and students and in accordance WAC 296-800-130.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Faculty (3) ■ Classified Staff (3) ■ Exempt Professional Staff (3) ■ Administrators (3) ■ Students (1)
<p>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE The Information Technology Committee, meeting once each quarter (excluding summer), provides a forum for reviewing, evaluating, and recommending acquisitions, strategies, planning, program development, and policies for campus information technology to support and advance the college’s mission, vision, values, and Strategic Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Faculty (2) ■ Exempt Professional Staff (1) ■ Classified Staff (1) ■ Administrators (2) ■ Whidbey Island Campus Representative (1) ■ Students (1)

Shared Governance Councils and Committees	Members
<p>CURRICULUM COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Curriculum Committee (CC) provides the college community with expertise, leadership, research, and analyses of college instructional programs. The CC is charged with ensuring that the curriculum is current, relevant and data-informed, and results in expected student learning outcomes at the course and program levels, including collaboration with the Program Review and Assessment Committee in the mapping of courses to program level outcomes, assessment, and planning for improvement. Specifically, the Curriculum Committee: 1) reviews and makes recommendations on additions and changes to course and program-level learning outcomes; 2) reviews and makes recommendations on academic standards and policies as they relate to college instructional programs; 3) collaborates with the Student Services Committee where these committees have a vested interest in and responsibility for policies and/or procedures; and 4) addresses other instructional policies and procedures as requested through the GSC by the president or the vice president of academic affairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vice President of Academic Affairs ■ Assessment Liaison ■ Instructional Dean (1) ■ Arts and Sciences Faculty (2) ■ Professional Technical Faculty (2) ■ At Large Faculty (3) ■ Library Faculty (1) ■ Students (1)
<p>SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Sustainability Committee provides expertise and leadership to the college on sustainable practices related to college facilities, operations, curriculum, activities, and quality of campus life for students and employees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Faculty (2) ■ Classified (2) ■ Exempt Professional (2) ■ Administrators (1) ■ Students (1) ■ Community/ Advisory (3)
<p>GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE</p> <p>The General Education Committee provides the college community with expertise, leadership, research and analyses regarding the General Education program to ensure that the curriculum is current, relevant and data-informed and results in expected student learning outcomes. The General Education program consists of all course requirements common across most SVC degrees, including First Quarter Experience, diversity, communication, quantitative, and other college-wide requirements. The GEC is responsible to evaluate and maintain the rigor of degree requirements as they relate to the general education learning outcomes, including collaboration with the Program Review and Assessment Committee in the mapping of courses to the general education outcomes, assessment, and planning for improvement. Specifically, the GEC: 1) reviews and makes recommendations on new degree programs and certificates per OPPM 4000 section 4000.05; 2) reviews and makes recommendations on graduation and degree requirements per OPPM 4000 section 4000.05 and 4100.05; 3) reviews and makes recommendations on academic standards and policies as they relate to general education learning outcomes and assessment; 4) collaborates with the Student Services Committee where these committees have a vested interest in and responsibility for policies and/or procedures; 5) addresses other instructional policies and procedures as requested through the GSC by the President or the Vice President of Academic Affairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vice President of Academic Affairs ■ Faculty Integrative Learning Coordinator ■ Faculty Integrative Liaison ■ Instructional Deans (2) ■ Faculty (5) ■ Counseling Faculty (1) ■ Library Faculty (1) ■ Student Service Leadership (1) ■ Student (1)

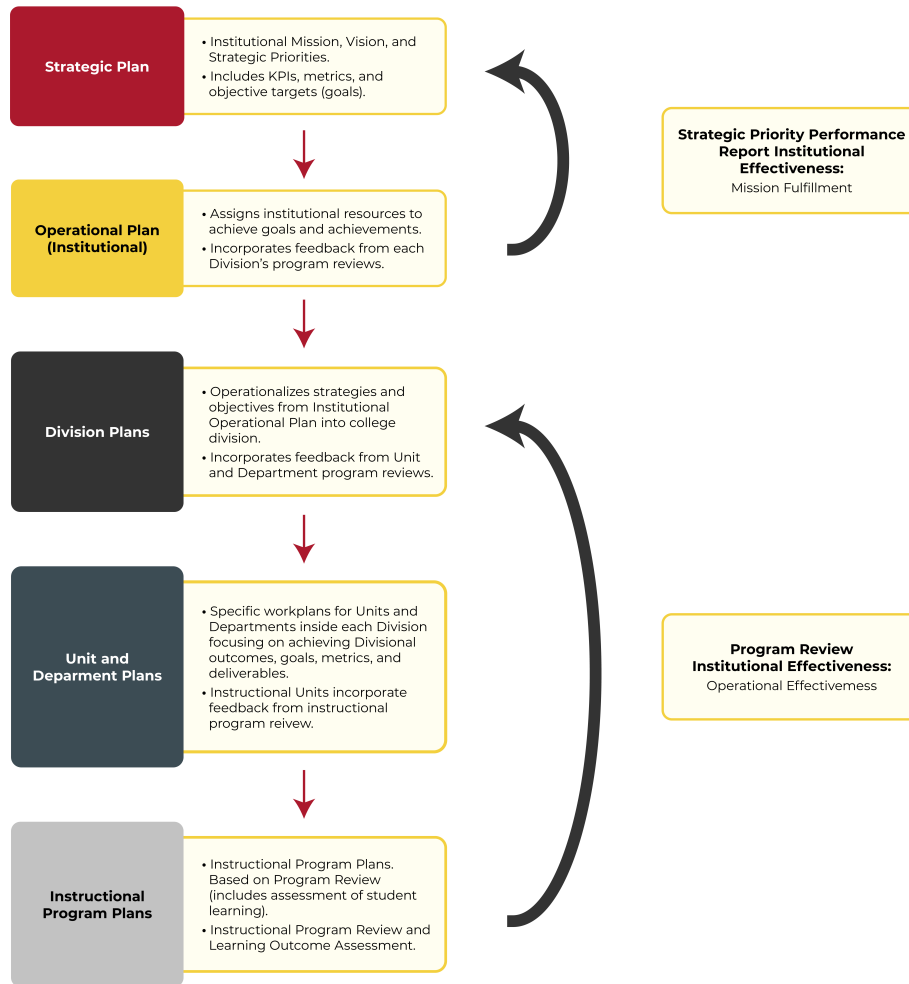
PLANNING ALIGNED WITH INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES

SVC has an integrated planning system that ensures alignment from the college's mission statement down to unit-level planning. This approach ensures that all planning at the college is integrated, clearly defined, systemic, and focused on achieving the objective outcomes of the Strategic Plan.

As discussed earlier in 1.B.1, all SVC divisional, Unit, and department plans align their strategies, activities, and goals to specific institutional strategic priorities. The difference between long-term (four-year) strategic planning and annual operational planning is that Operational Plans, both institution-wide and within specific divisions, involve narrower, more limited, and more specific actions that areas take to fulfill objectives during a given year. However, each of these is designed to move the institution one step closer to achieving one or more of its strategic priority goals. Since all operational planning objectives flow from one or more strategic goal, and each strategic goal operationalizes SVC's mission and vision, this integrated planning process allows SVC employees to see how operational planning within any given area connects directly to achieve SVC's mission-based goals. Furthermore, during the program review process, employees can find points of collaboration where other areas are working on overlapping or related objectives.

SVC has a strong institutional commitment to continuous program improvement. Program review is integral to both the college operational planning process and to assessing institutional effectiveness. All operational planning requests go through the program review process. This is to ensure that before a request is submitted, the area or Unit has had a chance to evaluate the effectiveness of its activities in the context of its measured output, which in turn is aligned with one of the strategic priorities. Requests for funding, positions, interventions, activities, etc. from all areas of the college can then be assessed in terms of their impact on achieving strategic objectives within the larger institutional framework.

SVC INTEGRATED PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT



PRIOR PLANNING PROCESS

Three years ago, SVC envisioned a revised planning system that would more closely align with strategic priority outcomes and seamlessly integrate and connect all planning processes, while also incorporating assessment practices. Over the years, the college has meticulously worked on implementing this vision, gradually establishing one process after another.

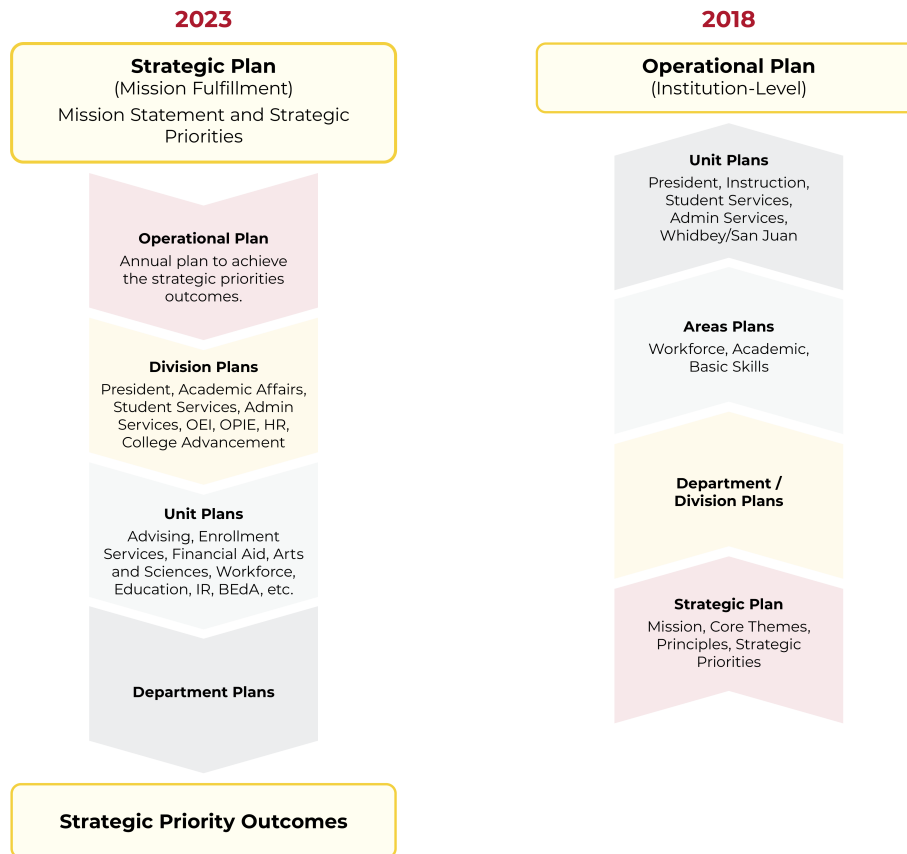
During the two and half years, SVC has significantly changed its approach to operational planning. In anticipation of the formal adoption of the new Strategic Plan by the Board of Directors, and with the adoption of the president's Strategic Priorities (which transitioned in the strategic priorities adopted with the new Strategic Plan) the college transitioned from using "base up" operational planning process to a process that was more tightly aligned with achieving the strategic priorities (as outlined above). The previous Core

Themes were so broadly defined that almost any activity could be tied to them. Faculty and staff were encouraged to interpret Core Themes at the ground level and come up with strategies and approaches to achieving them, without considering context or constraints from budgets, other areas, or higher-level institutional input. In essence, this process allowed the Core Themes to be operationalized differentially across the college, with each Unit strategizing their own way to accomplish the very broad goals set out in the themes themselves. Institutional assessments of mission fulfillment (the Core Theme Reports) were viewed largely as a reporting tool to the Board of Trustees and not widely shared or even known with the broader campus community. More importantly, the way these reports operationalized the Core Themes (and therefore Mission Fulfillment) was not part of the operational planning process across the college. In addition, the realities of budget and resource availability were also absent from the operational planning process until Cabinet had consolidated division plans and drafted an institutional Operational Plan. However, because the college was in deficit mode for the first five years of the accreditation cycle, the reality that cuts would be the main focus of operational planning (in terms of positions) was absent from the planning that occurred at the Unit and divisional levels.

While this approach (the “base up”) was meant to solicit the widest range of possible ideas and input from the campus community, it resulted in an operational planning process that “weeded out” the vast majority suggestions, requests, and strategic approaches from this ground-level approach. Faculty and staff repeatedly voiced concern that this process was difficult to understand and felt that much time was wasted in soliciting approaches that senior leaders “knew” would not work or could not be funded. This approach also yielded Division Plans that included more than 100 items, 90% of which would be discarded in the final Operational Plan. The current approach to operational planning provides a more structured approach and helps each area to focus, with increasing specificity, on how they might help to achieve the measured outcomes of one or more of the institutional strategic priorities. The operationalization process has occurred formally within the strategic planning process and is represented in the KPIs and target outcomes of the plan. The institution-wide involvement that was prioritized in the former approach became part of the strategic planning process and resulted in a “common language” of strategic priorities and measured targets. The current approach continues to encourage creativity and flexibility in Unit and divisional planning but also ensures that all areas are working toward the same objective targets across the institution.

The following two flowcharts have been shared across the institution during the switch to the new planning process. They illustrate both the interconnection and the change in approach between the previous operational planning processes and the current approach.

Annual Planning by Level



RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND BUDGETING

SVC follows a well-structured budget cycle to ensure the Board of Trustees adopts the annual operating budget before the start of each fiscal year. Allocation of resources is linked to the Operational Plan, which in turn is created to achieve institutional strategic priority outcomes. Division plans flow from the stated goals of the Operational Plan, and connections are made during the planning process for any leveraging of resources and/or alignment from different divisions toward achieving a specific strategic priority outcome. Thus, SVC attempts to have a clear connection between the allocation of resources, the planning process, and mission fulfillment.

The annual budget cycle for SVC is designed to align resources with strategic priorities, enhance fiscal transparency, and ensure institutional adaptability. This cycle begins in early October and culminates with final budget approval no later than July. It integrates preparation, planning, decision support, approval, and execution, creating a comprehensive framework for resource allocation and stewardship.

Budget preparation, commencing in early October, involves the compilation and distribution of budget planning documents and financial data across academic, administrative, and auxiliary units. This phase sets the foundation for robust budget

discussions, ensuring that all stakeholders have access to the necessary financial metrics, historical trends, and operational data to guide decision-making.

November through January, budget planning focuses on collaboration among executive leadership, deans, chairs, and directors. This phase emphasizes the alignment of resources with mission-critical short-term objectives and long-term institutional strategies. Departments and Units present their funding needs, which are evaluated against institutional priorities. Scenario planning, informed by decision support tools, addresses potential revenue fluctuations and helps develop contingency strategies.

By February, the budget approval phase begins, with preliminary funding decisions made by committees such as the Executive Budget Committee and Executive Cabinet. Feedback loops ensure that Unit-level adjustments reflect institutional priorities and address any unresolved funding gaps. This phase culminates in May and June with the formal presentation of the proposed budget to the Board of Trustees for review and final approval.

The cycle concludes with the execution phase, which starts in July. Budget priorities are implemented, and ongoing expense and revenue monitoring ensures alignment with approved allocations. Throughout the fiscal year, decision support metrics enable variance analysis, facilitating mid-year adjustments to optimize resource utilization.

A comprehensive suite of resource allocation principles and a robust decision support environment underpins all phases of this cycle, providing real-time data, transparency, and informed decision-making. By integrating financial, enrollment, and performance metrics, leadership can evaluate the effectiveness of budget strategies and make evidence-based adjustments, fostering accountability and adaptability in resource management. This structured and collaborative approach ensures that SVC remains responsive to both immediate needs and evolving institutional goals.

By combining planning and budgeting processes systematically and transparently, SVC hopes to ensure an efficient allocation of resources, aligning any new funds with the college's strategic goals. Specifically, opportunities will be identified to realign funds to proven and/or scalable strategies that improve student learning and success and eliminate areas of inequity.

SVC's resource allocation process is also tied to achieving its institutional strategic priorities. Currently, new funding requests as well as decisions on funding cuts are evaluated on their potential to help achieve (or not) the college's strategic priorities. In March, as part of the annual operational planning process, each vice president submits funding requests to the president through the [budget template](#). Over the following month, vice presidents meet individually with the college president to further explain and contextualize their requests against the template of that year's strategic objectives. Cabinet then meets for a day-long retreat to discuss, prioritize, and evaluate all budgeting requests. These discussions are weighed against the specific objectives within the overall Strategic Plan that have been identified as a priority for a given year. Cabinet

makes final recommendations to the president, who then makes a final decision in the spring of each academic year. Some examples of the results of this process include, the addition of a college enrollment recruiter and several dual enrollment positions (enrollment), the creation of the vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness position (institutional capacity), and the hiring of a new dean of libraries, eLearning, and tutoring (student success). More detailed information on our resource allocation process is reported in our 2024 Policies, Regulations, Financial Review (PRFR) Report in standard 2.E.2 Financial Resource Planning.

PRIOR FISCAL PLANNING PROCESS

Prior to the current budget planning process, all operational planning was completed ahead of the budgeting process; operational priorities, desired activities, interventions, positions, etc. were discussed, created, and prioritized without reference to the budget. During the planning phase, each division's vice president surveyed their areas for needs and requests, which were required to be associated with one or more Core Themes. Because of the broad nature of the Core Themes, and their lack of specific measurable targets, in essence, Core Themes were being operationalized at the department, Unit, and division level, independently of each two-year operational planning cycle. Within each division, requests were assigned a priority of high, medium, or low. The resulting lists were extremely large, often resulting in between 70 to 100 requests per division; the vast majority of those even labeled high priority were not funded.

The current approach to fiscal planning grew out of 1) a recognition of the limitations of this process to strategically prioritize requests, 2) a recognition that the process was not an efficient process for assessing current (ongoing) budgeting needs, 3) it resulted in a budgeting request process that was extraordinarily time consuming, and resulted on only a tiny fraction of high priority requests from each division being funded, and finally 4) widespread frustration with the inefficiency and lack of transparency that guided the process.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

Fiscal planning improvements and shared participation of constituent groups in planning, especially fiscal planning (the overall planning part will be laid out in shared governance next section). Previously only new resource allocation was evaluated based on its potential to achieve institutional strategic priorities. Similarly, cuts in resources were evaluated on potential harm to institutional priorities. In the future, because institutional priorities have specific targets and metrics, and because program review is required for all operational planning requests, the college has committed to a process in which all existing resources (e.g. existing/current resources) are evaluated in the resource allocation process in order to better align institutional resources on achieving its strategic priorities. The college has a goal to have this process fully in place for the 2027-2028 planning year.

STANDARD 1.B.4 GOVERNANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING TO IMPROVE INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it considers such findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, planning, intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement of its goals.

SVC monitors internal and external environments to identify meaningful trends and assess its strategic position and to define its future direction. Through our integrated planning and governance systems, we use what we learn to determine future directions, and continually update our mission, strategic priorities, objectives, and indicators of achievement.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness provides a wide range of data on the external environment for use in monitoring and planning. In addition, administrators in both middle and senior management (vice presidents, deans, and directors) play key roles in monitoring the external environment. They are actively engaged at the state, regional, and community levels to gather information on programs, services, and regional trends and projections in economy, demography, labor market, and revenue that might affect the college. Faculty, staff, and administrators are encouraged to attend local, regional, and national meetings and conferences to keep informed of emerging trends and best practices and learn how we can incorporate successful strategies at SVC.

Finally, SVC has a rich tradition of having faculty and administrators attend key conferences together, and to jointly present at conferences. SVC works closely with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to monitor governmental and legislative bills, programs, and directives as well as economic projections that might result in changes in state appropriations. There are eight commissions and 20 councils administered by the SBCTC that actively work to connect leaders in similar positions throughout the system and work together to resolve issues that impact all colleges. SVC actively encourages faculty and staff to be strong contributors and participants in these commissions and councils and to bring back to the college knowledge of statewide concerns and initiatives.

Employers and Regional Workforce Needs. Advisory committees are SVC's primary mechanism for engaging with employers and other industry stakeholders to ensure program alignment to workforce needs. SVC convenes advisory committees for each workforce degree program to provide regular input on employer demand and needs in their areas of expertise. Advisory committees allow staff and faculty to stay on top of emerging trends in rapidly changing fields. Conversations are robust, and committees identify technical skills and so-called "soft skills" (i.e. communication and collaboration competencies) that students will need to be competitive in the field upon graduation. The

feedback from advisory committees does not sit on a shelf: it leads to the revamping of existing courses, development of new courses, the redesign of programs and pathways, and if needed the launch of entirely new programs. The work of SVC program advisory committees has been especially key in the development of our Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS), Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS), and proposed Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees.

To supplement the qualitative input from our advisory committees, SVC also uses a variety of quantitative data sources. SVC maintains a subscription to Lightcast, a tool that mines current job postings, allowing us to identify skillsets that are in particularly high demand. Lightcast also allows us to forecast future industry demand five to ten years down to the level of individual ZIP codes, and it is an excellent tool for analyzing emerging occupations that may not yet be tracked in federal and state labor market data. New program development and expansion are driven by market need, so each process includes a feasibility study—and Lightcast data and advisory committee input are key elements of all such studies. In addition, SVC staff stay on top of the economic data and forecasts produced by the Northwest Workforce Council, the Economic Development Association of Skagit County, and the labor market economists at the Washington Employment Security Department (ESD). The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has a data sharing agreement with ESD that allows us to track the employment rates and median wages of our workforce graduates over time.

As part of its work with federal Perkins funding, SVC completes a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) for workforce programs every two years. The CLNA requires an environmental scan, extensive data gathering and analysis, and strategic planning. As part of that work, we analyze equity gaps in the completion and employment rates of our students and strategize about building supports to close those gaps. SVC supplements our existing data sources by surveying our advisory committee members and scores of other employers who hire our graduates to gain additional insight into how well our programs are meeting regional workforce needs and how they should evolve.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

SVC formally monitors the internal environment through the shared governance model, standing committees, and forums such as one of the three Institutional Days, the president's six college-wide meetings, and a regular published schedule of department, Unit, and division meetings. The college also surveys students and employees on a regular basis. In 2023, SVC switched from an internally generated and administered biennial employee survey to the externally administered HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate survey to track employee satisfaction, sense of belonging, campus climate, and a host of other issues. This survey is nationally normed and allows the college to compare responses to other community colleges in the nation. Follow up focus group studies, also administered by an external provider, allow the college to dig deeper into issues identified in the college-wide survey. The results of the HEDS survey are widely shared and available on the college website. Joint presentations by the Offices of

Equity and Inclusion and Planning and Institutional Effectiveness happen in the interim years, with formal presentations to the Board of Trustees, the SVC faculty union, the Equity and Social Justice Committee, and a wide range of other venues. SVC uses the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, administered annually, to survey a wide range of student satisfaction, sense of belonging, and other factors. The results of the SSI are integrated into the program review process for all instructional areas, as well as student support services, and college support services. In this way, student feedback is integrated into the college’s assessment of institutional effectiveness, and into the operational planning process for each Unit and division.

Sources for Monitoring Internal and External Environments at SVC

	Environmental Monitoring	Source
External	Regional Demographics	Washington State Educational Research and Data Council, SBCTC data, WA Superintendent for Public Instruction
	Labor Market Trends/Data	Employment Security Department
	Legislation	SBCTC, etc.
	Local Workforce Needs	Professional Technical Program Advisory Boards
	State and National Student Data	IPEDS, National Clearinghouse, etc.
	State and National Higher Education Data	Vice presidents, deans, directors, and faculty attend SBCTC Commission Meetings and Conferences
Internal	Mission Fulfillment Data	Strategic Priority Performance Reports
	Student Course Taking Data	Internal Data Dashboard
	Student Retention, Completion, and Equity Data	Internal Data Dashboard
	Student Feedback	Noel Levitz Survey, student focus groups
	Employee Feedback	HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey; faculty and employee focus groups
	Financial Projections	Tuition projections via enrollment modeling, institutional reserve, budget performance

GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

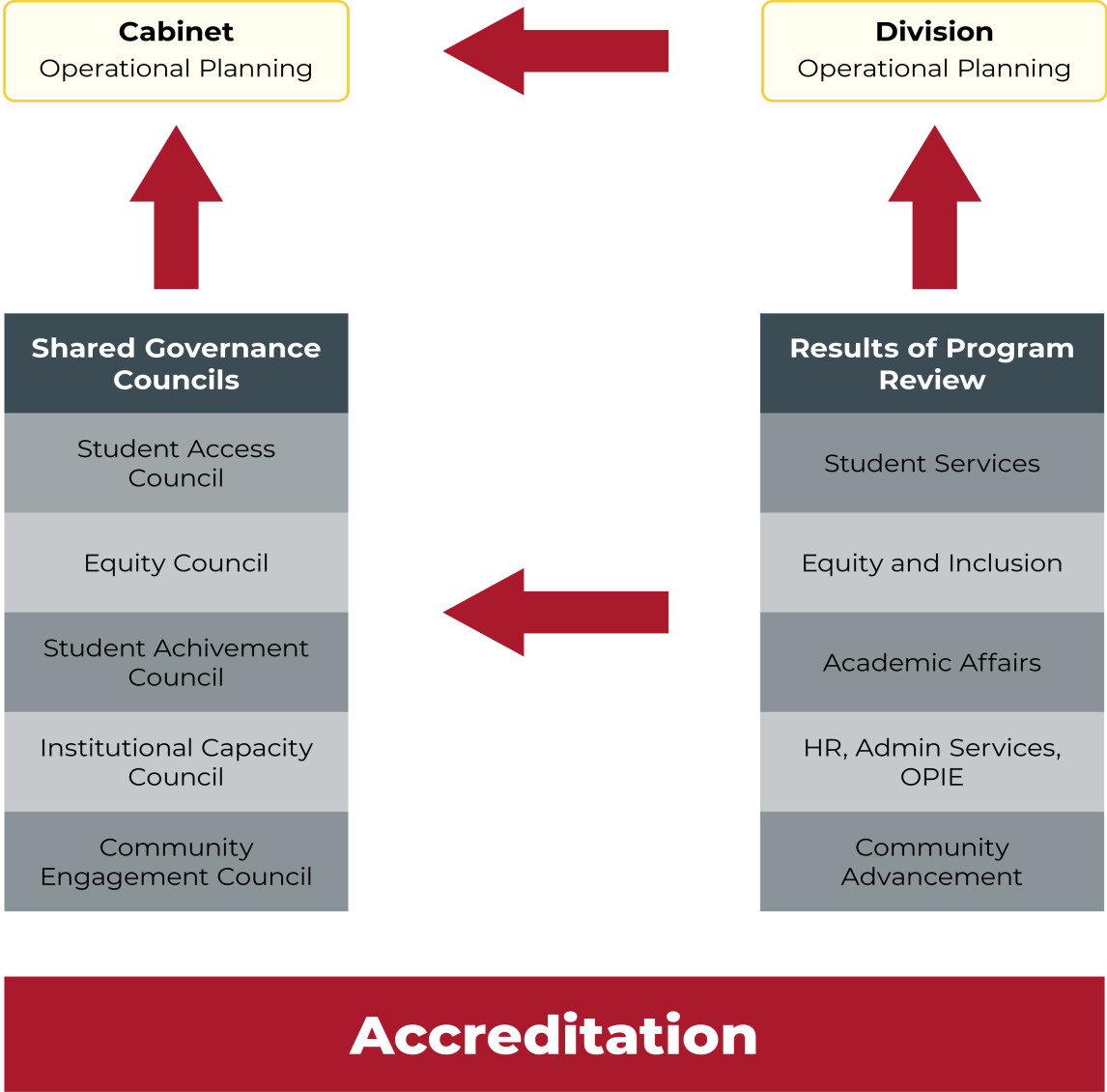
Beginning in late 2023, President’s Cabinet, the Governance Steering Committee, and other key stakeholders engaged in a concerted effort to improve the accessibility, usability, and relevancy of SVC policies and procedures. All policies and procedures have been reviewed, reformatted for consistency, and posted on a user-friendly webpage, and more than 25% have been substantially revised. A [new policy manual](#) provides clear guidelines, so employees with administrative responsibility can revise policies and procedures in a timely way and with appropriate input from the college’s governance system.

SVC has a Governance Steering Committee and eight standing committees that make up the formal shared governance structure of the college. The roles and responsibilities of these committees are delineated in the [Operational Governance Policy](#) listed in the college's [Policies and Procedures webpage](#). In addition, the college administration maintains a close working relationship with the faculty and classified unions through joint labor management committees. Over the last accreditation cycle, the results of institutional effectiveness findings have been shared with these and other college groups through a variety of methods. For example, the SVC college president holds regular all college meetings in which the results of core theme reports and other findings on institutional effectiveness are shared. Similarly, division vice presidents and deans hold regular meetings with their faculty and/or direct reports. However, the college realizes that this process needs to be made more systematic, transparent, and effective. Therefore, in January of 2025, SVC college president Dr. Christopher Villa announced that the college would embark on the creation of a new shared governance system to be put in place sometime during the 2025-2026 academic year.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

SVC's current shared governance structure has been in place since 2001; standing committees were modified slightly in 2014, 2017, and in 2023. However, despite significant changes to institutional structure, pedagogical approach, student support, fiscal funding sources, and strategic priorities, the SVC shared governance structure has not been substantially revised or examined since it was put in place two and a half decades ago. Starting in the summer of 2024, senior administrators began meeting with the SVC union president and other faculty leaders to discuss how the updated Strategic Plan and operational planning process would begin devising an updated shared governance structure that would 1) align more closely with the institution's strategic priorities, 2) allow for more participation and contribution to operational planning, 3) increase oversight of institutional effectiveness and program review results in order to contribute to continuous program improvement, 4) more effectively involve faculty and staff in the interventions, strategies, and resource allocation decisions for the institution. In January of 2025, the SVC college president sent an email explaining the proposal and outlining next steps. The college will use the next six months to allow for feedback and discussion on the logistics and details of the proposed change. Over the summer, a group of administrators and faculty will draft new policy language to be adopted. The final review of the new system will occur during fall quarter 2025. The new shared governance structure will go into place in January of 2026, in time for the 2025-2026 operational planning cycle. The new shared governance councils will align closely with the institutional strategic priorities. Faculty and staff will be able to review area, Unit, and departmental program review results relevant to the shared governance council task. These councils will also formally weigh in on operational planning priorities and funding, in a more systematic and structured way than is currently occurring at the institution. A graphic representation of the proposed new shared governance structure is shown below.

SVC Inclusive Planning Model



STANDARD 1.C. STUDENT LEARNING

STANDARD 1.C.1 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING

The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

Consistent with its mission, Skagit Valley College is dedicated to fostering high-quality, student-centered learning experiences that equip students with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary for personal and professional success. Learning experiences are intentionally designed to include clear outcomes and structured to include progressive skill development, ensuring students achieve competency at increasing levels of complexity. Academic programs work to ensure that educational inequities are systematically addressed through curriculum design, learning support, and consistent assessment practices. Faculty actively engage in ongoing evaluation of student learning, using data to make decisions to improve student success and close equity gaps.

All programs undergo a structured [review process](#) to ensure they maintain program learning outcomes that meet the rigor and relevance required of recognized fields of study. Faculty conduct regular curriculum reviews to ensure program content remains up to date with industry standards, third-party accreditation requirements, and transfer expectations. Academic programs participate in a review cycle that includes an annual assessment embedded within a four-year program review process.

Faculty members engage in curriculum mapping and student learning assessment cycles to maintain appropriate course sequencing and depth of coursework. Course outcomes are reviewed by disciplinary faculty, instructional administrators, and the college's Curriculum Committee to maintain consistency, measurability, and clarity. Faculty use shared rubrics embedded and tracked in Canvas across programs to assess program learning outcomes and to ensure comparability in assessment standards. Additionally, research-based pedagogical frameworks – such as inclusive pedagogical practices, competency-based education models, and high-impact teaching practices – guide program design and student skill development.

INSTRUCTIONAL CREDENTIALS, ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE, AND FACULTY OVERSIGHT

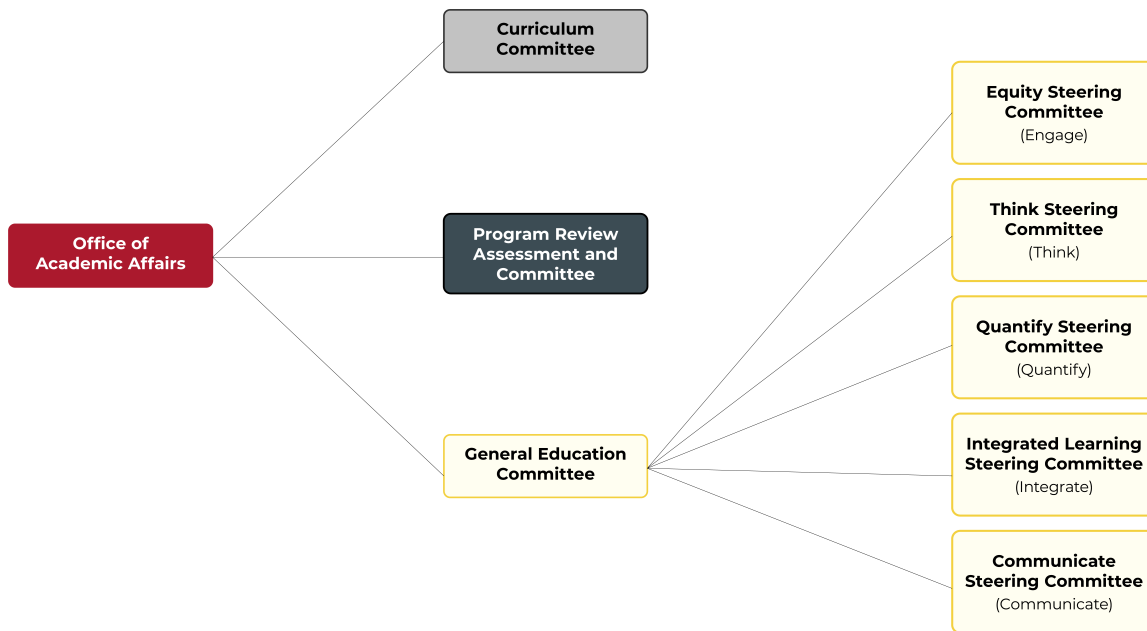
To meet the diverse educational and workforce needs of its students, SVC offers 35 associate degree programs, five bachelor's degree programs, and 39 certificate programs. These programs are developed based on labor market demand, transfer pathways, and evolving industry requirements, providing students with clear, structured academic pathways that support career readiness and postsecondary progression.

The college’s academic catalog, program specific handbooks, program development activities, statewide agreements, and collaboration with advisory committees collectively reflect SVC’s commitment to maintaining high academic standards and providing transparent information about the content and rigor of its educational programs. SVC’s catalog and website offer comprehensive descriptions of each program, including course requirements, learning outcomes, and academic policies. This resource outlines the structure and expectations for students, ensuring clarity on the academic rigor involved.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

Instructional programs are reviewed and supported by three Instructional Governance Committees with independent charges. The Curriculum Committee, Program Review and Assessment Committee, and General Education Committee are faculty-led bodies charged with maintaining and improving the college’s instructional efforts. These committees were renamed, and their charges revised in 2023 to better support the development and assessment of learning outcomes.

SVC Instructional Governance Committee Structure



COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

The Curriculum Committee is responsible for reviewing department level curriculum proposals and making recommendations regarding course level and program level outcomes, new degree and certificate programs, and facilitates changes in the college’s master course outline system. In collaboration with instructional deans, the committee ensures that curricular offerings meet institutional and state standards and include appropriate course designators that align with program content.

The Program Review and Assessment Committee supports the college’s assessment of course, program, and general education learning outcomes. The committee assists

the college in the use of assessment results in planning and improvement through the program review process. The committee reviews all instructional program review documents, makes recommendations on academic standards, programmatic goals, and learning outcome achievement, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with institutional objectives.

The [General Education Committee](#) monitors the achievement of institutional learning competencies and maintains degree requirements to support the college's broader educational mission. The committee, along with five steering committees aligned with each [General Education Outcome](#), works with faculty to assess institution-level competencies such as quantitative reasoning, communication, and critical thinking.

TRANSFER AND PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL PROGRAM ALIGNMENT

SVC upholds the academic integrity of its degree pathways through formalized articulation agreements, statewide transfer policies, and workforce advisory committees. The college participates in Washington's Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA), ensuring that students' academic credits seamlessly transfer to baccalaureate institutions. College administrators work closely with the Washington state [Intercollege Relations Commission](#) (ICRC) to maintain curriculum alignment with transfer institutions, ensuring students meet general education and major-related requirements.

Professional technical (Career and Technical Education - CTE) programs collaborate with advisory committees to validate program relevance, identify emerging industry trends, and ensure alignment with workforce needs. Employers, industry professionals, and alumni provide real-time feedback on curricular content, helping faculty refine program offerings. New professional technical degrees and certificates are developed through structured collaboration between faculty members, subject matter experts, and industry stakeholders to ensure alignment with current and emerging workforce demands.

STANDARD 1.C.2 INSTRUCTIONAL INTEGRITY

The institution awards credit, degrees, certificates, or credentials for programs that are based upon student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.

AWARDS BASED ON STUDENT LEARNING

SVC awards credits, degrees, certificates, and credentials for programs designed around clearly defined student learning outcomes. Academic programs ensure appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and integration of learning, allowing students to achieve measurable academic and professional competencies. [Student learning outcomes](#) (SLOs) have been established for all programs and are used to guide course sequencing, prerequisite determination, and program completion.

The college follows Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) policies governing instructional program development. [SVC's academic](#)

[catalog](#) provides detailed program information, including learning outcomes, degree and certificate requirements, and program expectations. Additionally, official transcripts document courses completed, grades earned, degrees conferred, transfer credits, cumulative and college-level GPAs, and academic honors.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Since 2019, the college has employed a [structured framework to describe and assess learning outcomes](#), ensuring students acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for academic success, career readiness, and personal growth. All tenured faculty have been trained to write clear, assessable, and meaningful learning outcomes. Any new or revised outcomes undergo a rigorous review by the appropriate [instructional committee](#). These outcomes are categorized into four distinct levels, which include General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Course Specific Learning Outcomes (CSLOs), and Degree Learning Outcomes (DLOs), each serving a critical role in curriculum design, instructional practices, and assessment processes.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES (GELOS)

[General Education Learning Outcomes](#) represent the foundational skills and competencies required for all degree-seeking students, regardless of program. These outcomes establish a broad educational foundation, fostering critical thinking, effective communication, quantitative reasoning, cultural awareness, and integrative learning. GELOs are embedded throughout the curriculum, ensuring students develop transferable skills applicable across disciplines and careers.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOS)

Program Learning Outcomes define the overarching skills, knowledge, and abilities emphasized and reinforced across multiple courses within a program. PLOs for [Professional Technical](#) and [Transfer](#) programs are measurable, competency-based statements that outline the specific knowledge, and skills students should acquire beyond GELOs within their chosen field of study. These outcomes are directly aligned with professional standards, accreditation expectations, and academic requirements, ensuring program content remains relevant. These outcomes guide faculty in developing relevant course materials and assessments, ensuring students are prepared for future academic pursuits or entry into the workforce.

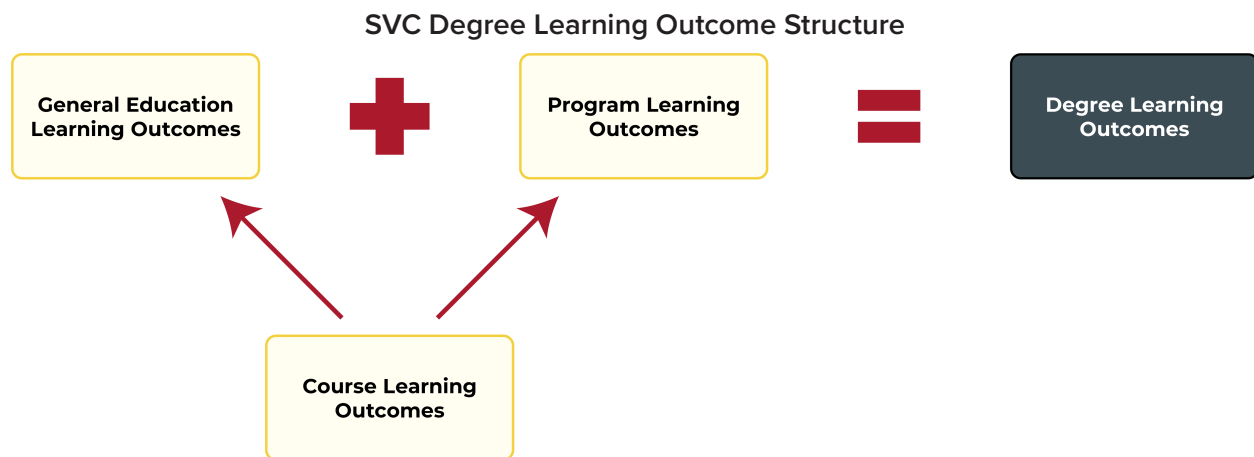
COURSE SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSLOS)

Course Specific Learning Outcomes identify the specific, measurable skills and competencies students are expected to develop within a single course. CSLOs align directly with PLOs, ensuring each course contributes meaningfully to program-level learning objectives. These outcomes guide curriculum development, instructional methods, and assessment strategies, allowing faculty to monitor student progress and continuously refine instructional practices. Many CSLOs are informed by industry-

based competencies to ensure student learning aligns with professional practice such as Nursing or with the statewide standards such as Basic Education for Adults and Washington state common courses.

DEGREE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcomes represent the comprehensive set of learning expectations for each degree program. These outcomes integrate GELOs, PLOs, and CSLOs into a unified framework, ensuring that students graduate with demonstrated proficiency in core competencies and program-specific expertise. Degree Outcomes ensure that all components of a student's academic journey—from general education to specialized coursework—are purposefully connected to support student achievement.



OUTCOME MAPPING AND SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT

To maintain consistency, academic integrity, and instructional quality, SVC employs a structured approach to learning outcome mapping and assessment. All courses include clear student learning outcomes that are included in course syllabi and the college's course outline system. Program Learning Outcomes and General Education Outcomes are mapped to specific courses to ensure a coherent, scaffolded learning pathway. Student progression toward PLO and GELO attainment is purposefully sequenced to promote student success and consistency of student experience. For example, students encounter courses mapped to specific GELOs (e.g., Communicate and Quantify) within the first year of a program of study, while courses mapped to Engage, Integrate, Think often occur in the second year of a program of study.

Faculty are responsible for assessing student learning outcomes using shared rubrics during scheduled assessment cycles to facilitate the consistent collection of data to inform curricular improvements. Data collected from assessment activities, including direct measures such as exams, portfolios, capstone projects, and performance-based evaluations, provide evidence of student achievement and areas for improvement. Instructors link learning outcomes to grading rubrics in Canvas, the college's Learning Management System, to indicate how well each student met the learning outcome

standards which include: Exceeds Standard, Meets Standard, Approaches Standard, Standard Not Met, Not Assessed. Although instructors grade assignments using a grading rubric aligned with general education or program learning outcomes, scoring the outcome itself does not affect the student's grade for the assignment. Details of the college's learning assessment process are included in the college's [Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan](#) and discussed further in 1.C.5.

REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

SVC systematically reviews and develops degree and certificate programs to align with workforce needs, academic transfer pathways, and student success initiatives. The college follows a [structured program review cycle](#), integrating student learning data, advisory committee input, labor market data, and student achievement metrics to guide program development, course sequencing, and curricular design/re-design. Transfer degrees align with SBCTC and ICRC guidelines and are designed by faculty and instructional administrators. Professional Technical programs work collaboratively with faculty, advisory committees, and external stakeholders to ensure program offerings meet regional workforce demands and align with state-level academic requirements.

STANDARD 1.C.3 PUBLISHED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Skagit Valley College is committed to providing students with clearly defined, measurable, and accessible learning outcomes for all courses, degrees, and certificates. Teaching to well-formulated learning outcomes is essential to the college's mission of providing opportunities for students to pursue their education and professional goals. Learning outcomes at all levels of instruction provide students with clear expectations for academic achievement and skill development. By maintaining transparent and accessible language in the design of learning outcomes, the college supports student agency, informed decision-making, and equitable learning experiences.

PUBLICATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

SVC ensures that degree outcomes are accessible through multiple platforms and institutional processes, providing clarity and transparency for current and prospective students. Learning outcomes are published and communicated through several mechanisms. The college [catalog](#) and [institutional website](#) serve as the primary sources where Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for [Transfer](#) and [Professional Technical](#) programs, as well as General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) are published. Course syllabi include course-specific learning outcomes (CSLOs), which faculty members distribute to students at the beginning of each term. Course outlines also include course-level and program-level outcomes and can be viewed on the college's

[website](#). In combination, the resources allow students to review expected learning outcomes before enrolling in courses or programs, providing them with the information necessary to make informed academic decisions.

As discussed in 1.C.2, all GELOs and PLOs are mapped to specific courses and listed along with the course-specific learning outcomes included in the syllabi and on the college website. Syllabi are archived by each academic Unit (e.g., Arts and Sciences, Workforce Education) to ensure accessibility for students, faculty, and prospective learners. [Program-specific websites](#) and promotional materials, such as brochures and multi-media resources, further communicate PLOs and degree-specific outcomes. These materials help to ensure that both internal and external audiences understand program expectations, career pathways, and learning opportunities.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH TRANSPARENCY

By making learning outcomes easily accessible, SVC supports student success by fostering clear expectations and structured academic pathways. Faculty have continued a multi-year effort to present learning outcomes in student-centered language, in order to clearly show how academic programs contribute to career readiness, transfer preparation, and lifelong learning. The approach helps students understand how individual courses contribute to their overall educational goals. Students are encouraged to use learning outcomes as a guide for academic planning, skill development, and goal setting. By referring to these outcomes, students can track their progress toward degree completion and professional advancement.

Instructional administrators and faculty engage in ongoing discussions about improving transparency and accessibility of learning outcomes. Many faculty members explicitly tie daily agendas, lesson plans, and assignments to course outcomes and discuss the connection with students. These efforts are intended to foster a learning environment where students can confidently navigate their educational journeys by developing a deeper understanding of the process by which expectations, coursework, and outcomes build toward degree and career goals.

ONGOING EFFORTS TO ENHANCE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The college is continuing its efforts to increase clarity and availability of learning outcomes across all programs to foster a culture of equity, accountability, and shared responsibility for student achievement. For example, faculty participate in ongoing professional development, engaging in equity-focused training and best practices for assessing student learning, such as the Inclusive Pedagogy Community of Practice and the New Faculty Academy (described further in 1.C.7).

STANDARD 1.C.4 ADMISSION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The institution's admission and completion or graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public.

Skagit Valley College provides a comprehensive set of [welcome resources](#) to assist

students in exploring and applying to SVC. College admission [policies and procedures](#) can be found on the [SVC website](#) and in the college catalog. The [Getting Started](#) section on the SVC website lists specific information and admission requirements for a variety of populations including [first-time applicants](#), [returning students](#), [bachelor's degree seekers](#), [High School Completion seekers](#), [dual credit programs](#), [basic education for adults](#), [international students](#), [Dental Therapy](#), and [veterans and military affiliated students](#). Program admission requirements are also noted on specific program websites, such as those related to Bachelor of Applied Science programs in [Advanced Manufacturing and Design](#), [Healthcare Management](#), [Management](#), and [Environmental Conservation](#). [Selective entry policies](#) are also available on the college website. The [academic catalog](#) provides information regarding credit and credentials in the following programs: e-learning, developmental education, English Language Acquisition, externships and practicums, Open Doors, Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit, College in the High School, apprenticeship, cooperative education, parent education, community programs, foreign travel, and independent study.

SVC offers [New Student Registration](#) events in person and online to provide wrap-around support in completing steps for enrollment, including math/English placement, registration, email/IT set-up and assistance, and student engagement opportunities. All students participating in New Student Registration meet with an academic advisor who helps them register for their first quarter of classes.

Likewise, students can access information on curriculum, program, and graduation requirements in the SVC Catalog in the “[Degrees and Certificates](#)” section, as well as on the webpage under “[Academics - Areas of Study](#).”

The [graduation section of the catalog](#) and webpage outline the standards for satisfying the requirements for receiving a college credential.

Students are required to submit a [Graduation Application](#) available online through the Enrollment Services webpage and the [graduation policies and procedures](#) can also be found online. Information on academic programs and courses can be found throughout the college catalog and on the SVC website.

[Areas of Study](#) are listed on the website and help organize various programs and degree options to assist students in “finding their path.” Within each Area of Study, there are [links to the catalog](#), where each program provides a map with career possibilities, particular course requirements, recommendations, and credential options.

Program maps are available for each of the degree and certificate types offered at SVC. Program maps also help advisors assist students with their education plans, which are built for each individual student during their First Quarter Experience class. These curricular maps are accessible to students and their advisors, providing students, faculty, and staff a real-time view of a student's progress toward their credential.

STANDARD 1.C.5 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs.

Skagit Valley College has made significant progress in developing and implementing comprehensive systems for evaluating learning across all programs. These efforts reflect SVC's commitment to fostering equitable student success and continuous improvement. Through the development of intentional learning outcomes, the systematic assessment of learning outcomes, and a robust program review process, the college works to ensure that its programs are monitored and improved to meet the evolving needs of its diverse student body. While proud of its accomplishments, the college acknowledges that there continues to be room for growth and remains dedicated to ongoing refinement of these systems.

REVISION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

SVC's journey toward a cohesive and intentional outcomes assessment process began with efforts to address structural challenges and inequities in student success. Beginning in 2012, the college conducted a targeted student success equity review and launched its comprehensive Student Achievement Strategy. These initiatives created the foundation for efforts that have contributed to significantly improved graduation rates, the college's transformation into a Hispanic Serving Institution, and embedding equity into the fabric of the assessment and program review processes.

Developing clear program learning outcomes and revising the college's institutional outcomes was central to these efforts. In 2019, faculty redefined the General Education Learning Outcomes (**GELOs**), reducing them from 59 to five meaningful and assessable outcomes. This significant change ensured that GELOs focus on key competencies such as critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and equity-focused engagement. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) were also developed for all **Transfer** and **Professional Technical** programs to ensure an outcome focused curricular structure and to establish a robust framework for evaluating student learning and program effectiveness.

Concurrently, the college implemented a revised program review process that integrated the process of learning outcomes assessment with a systematic review of data on program enrollment, completion, and student satisfaction to inform a cycle of continuous improvement and data-informed resource planning. In this way, data on student learning were critically analyzed in the larger context of student achievement.

SVC Program for Learning Outcome Assessment Timeline	
2012-13	Student Success Summit and Launch of Student Success Strategy
2016-17	Equity-informed interventions begin (e.g. Inclusive Pedagogy Learning Communities)
2018-19	General Education Outcomes and Program Learning Outcome revision
2019-20	Implementation of revised program review process which integrated assessment of student learning outcomes with other measures of student success
2023-24	Culmination of first four-year program review cycle

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

The college uses a systematic approach to learning outcomes assessment intended to improve student learning and promote continuous improvement. Both Program Learning Outcomes and General Education Learning Outcomes are assessed on a regular cycle outlined in the college's [Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan](#) to evaluate how well students are achieving intended competencies and to inform strategies for improvement. Faculty are primarily responsible for assessing learning outcomes, monitoring results, and implementing activities or interventions that improve student success. They are supported by instructional administrators and faculty-led instructional committees, which include the General Education Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Program Review and Assessment Committee. In combination, these committees aid in designing, assessing, and using learning outcomes data to improve student learning across the institution. Data generated from assessment activities are analyzed by faculty annually as part of the academic program review cycle, which integrates measures of learning, enrollment, retention, completion, and student satisfaction (Instructional Committees and the college's program review process are described in further detail below).

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

SVC utilizes a robust set of tools to support the assessment of learning outcomes and program review. The college's learning management system, Canvas, serves as the primary platform for collecting data on student performance, with preloaded rubrics enabling consistent evaluation of outcomes. Tableau provides analytics tools for visualizing [learning outcomes assessment results](#), including demographic breakdowns that highlight equity gaps. These tools streamline the assessment process, enabling faculty to focus on interpreting data and implementing improvements. The continued integration of technology in the assessment process has helped the college make data-informed decisions and has contributed to a data-informed culture.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

All GELOs and PLOs are [mapped](#) to a specific course or cluster of courses within a program, embedded in course syllabi (along with the course learning outcomes), and assessed at the course level each time a course is taught. [Outcome Assessment Rubrics \(OARs\)](#) for [GELOs](#) and [PLOs](#) are pre-loaded in Canvas and available for instructors to

import into the courses they are teaching during a given quarter. [Assessment results](#) are available in Canvas and a Tableau dashboard, where data can be grouped by student academic plan (degree) and demographic factors such as race, gender, age group, and attendance.

LINKING OUTCOMES TO ASSIGNMENTS

In Canvas, instructors can use multiple course activities to assess student learning. These activities may include quizzes, essay questions, and online discussions. Each of these assessment activities includes a grading rubric aligned with learning objectives and outcomes. All instructional programs at the college use a standardized OAR, which allows data to be collapsed, aggregated, or disaggregated as needed, and enables comparisons across programs, faculty, classes, and modalities.

SCORING OUTCOMES

Instructors use the learning outcomes linked to the grading rubric to indicate how well each student met the learning outcome standards which include: Exceeds Standard, Meets Standard, Approaches Standard, Standard Not Met, Not Assessed. Although instructors grade assignments using a grading rubric aligned with general education or program learning outcomes, scoring the outcome itself does not affect the student's grade for the assignment.

REPORTING ASSESSMENT DATA

At the end of each quarter, the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness exports learning outcomes assessment data from Canvas and imports it into a locally managed database. Tableau is then used to [display outcome data](#) linked to courses and student demographics. Individual learning outcome data is also summarized into specific degree programs, where faculty can disaggregate by various demographic identifiers. Other information available includes the count of course sections that assessed the outcomes, student headcounts, and how well students met each individual or cumulative outcome.

REFINEMENT AND UPDATING OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes at SVC are regularly reviewed and updated by faculty, instructional administrators, instructional committees, and advisory committees to ensure their relevance and alignment with program and institutional goals. Updates are informed by assessment data, subject matter expertise from disciplinary faculty and members for the college instructional committees.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM REVIEW AND FACULTY OVERSIGHT

A revised program review structure was developed in 2018 and implemented in the 2019-2020 academic year. Reviewing program data plays a central role in maintaining and enhancing the quality of academic programs at the college, while simultaneously informing resource planning for each academic department and the institution as a whole. Conducted on a [four-year cycle](#), instructional program review provides an

opportunity for faculty to evaluate program performance using data on student access, achievement, learning outcomes, and student satisfaction. This process facilitates reflection on the effectiveness of curriculum and pedagogy while identifying areas for improvement. Data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and other demographic markers provide a framework to conduct an equity-informed analysis and ensure that programs address disparities in student outcomes and foster inclusive learning environments. Program review findings inform operational planning and resource allocation, ensuring that decisions align with institutional goals and community needs.

Instructional programs are reviewed and supported by [three governance committees](#) with significant oversight of the program review and assessment process. The Curriculum Committee, Program Review and Assessment Committee, and General Education Committee are faculty-led bodies charged with maintaining and improving the college's instructional efforts.

- The **Curriculum Committee** is responsible for reviewing department level curriculum proposals and making recommendations regarding course level and program level outcomes, new degree and certificate programs, and facilitates changes in the college's master course outline system. In collaboration with instructional deans, the committee ensures that curricular offerings meet institutional and state standards and include appropriate course designators that align with program content.
- The **Program Review and Assessment Committee** supports the college's assessment of course, program, and general education learning outcomes. The committee assists the college in the use of assessment results in planning and improvement through the program review process. The committee reviews all instructional program review documents, makes recommendations on academic standards, programmatic goals, and learning outcome achievement, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with institutional objectives.
- The **General Education Committee** monitors the achievement of institutional learning outcomes and maintains degree requirements to support the college's broader educational mission. The committee, along with five steering committees aligned with each general education outcome, works with faculty to assess institution-level competencies such as quantitative reasoning, communication, and critical thinking.

PROGRAM REVIEW

Program review at the college is a cornerstone of continuous improvement, designed to evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs and ensure alignment with institutional priorities and community needs. The [Academic Affairs Program Review](#) structure and process has linked learning outcomes assessment with a systematic review of data on program enrollment, completion, and student satisfaction. Because of this integration, data on student learning are always analyzed in the larger context

of student achievement. The process operates on a multi-year cycle, with annual evaluations culminating in a comprehensive report every four years. The structured sequence of activities ensures that program review facilitates data-informed curricular and pedagogical refinements on an annual basis, while holistic reflection and larger-scale program reforms are articulated in program review report.

During the fourth year of the program review cycle, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning compiles program data, including enrollment trends, course pass rates, completion rates, and student learning outcomes. These data are delivered to department chairs alongside three primary documents:

1. **Program Review Guide**: This document serves as the foundation for the program review process. Faculty use the guide to analyze program effectiveness, address equity gaps, and set actionable goals for improvement. It prompts reflection on access, achievement, learning outcomes, and satisfaction.
2. **Program Effectiveness Datasheet**: Summarizing key trends from previous Annual Effectiveness Reports, this datasheet provides a comprehensive snapshot of program performance. Faculty use the data to identify patterns, successes, and areas needing improvement.
3. **Program Review Rubric**: Developed by the Program Review and Assessment Committee, the rubric provides clear criteria for evaluating the Program Review Guide. It ensures transparency in the review process and offers actionable feedback for faculty.

Once department chairs and program leads receive these resources, they collaborate with faculty in their departments to complete the Program Review Guide. The completed guide is then reviewed by the Program Review and Assessment Committee, which evaluates it using the rubric and provides recommendations for improvement. The guide, along with the committee's feedback, is forwarded to the instructional dean overseeing the program. The dean works closely with department chairs to address recommendations and refine the document as needed.

Findings from the program review process are then integrated into departmental planning and operational planning. Quantitative and qualitative data from the reviews inform decisions about resource allocation, strategic initiatives, and program adjustments. This ensures that program review is not only a reflective exercise but also a driver of institutional planning and improvement.

FACULTY LEADERSHIP

Faculty are central to the program review process, taking on key responsibilities to ensure its success. Department chairs and program faculty collaborate to analyze data, complete the Program Review Guide, and propose actionable goals for improvement. Faculty assess learning outcomes mapped to their courses, using preloaded rubrics in Canvas to evaluate student achievement. The annual and cumulative program

review processes emphasize “closing the loop” by translating findings into actionable improvements. Examples include revising curricula and instructional methods to address identified gaps, enhancing professional development for faculty to support equitable teaching practices, and allocating additional resources to programs with demonstrated needs, such as equipment upgrades or expanded staffing.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND DISAGGREGATED DATA

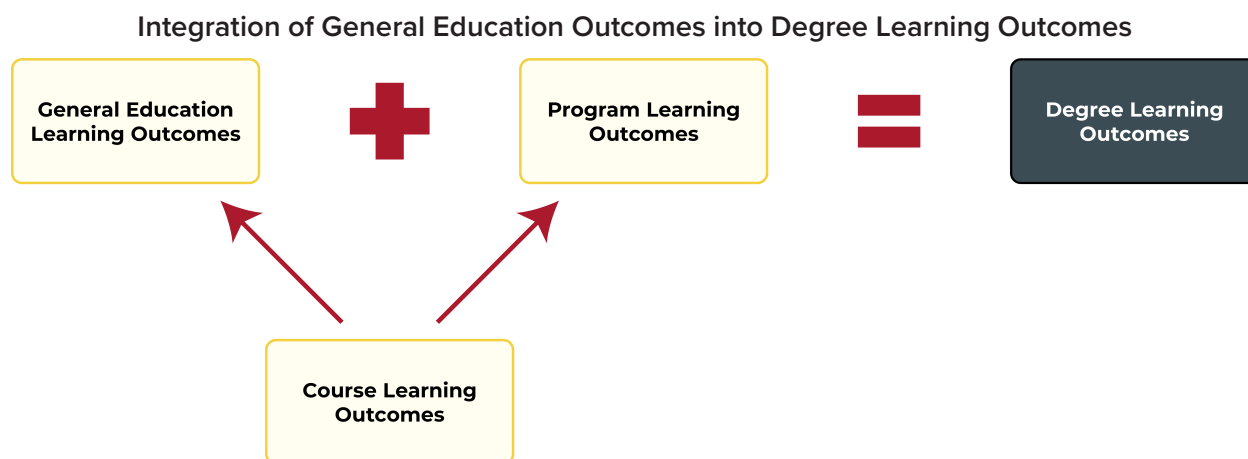
SVC is committed to using disaggregated data to identify and address equity gaps within its program review process. All [student success data](#) are disaggregated by a variety of demographic indicators. By analyzing enrollment, retention, and completion rates by race/ethnicity, gender, and other demographics, in concert with disaggregated learning outcomes data, the college gains a deeper understanding of which students are succeeding, and which are not. This approach enables faculty and administrators to implement targeted interventions, such as changes in enrollment practices, curriculum design, and teaching strategies, to close equity gaps and improve outcomes for all students.

STANDARD 1.C.6 INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes, and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.

SVC has established and assessed a robust framework of institutional-level competencies referred to as [General Education Learning Outcomes](#) (GELOs). GELOs represent the foundational skills and competencies required for all degree-seeking students, regardless of program. These outcomes establish a broad educational foundation, fostering critical thinking, effective communication, quantitative reasoning, equity-informed cultural awareness, and integrative learning. GELOs are embedded throughout the curriculum, ensuring students develop transferable skills applicable across disciplines and careers.

As described in 1.C.2, GELOs constitute a central component of Degree Learning Outcomes, which represent the comprehensive set of learning expectations for each degree program. When combined with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course Specific Learning Outcomes (CSLOs), GELOs are part of a unified framework, ensuring that students graduate with demonstrated proficiency in core competencies and program-specific expertise.



REVISION AND ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, SVC redefined its [General Education Learning Outcomes \(GELOs\)](#) in 2018 through a collaborative, faculty-led process. This revision streamlined 59 institution-level outcomes into five core competencies, enhancing clarity and alignment with institutional priorities. The five institutional GELOs are:

- **Communicate:** Produce and exchange ideas and information effectively through written, spoken, and visual forms.
- **Think:** Think analytically, logically, creatively, and reflectively.
- **Quantify:** Apply mathematical skills quantitatively, logically, creatively, and critically to analyze and solve problems.
- **Integrate:** Apply knowledge, skills, and methodologies from multiple disciplines.
- **Engage:** Interact with humans and the environment informed by an understanding of equity.

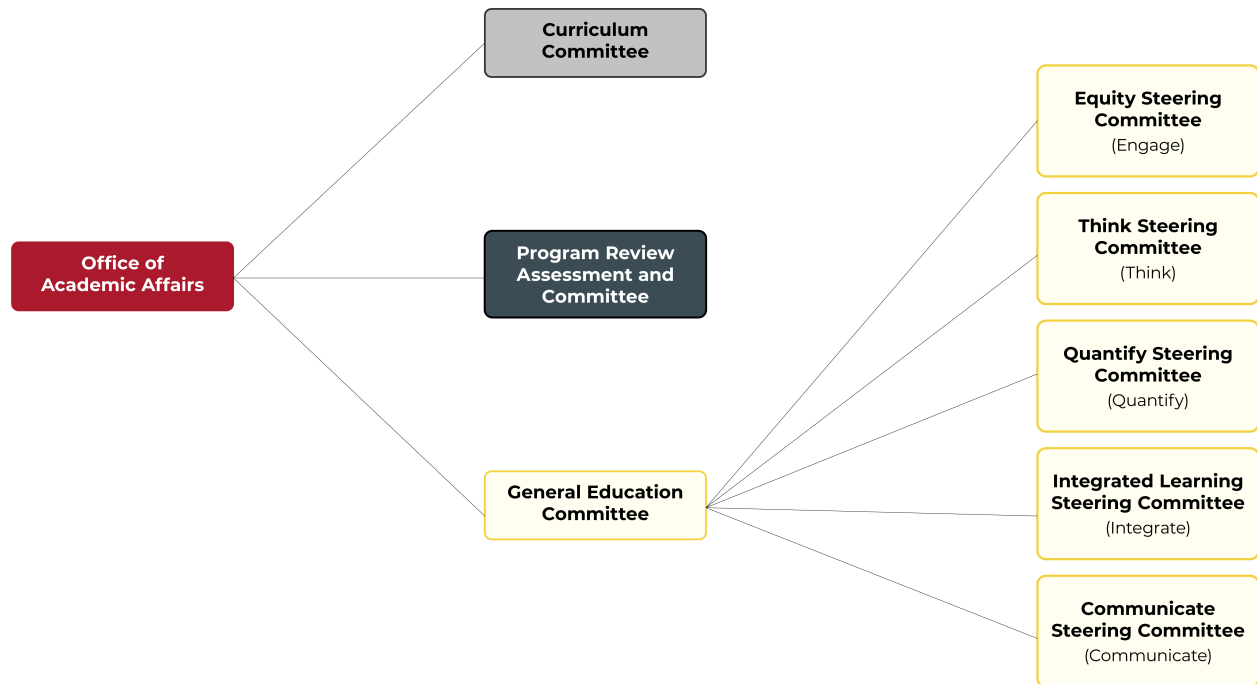
FACULTY-LED ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

SVC employs a systematic and collaborative approach to assess General Education Learning Outcomes. Faculty use [standardized rubrics](#) to evaluate student achievement of GELOs through assignments and projects. Each year, a subset of approximately one-third of GELOs are assessed as part of the Academic Affairs [Program Review cycle](#). Results are compiled into Annual Effectiveness Reports ([sample report](#)) and reviewed by faculty who participate in five steering committees, each dedicated to one outcome.

Recommendations from these steering committees are directed to the [General Education Committee](#), where assessment results inform strategies for improving curricular design, teaching practices, and resource allocation. For example, recent departmental reforms aimed at better assessing quantitative reasoning involved interdisciplinary collaboration between Math, Culinary Arts, and Business departments, whose courses are mapped to the Quantify outcome. Additionally, the General Education Committee recommended

increasing the analytical capacity of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to better support programs' data needs.

SVC Instructional Governance Committee Structure



ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Similar to the assessment of the college's PLOs, GELOs are assessed in a process intended to maintain consistency, academic integrity, and instructional quality. GELOs include clear student learning outcomes that are included in course syllabi and the college's [course outline system](#). General Education outcomes are mapped to specific courses to ensure a coherent, scaffolded learning pathway. Student progression toward GELO attainment is purposefully sequenced to promote student success and consistency of student experience. For example, students encounter courses mapped to specific GELOs (e.g., Communicate and Quantify) within the first year of a program of study, while courses mapped to Engage, Integrate, Think often occur in the second year of a program of study.

Faculty are responsible for assessing GELOs using shared rubrics during scheduled assessment cycles to facilitate the consistent collection of data to inform curricular and institutional improvements. Data collected from assessment activities provide evidence of student achievement and areas for improvement. Instructors link learning outcomes to grading rubrics in Canvas to indicate how well each student met the learning outcome standards which include: Exceeds Standard, Meets Standard, Approaches Standard, Standard Not Met, and Not Assessed. Although instructors grade assignments using a grading rubric aligned with General Education or Program Learning Outcomes, scoring

the outcome itself does not affect the student’s grade for the assignment. Details of the college’s learning assessment process are included in the college’s [Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan](#). Faculty receive data from assessed GELOs within the college’s Annual Effectiveness reports. Sample data from an Annual Effectiveness report is included below.

Outcomes achievement				
	2019-2022 Average			
	<i>Exceeds or Meets Standards</i>	<i>Approaches Standard</i>	<i>Standard Not Met</i>	<i>Not Assessed</i>
GE01a_Communicate	85.9%	5.7%	1.7%	6.7%
GE01b_Engage	92.9%	3.4%	1.4%	2.3%
GE01c_Integrate	82.1%	12.2%	2.5%	3.2%
GE01d_Quantify	68.4%	14.0%	7.6%	9.9%
GE01e_Think	83.8%	8.6%	2.9%	4.7%

FINDINGS FROM LATEST ASSESSMENT CYCLE

The assessment of institutional learning at SVC emphasizes “closing the loop,” ensuring that findings lead to actionable improvements that align with institutional goals and address equity gaps. Recent examples from the program review process highlight the college’s commitment to using data to enhance student learning outcomes.

- **Communicate Outcome:** The English department identified inconsistencies in how instructors assessed the Communicate outcome across English 101 sections. Faculty observed that variations in assessment frequency and methodologies led to unreliable data. To address this, the department standardized assessment practices and increased communication through regular department meetings.
- **Engage Outcome:** Faculty noted high achievement rates for the Engage outcome, with more than 92% of students meeting or exceeding standards in courses approved through the Equity Steering Committee. This success was attributed to intentional course redesigns emphasizing culturally responsive content and assessment practices. Faculty workshops focused on backward design, TILT (Transparency in Learning and Teaching), and universal design principles were instrumental in achieving these results.
- **Integrate Outcome:** Faculty assessing the Integrate outcome identified challenges related to the consistency of rubric application across disciplines. To improve reliability, faculty recommended adopting a norming process where small groups assess student artifacts collaboratively to ensure consistent application of the rubric.
- **Quantify Outcome:** The steering committee that assessed data collected for the Quantify outcome proposed annual training sessions for all instructors teaching Quantify-designated courses. These sessions will ensure consistency in assessment methodologies and increase faculty participation in the process.

- **Think Outcome:** The Think steering committee, identified equity gaps in critical thinking achievement, particularly among students that identify as Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native. Future plans include defining discipline-specific expectations for critical thinking and conducting targeted professional development workshops.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Data generated from the assessment of GELOs are analyzed by a General Education Steering Committee as part of the college's four-year program review process. The steering committees consist of faculty academic departments across the college based on their work teaching courses mapped to GELOs. Like the program review process for academic departments, GELO program review follows the review process outlined in 1.C.5, where the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness compiles program data, including enrollment trends, course pass rates, completion rates, and student learning outcomes. These data are delivered to program leads alongside three primary documents:

1. **Program Review Guide**: This document serves as the foundation for the Program Review process. Faculty use the guide to analyze program effectiveness, address equity gaps, and set actionable goals for improvement. It prompts reflection on access, achievement, learning outcomes, and satisfaction.
2. **Program Effectiveness Datasheet**: Summarizing key trends from previous Annual Effectiveness Reports, this datasheet provides a comprehensive snapshot of program performance. Faculty use the data to identify patterns, successes, and areas needing improvement.
3. **Program Review Rubric**: Developed by the Program Review and Assessment Committee, the rubric provides clear criteria for evaluating the Program Review Guide. It ensures transparency in the review process and offers actionable feedback for faculty.

After program leads receive these resources, they collaborate with faculty from a designated steering committee to complete the Program Review Guide. The completed guide is then reviewed by the Program Review and Assessment Committee, which evaluates it using the program review rubric and provides recommendations for improvement. The guide, along with the committee's feedback, is forwarded to the General Education Committee and instructional deans. The General Education Committee and instructional administrators analyze and use findings from each program review to recommend curricular changes and inform institutional planning to facilitate continued improvement of student learning.

Additional details and program review reports for GELOs can be found on the college's learning outcomes [website](#).

STANDARD 1.C.7 IMPROVING ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

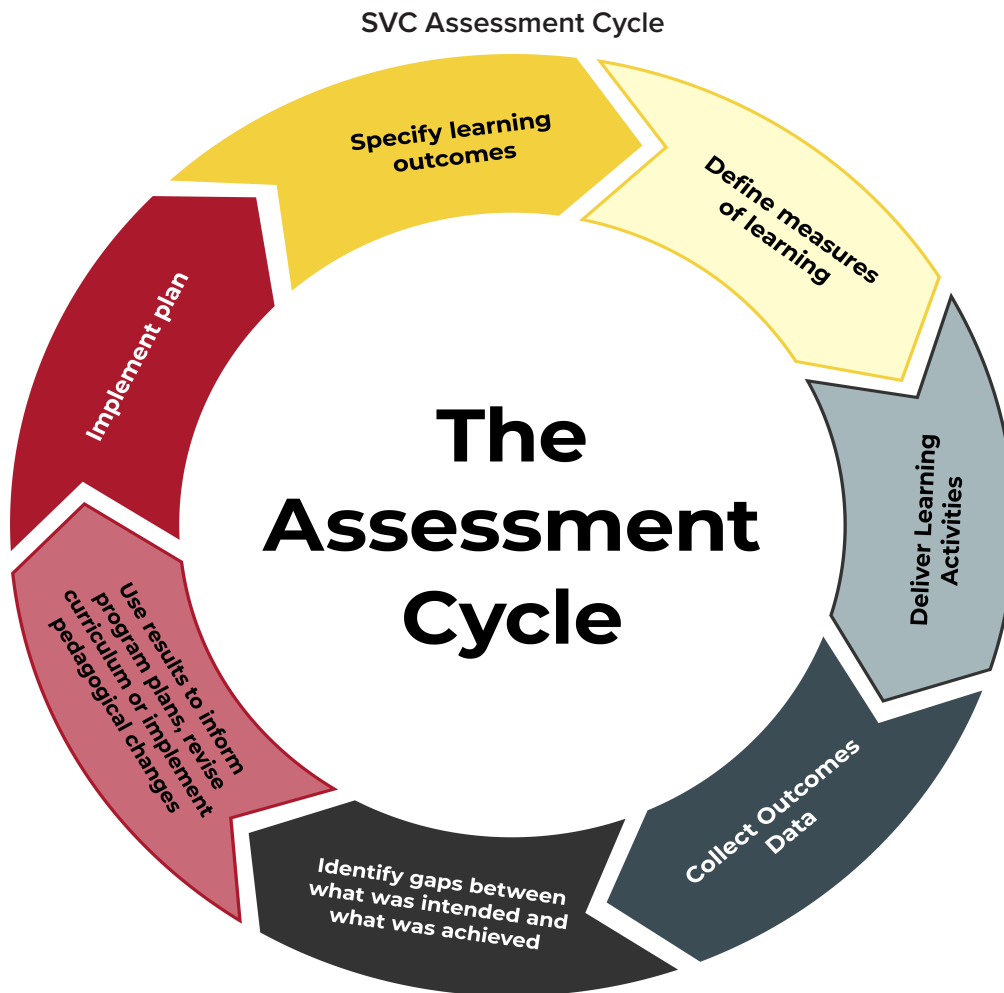
The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.

Skagit Valley College is committed to using and sharing the results of its assessment efforts to continuously improve student learning outcomes. Through a systematic and collaborative process, the college leverages data from learning outcome assessments, annual effectiveness reports, and program review reports to inform academic and learning-support planning.

USING ASSESSMENT TO INFORM ACADEMIC PLANNING

Academic Program Review involves an annual review of data and implementation of strategies to improve student outcomes. Data from learning outcomes assessment – along with other measures of program performance, including enrollment, achievement, and student satisfaction data, are analyzed by faculty on an annual basis to inform for changes to improve student learning, set program goals, and identify strategies to reach those goals. These results of this analyses are then integrated into the academic planning processes to enhance curriculum, pedagogy, and student success strategies. As described in 1.C.2, 1.C.5, and 1.C.6, the college defines and assesses learning outcomes at the course, program, and institution levels. Department faculty lead the analysis and response to discipline-specific program review, while cross-disciplinary faculty lead the analysis and response to program review of the college institutional learning outcomes.

As outlined in 1.C.5, faculty assess learning outcomes mapped to their courses, using preloaded rubrics in Canvas to evaluate student achievement. The annual and cumulative program review processes emphasize “closing the loop” by translating findings into actionable improvements. Examples include 1) revising curricula and instructional methods to address identified gaps, 2) enhancing professional development for faculty to support equitable teaching practices, 3) norming assessment practices to reduce subjectivity and bias, and 4) allocating additional resources to programs with demonstrated needs, such as equipment upgrades or expanded staffing. Details of departmental actions based on program review data are demonstrated in further detail below.



The learning outcome assessment process includes seven primary steps. Each step supports the next in a cycle of continuous improvement. Not all steps take place every academic year, but many do – including the delivery of learning activities, the collection of outcomes data, the identification of gaps “between what was intended and what was achieved,” and the use of results to inform program plans. The seven steps are outlined below:

1. **Specify learning outcomes** – Learning outcomes have been defined for all courses, programs, and degrees. When learning outcomes are revised, faculty draft and present changes to the college’s Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee reviews every new or revised learning outcome against standardized criteria that define exemplary student learning outcomes. In doing so, it ensures that each outcome is both measurable and aligned with academic standards. The committee works with faculty on outcome revisions and then makes recommendations for institutional approval. This iterative process has improved the quality of SVC outcomes and has increased faculty understanding of how to write, assess, and teach to quality student learning outcomes.

2. **Define measures of learning** – Faculty subject matter experts determine how learning outcomes will be measured and develop rubrics to consistently assess student performance.
3. **Deliver learning activities** – Faculty develop and deliver learning activities that are tied to individual outcomes and assessed to understand and document student performance.
4. **Collect outcomes data** – Assessment data is collected at the course, program, and institution level throughout the year. Faculty have access to assessment results from their courses in real time, while the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness aggregates outcomes data and delivers it annually to department chairs and program leads in the form of Annual Effectiveness Worksheets.
5. **Identify gaps between what was intended and what was achieved** – Department chairs and program leads analyze assessment data to identify measures of expected learning, as well as program performance where improvement is required. Equity gaps and metrics of student performance inform departmental and General Education Steering Committee responses to Program Review Reports and lay the groundwork for programmatic changes to improve student learning.
6. **Use results to inform program plans, revise curriculum, or implement pedagogical changes** – Results of the Annual Effectiveness Reports and Program Review Reports inform faculty-led discussions to improve student learning. Program goals and strategies to meet them are derived through these program discussions and might include curricular, pedagogical, student support services, or resource-oriented changes, e.g., equipment, personnel. Program goals and strategies are proposed in the Annual Effectiveness Report (yearly) and Program Review Report (every fourth year). Proposals are reviewed by the Program Review and Assessment Committee, as well as instructional deans. Program Review Reports for General Education Learning Outcomes are also reviewed by the General Education Committee. Program plans are then finalized in collaboration with department chairs and program leads.
7. **Implement plan** – Strategies to improve student learning included in annual effectiveness and program review reports that do not require additional resources can be implemented immediately. Strategies that require resources that cannot be allocated within the division – or require cross-division support – are included in the college’s operational planning process. The Office of Academic Affairs consolidates resource requests from the annual effectiveness and program review reports, prioritizing them according to their alignment with institutional priorities and further emphasizing those that are recurrent, before integrating them into the operational planning process.

USING ASSESSMENT IMPROVE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Examples of learning assessment data prompting programmatic changes include revisions to curriculum, pedagogy, student support-services, and resources (personnel or equipment) across multiple departments at the college. For example, faculty from Physical Education revised degree maps to include a broader selection of activity courses, providing students with more flexible pathways aligned with their fitness goals. Additionally, the program is exploring a wellness fee to support fitness center staffing and expand wellness opportunities. Similarly, curricular and learning outcome revisions were implemented in the Bachelor of Applied Science in Management program based on quarterly student course feedback gathered through a faculty-created survey instrument, as well as ongoing program engagement with community and industry partners.

The Culinary Arts program used student satisfaction data to enhance instructional quality and course relevance. The faculty revised course materials and incorporated advisory committee feedback to ensure alignment with evolving industry standards. These changes aim to attract and retain students while improving learning outcomes across the program.

Assessment results also shape learning-support services. Marine Maintenance Technology and Welding Technology programs, for example, analyzed English pass rates to identify barriers to student success. With Marine Maintenance Technology students achieving an English pass rate of only 47.2%, faculty and instructional administrators introduced integrated writing workshops and dedicated IBEST sections to strengthen technical writing skills. Similarly, Welding Technology faculty emphasized expanding student advising and career exploration to address gaps in course scheduling and career alignment.

The Nursing program used clinical assessment data to refine its mentorship program for first-year nursing students, pairing them with experienced faculty mentors to increase retention and foster a stronger sense of community within the cohort. Similarly, the Medical Assistant program leveraged program review findings to expand outreach efforts through high school events and partnerships with advisory committees, leading to increased enrollment and stronger connections with community stakeholders.

Assessment results also guide institution-level resource allocation at the college in effort to align investments with departmental needs and institutional goals. For example, in the Marine Maintenance Technology program, faculty identified the need for additional training aides and lab space to accommodate increasing enrollment demands and provide hands-on learning opportunities for students.

Similarly, the Manufacturing Technology program review highlighted the necessity of expanding equipment inventories to increase student access to hands-on training. Faculty developed a strategic purchasing plan to acquire industrial automation and mechatronics equipment, aligning curriculum with evolving industry standards.

In Welding Technology, program review findings helped secure funding for specialized equipment, including pipe welding positioners and industrial welding machines. These investments enhance student preparation for certification exams and improve employability in advanced welding fields.

Assessment data also play a critical role in establishing new programs and faculty positions. Multimedia Interactive Technology faculty recently proposed an AAS degree in graphic design to provide students with a flexible pathway aligned with industry needs. Additionally, program review data from the Management program demonstrated a clear demand for additional BAS faculty, leading to the hiring of a full-time faculty member.

Aggregated program assessment data also drive broader interventions to enhance student learning and completion. One of the most significant examples is the New Faculty Academy and Inclusive Pedagogy Learning Community, both of which are now mandatory for all tenure-track faculty and open to associate faculty participation. These professional development programs focus on improving curricular and pedagogical practices to eliminate persistent equity gaps. As discussed further in 1.D.4, the Inclusive Pedagogy Learning Community utilizes disaggregated achievement data to reinforce equity-oriented syllabus and course design, helping to improve student belonging and engagement. Faculty are trained in the use of TILT (Transparency in Learning and Teaching) frameworks to clearly articulate course objectives and assignment expectations. Combined with the college's Integrative Learning professional development, these efforts have significantly contributed to student achievement gains over the past decade.

USING ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

The college has also implemented program review for learning support services, including tutoring and library services, consistent with the broader assessment structure used by the college. As described in the preface, program review for Tutoring Services has been administered through the Student Services division, while the Library Services program review was facilitated within Academic Affairs. Each of these areas participated in annual program review cycles aligned with college assessment and operational planning in their respective areas.

COLLEGE TUTORING SERVICES

Key findings from the Program Review of Tutoring Services indicated the following: a) a lack of adequate, consistent funding to support tutoring needs, particularly in gateway courses, higher level science courses, and bachelor's programs, b) decentralized administrative oversight, c) concurrent tutoring activities offered in many disparate areas on campus with little to no coordination, e.g. Math Center, Writing Center, Library tutoring, nursing tutoring, TRIO tutoring, science tutoring, peer tutoring, etc., and d) limited staffing support. These results were used to inform the college's operational planning process and led to an institutional investment in the development of a new Learning Resource Center led by a newly funded dean of libraries and learning resources. The

reorganization of Tutoring Services is intended to better support student learning and facilitate deeper coordination between various divisions of the college. Increased administrative oversight will contribute to the achievement of programmatic goals and institutional priorities of student success (completion) and equity.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Since the Comprehensive Year Seven Evaluation visit in 2018, the college has developed and implemented a faculty-led, comprehensive Academic Affairs program review and assessment cycle. Through this process, faculty analyzed data on access, achievement, learning, and student satisfaction to establish strategic goals for continuous improvement. As part of the Academic Affairs division, Library Services actively participate in the annual and four-year comprehensive review cycle, drawing on their dual role in instruction and learning support. In addition to evaluating program data typically provided in academic program review, library usage data plays a critical role in the review analysis, ensuring informed decision-making in resource allocation and academic support.

During the first program review cycle, the college's library applied data-driven insights to guide strategic decisions on subscription adjustments, acquisitions, course offerings, faculty training, and collection development. By analyzing usage data, they identified underutilized subscriptions, enabling informed budgetary choices regarding resource reductions and additions. Additionally, their review of General Education Outcome data led to key projects, including faculty training on information literacy, the expansion of Library 201 offerings, the diversification of collections, the decolonization of subject headings, and a collaboration with the English department to integrate scaffolded literacy instruction into ENGL& 101 and 102.

Participating in the Academic Affairs program review has also deeply embedded the libraries within the college's teaching and learning dialogues and spaces, achieving a level of integration previously unattained. One of the faculty librarians serves on the Program Review and Assessment Committee and provides an important voice to the design, maintenance, and implementation of Academic Affairs program review. Moving forward, the college has committed to hosting several student focus groups in the near future to better understand some of the critical feedback gathered on the library from the Noel Levitz Ruffalo SSI survey. From this, the library will continue to incorporate library-specific student feedback into the process of continuous program improvement.

OTHER LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

In addition to Library and Tutoring Services, SVC is proud to have three equity-based cohort programs that also focus and contribute to learning support services, including a TRIO Student Support Program, CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program), and CAP (Cardinal Achievement Program). TRIO and CAMP are federally funded programs, both of which participate in annual program assessments and federal reporting. Both programs have met or exceeded the goals and outcomes established in their grant awards. In

addition, SVC created a “home grown” Cardinal Achievement Program (CAP), which now supports 160 students identified as first generation, to assist in high school to college transitions, provide targeted, proactive advising support, and culturally responsive programming. Each of these cohort programs partner with tutoring services and the next cycles of program review will assess tutoring demand and effectiveness for these programs, as well as broader student populations at SVC.

STANDARD 1.C.8 TRANSFER CREDIT

Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Skagit Valley College ensures integrity and consistency in the credits accepted for transfer into degrees and certificates through articulation agreements with Washington baccalaureate institutions, and by participation in major statewide articulation and transfer councils and committees.

TRANSFER OF CREDITS

SVC’s credentials evaluators determine external credit transfer, according to clearly defined policies and procedures. Student Transfer Rights and Responsibilities are clearly detailed in the [Policies and Regulations](#) section of the catalog. Students are informed about different types of nontraditional credit, such as Credit for Prior Learning, Military Credits, Advanced Placement coursework, and International Baccalaureate, which satisfies NWCCU’s Transfer and Award of Academic Credit Policy. These policies maintain the integrity of SVC’s programs while facilitating student mobility between institutions and supporting students in the completion of their educational goals. Students are responsible for providing official transcripts and, if required, additional documentation such as course syllabi, to determine course equivalency. Evaluation specialists review official transcripts for SVC course equivalencies. Evaluations are done on a course-by-course basis using the official course descriptions in the catalog of the transferring institutions. If catalog information is insufficient, the evaluator requests course descriptions and course syllabi, and may also confer with the dean or with faculty from the academic area(s) where credit might apply. Credit accepted for transfer to SVC is not used in the calculation of SVC’s grade point average.

The SBCTC’s [Inter-college Reciprocity Policy](#) guides SVC’s actions for determining which courses satisfy distribution area requirements. SVC’s compliance with this policy eases student transfer between the state’s community colleges and the baccalaureate institutions. To further facilitate transfer, SVC subscribes to the common course numbering system established in 2007 by the SBCTC. SVC shares a single set of course

numbers to provide seamless course articulation between community and technical colleges in Washington state.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

[SVC Policy 5140](#) describes policies and procedures outlining credit for prior learning, evaluation of credit, evaluation of non-traditional credit, and advanced placement. Policies and procedures regarding credit for prior learning are also outlined in the [SVC catalog](#).

TRANSFER OF DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

All transfer degrees are accepted by the Washington state public baccalaureate institutions based on our membership in the [Intercollege Relations Commission](#) (ICRC), a statewide council that coordinates transfer articulation. The ICRC is responsible for all Direct Transfer Agreements and assures program consistency for the public and private baccalaureate institutions accepting Washington state community and technical college transfer credits. SVC maintains an active membership in ICRC and complies with all ICRC handbook guidelines. This ensures that our programs, degrees, and student learning outcomes meet regional standards to support academic transfer to Washington state baccalaureate institutions.

STANDARD 1.D. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

STANDARD 1.D.1 RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Consistent with its mission, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

As an open access institution, student recruitment, enrollment, and orientation at SVC are designed to welcome and affirm the diverse experiences and backgrounds of our students. Each of these recruitment elements are organized to provide clear program pathways and procedures regarding how to complete a degree or certificate. Printed as well as online materials are co-created by the Marketing team in collaboration the Recruitment and Outreach team, Enrollment Services, Academic Affairs, Advising and Counseling, and various equity-based cohort programs designed to support students. Materials are often available in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian.

RECRUITMENT

The SVC college website is often the first point of inquiry or connection for prospective [students seeking information](#) regarding programs, services, and resources. As such, SVC outlines all available [degree and certificate programs](#) on the website, as well as through the [online course catalog](#). Students can access detailed program information related to curriculum, program information, and graduation requirements in the catalog.

In addition, SVC actively engages in recruitment activities throughout the district by providing [information sessions](#) for students and families in the high schools, offering weekly [admission labs](#) in both English and Spanish, participating in a wide variety of community events, and hosting large-scale high impact events for K-12 and other prospective students on the SVC campuses. These large-scale events such as “Try-a-Trade,” [“Learning with Leaders,”](#) and “Latinos in Action” are designed to introduce students to academic and workforce programs, including hands-on opportunities to explore various majors. SVC also hosts an annual lunch with high school counselors across many feeder school districts. These programs and activities are designed to integrate culturally responsive programming reflective of the broader Skagit Valley district and community.

For more specialized populations such as students enrolling in [bachelor’s degree programs](#), [Basic Education for Adults \(BEDA\)](#), [Dental Therapy](#), [International Programs](#), [High School Programs](#), [Running Start](#), and [Veterans and Military Affiliated students](#), SVC hosts unique [information sessions and program briefings](#) in which students receive additional information details and support in completing any unique program admission requirements.

ENROLLMENT

SVC completely redesigned the admission and onboarding process in 2023-24 in order to provide more tailored, holistic, hands-on support for students. Enrollment processes now include a series of automated email and text messages welcoming students to the college and prompting completion of their application, if necessary. The bulk of the onboarding experience occurs in a [New Student Registration](#) in which students are invited to an on-campus session where they receive math and English course placement, activate various electronic accounts, are introduced to student engagement opportunities and funding resources, and ultimately meet with an academic advisor to complete the first quarter class registration. Students are introduced to the [SVC website](#) and [Areas of Study](#) during this class registration segment so they can learn where and how to register for classes in subsequent quarters. New Student Registration events are held throughout the year and organized to support students entering each quarterly admission cycle. They are hosted on both campuses and zoom options are provided for students who are unable to attend an in-person event.

ORIENTATION

Orientations are held at the beginning of each quarter to further assist students in connecting to resources, services, and policies relevant to their degree/certificate completion and student success. Orientations notably highlight advising and financial aid resources, and all students are enrolled in a mandatory First Quarter Experience class in which they create an education plan in partnership with their assigned faculty or staff advisor. The education plan maps out their program requirements and provides the groundwork for timely progress and degree/certificate completion. The FQE then articulates into additional advising checkpoints throughout a student's time at SVC where they engage in further conversation and planning around degree progress, career, and transfer goals and requirements.

In addition to the broad Orientation held each quarter in which all students are invited, various population-specific orientations are held to support the unique needs and requirements related to Athletics, International Programs, Dental Therapy, and other grant-funded programs such as [TRIO Student Support Services](#) and the [College Assistant Migrant Program \(CAMP\)](#). A [Summer Bridge Program](#) also provides an opportunity for a cohort of students to engage in the First Quarter Experience class along with experiential engagement opportunities in a session just prior to their fall quarter start.

Lastly, SVC makes drop-in advising appointments readily available and accessible both in person and online during the busiest weeks of each quarter when students need assistance with course and degree program changes. This practice supports timely and accurate information as students progress through their education plans.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

Whereas SVC has consistently developed an annual Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, the Core Themes of access, achievement, and community proved to be too broad as a filtering function for strategic decisions. In addition, a lack of access to timely, accurate data stalled efforts to measure the effectiveness of various recruitment and retention activities that were implemented to support SEM.

With the addition of staffing in the Office of Institutional Research along with the development of more focused Strategic Priorities for the college, SVC created a SEM Council comprised of deans, directors, and other key staff members to shepherd a new SEM plan. Cabinet identified four key target populations in which to focus recruitment and enrollment efforts, both as a way to advance the institutional mission as well as to maintain fiscal health in the context of budget planning.

In the first year of implementation, SVC met or exceeded three out of four enrollment targets and outpaced all four enrollment targets in year two. The SEM Council meets monthly to develop and monitor the goals, KPIs, and progress across the identified activities to advance the Strategic Plan. The SEM Council is now evolving to include an expanded shared governance model inclusive of additional faculty and staff members across the college, consistent with a broader model of shared governance councils to support each of the [five SVC Strategic Priorities](#). This expanded model will enable broader input from various members of the college, which furthers a shared understanding and investment in SEM decisions and activities. Status updates on enrollment activities and outcomes are also shared with the Board of Trustees and through the president's meetings to inform and engage members of the college in this work.

STANDARD 1.D.2 ESTABLISHED INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).

INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Equitable student achievement is a critical part of fulfilling SVC's mission, vision, and strategic priorities. SVC has established a [shared set of indicators](#) (see Strategic Priority Outcomes, KPIs, Metrics, and Targets) for student success that serve to indicate mission fulfillment and are a fundamental part of evaluating the institution's effectiveness, as discussed in section 1.B.1. and 1.B.2. Regional and national benchmark institutional data as well as multiple indicators of student achievement, including data on graduation,

completion, retention, course success, enrollment and measures of postgraduation success, are published on the [Institutional Data webpage](#) under the section Institutional Effectiveness and Student Achievement Data section. Institution level measures of student achievement are also found in the [Strategic Priorities Performance Reports](#) (formerly Core Theme Progress Reports) webpage. Finally, all tableau dashboards on student achievement have a tab displaying equity gaps by a range of specific variables, including race, gender, age, attendance, or first-generation status, and many contain the ability to offer multiple levels of disaggregation.

In addition to the high-level indicators of student achievement, the college provides faculty and staff with a wide range of disaggregated indicators of retention, transition, learning, enrollment, and course success. These are widely shared and monitored at the division, Unit, and department level. However, the college uses these data as tools to understand pathways to student achievement and bases operational planning on these data. However, the college has made a conscious choice to focus on final outcomes as our indicator of mission fulfillment.

PRIOR INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

The current indicators of achievement were adopted in the fall of 2024 and built off the previous Core Theme Indicators of Student Success. There is significant continuity between the previous and current set of indicators. The most significant change is at the mission fulfillment level. Current indicators are focused on outcome data, such as completion or employment rates, whereas previous versions included significant data on explanatory metrics such as retention and transition. This was a conscious decision to increase institutional accountability at the mission fulfillment level, where the focus is on outcomes metrics, versus area program review data (e.g. Academic Affairs, Student Support Services) that focus on utilizing explanatory metrics to improve outcome metrics.

EQUITY GAPS

The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness provide [numerous dashboards](#) that provide real-time data for faculty, instructional programs, and other support services use to identify where interventions are necessary to close opportunity gaps in student achievement, and to celebrate successes. All student achievement dashboards include an equity gap tab to highlight disparities in educational outcomes between different student groups, disaggregated by demographic factors such as race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, attendance, first-generation status, and others. These disparities may include differences in meeting course learning objectives, course completion, program completion, transition to college-level work, retention rates, and 45 credit completion within two years, among others. The office monitors the equity gap in relation to overall averages to identify and establish both short and long-term institutional goals aimed at addressing inequities and fulfilling the college's mission.

For instance, faculty and instructional areas utilize these dashboards to analyze course enrollments, achievement of learning outcomes (both general education and program-

level), course success (defined as completing a course with a grade of C or better), program completion (rates of graduation and transfer to four-year colleges), and student satisfaction (as indicated by feedback surveys administered by the eighth week of each quarter, as well as the annual Ruffalo Noel Levitz SSI survey). Furthermore, several dashboards were developed to assist academic areas in preparing their Program Annual Effectiveness Reports. The data in these dashboards are disaggregated not only by student demographics but also by the academic plans (degree programs) students are pursuing. Most of these dashboards are updated daily, while some are updated quarterly or annually, depending on when the relevant data becomes available.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PEERS

SVC selected regional benchmark institutions from the following characteristics: degree granting four-year, primarily associates, 2021 Carnegie classification of Associates Dominant, public and enrollment of similar size, geographic locations, and institutional demographics. Because SVC has just become a Hispanic Serving Institution, HSI or emerging HSI status was also considered. The following are regional peer colleges that SVC uses to benchmark its metrics: Centralia College, WA, Columbia Basin College, WA, Yakima Valley College, WA, Peninsula College, WA, Wenatchee Valley College, WA, and Whatcom Community College, WA. Our comparison data is drawn from the Tableau dashboards maintained by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

SVC uses data provided by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to benchmark its performance against national peers. SVC uses the IPEDS Compare Institutions Tool to pull metrics of interest. National benchmark institutions were selected from the following characteristics: degree granting four-year, primarily associates, 2021 Carnegie classification of Associates Dominant, public and enrollment of a similar size. SVC would like to note there is ample peer reviewed published literature discussing the difficulty in comparing community colleges from different state systems. Unlike traditional four-year colleges and universities, which are fairly uniform in structure, function, and composition nationally, community colleges vary greatly based on how a given state has structured their system. Given this, choosing national peers remains something of an art and not a science. That said, these are the following national peer colleges that SVC uses to benchmark its metrics: Chemeketa Community College, OR, Clackamas Community College, OR, Mt Hood Community College, OR, North Idaho College, ID, Pima Community College, AZ, Scottsdale Community College, AZ.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

SVC has operated with a limited data capacity for much of the last accreditation cycle. The college struggled to systematically integrate data into its planning and evaluation systems. Faculty, staff, and administrators were often frustrated by the lack of data and skeptical of the accuracy or applicability of the data that were provided. Data on overall institutional effectiveness relied almost exclusively on data provided by the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) system, internal data were

only generated on a case-by-case basis, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness was not well integrated with the rest of the college. Over the course of two operational planning cycles, this feedback was consistent and widespread, coming especially from two main sources: 1) instructional program review and 2) strategic enrollment management. Consequently, the college created the position of vice president of institutional effectiveness, and a new director of institutional research was hired. This has resulted in a large increase in the data available for planning and evaluation, and improved trust in the data provided. However, this shift has also further highlighted the need for increased data capacity. The college has committed to growing the office of institutional research (currently comprised of just one position, the director of institutional research). In the future, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research plans to release an annual Institutional Effectiveness Report that will combine institution-level data from the Strategic Priorities Performance Reports along with data from each area of program review. This report will help to make effectiveness data more contextualized, centrally located, and systematically available for operational and division level planning efforts.

STANDARD 1.D.3 PUBLISHED DISAGGREGATED INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The institution's disaggregated indicators of student achievement should be widely published and available on the institution's website. Such disaggregated indicators should be aligned with meaningful, institutionally identified indicators benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.

Skagit Valley College publishes multiple, publicly available, interactive dashboards on its [Institutional Data webpage](#) in each the following areas connected to student achievement, success, and learning: enrollment, retention, completion, course success, student satisfaction, and financial aid. Each interactive dashboard allows users to view, disaggregate, and analyze data and many have discrete dashboards that highlight equity gaps in completion, retention, and course success. These dashboards are publicly accessible don't require a login or password. They are designed to monitor and track trends, provide evidence for data-driven decisions, and communicate information to stakeholders. In addition, the college publishes interactive dashboards on student learning in two locations, on the [student success and achievement webpage](#) and on the [Academic Affairs Program Review webpage](#). These are available to all college employees with a login and password.

[Strategic Priority Performance Reports](#), formerly called Core Theme Reports, assess mission fulfillment in each of SVC's five institutional priority areas. These reports contain disaggregated student success indicator data and are benchmarked against peer institutions. Strategic Priority Performance Reports are foundational for the College's continuous improvement and to inform planning and decision-making. Combined, these

data sources both inform and drive the institution's operational and strategic planning processes and help to set priorities and institutional goals.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

While a large amount of data is freely available to the public and all college employees, the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness has committed to improving data culture and accessibility for the college community. Better data visualization (e.g. graphs and figures) are a key component to this approach. In addition, the office plans to continue working with all areas of the college to more systematically insert relevant data into planning and evaluation processes. Finally, the college has committed to improving the data culture at the college, including the launch of a Faculty Literacy Program that is co-led by the director of institutional research and faculty presenters, and the creation of a Data Committee, that would build increased awareness and capacity across the institution, with key participation from HR, IT, Business Office, Enrollment Services, instructional deans, and schedule builders.

STANDARD 1.D.4 STRATEGIES TO ALLEVIATE GAPS IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.

TRANSPARENCY

Skagit Valley College's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing disaggregated indicators of student achievement have become increasingly transparent and widely available over the last seven years. All measures of student achievement are disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and age. Furthermore, more than 75% of indicators are also disaggregated by attendance (full-time vs part-time), Hispanic/Latino status (this includes students who also identify with another racial category), first generation status, and low-income status. Most indicators also have a separate tab that specifically displays any potential equity gaps in achievement, and many indicators are able to be disaggregated by multiple factors. The definitions, data sources, sample size, and sample demographics are also available for each student achievement metric. Finally, all indicators of student achievement are publicly available on the college website (e.g. SVC three-year completion rates), apart from some instructional program review results, which are available to all college employees, but not the general public.

DATA USE TO ALLOCATE RESOURCES AND MITIGATE GAPS

The college has been moving steadily toward more intentional resource allocation to mitigate achievement gaps over the last seven years. Our previous operational budgeting process required connecting all new expenditures to an institutional strategic priority. In addition, the college had a focus on equity in both access and achievement, so (new) resource allocations addressing equity gaps in these areas were prioritized over other

competing requests. In our new operational planning process, that same approach is being applied to all funding. In addition, addressing equity gaps, specifically in achievement, has been called out specifically in the new strategic priorities, KPIs, and targets that are part of the newly implemented [Strategic Plan](#). Finally, the [institutional program review process](#) requires all area program review processes to be specifically aligned with a specific strategic priority and one or more targets embedded in the priority. Thus projects, positions, and interventions that are projected or have been shown to deliver better outcomes based on the reviewed data and are more in line with college priorities, such as closing equity gaps, are considerably more likely to be funded.

AMELIORATING EQUITY GAPS

Within the Academic Affairs division, equity gaps in enrollment and achievement are analyzed within the program review process. Disaggregated achievement data are assessed annually by faculty and instructional administrators to identify areas that require attention and to develop or implement interventions to improve student success. Institutionally, these interventions are focused on faculty training.

Specifically, the college's New Faculty Academy and Inclusive Pedagogy Learning Community have been used to train faculty in curricular and pedagogical practices meant to increase student belonging, engagement, and success. Disaggregated data are used in these learning communities to show the historical nature of disparities in achievement across race/ethnicity markers, and institution-specific equity gaps that have persisted over time. The intent of the analysis is to demonstrate – both institutionally and nationally – that equity gaps are persistent and require purposeful, targeted interventions to ameliorate. For example, the Inclusive Pedagogy Learning Community – which has been a mandatory requirement for all tenure-track faculty since 2021 – uses disaggregated achievement data to reinforce the importance of equity-oriented syllabus and course shell construction and the use of TILT frameworks to clearly articulate the purpose of courses and course assignments. These efforts support the college's continued transformation toward becoming a "student ready" institution. Although the correlation between the college's improved three-year completion rate (10% over ten years) and decreased equity gaps are difficult to isolate, we believe the training provided to faculty in these learning communities has had a direct, positive effect on student outcomes.

At the program level, examples are drawn from the identification of equity gaps in access, retention, and achievement within the program review process. When achievement gaps are identified, programs propose interventions intended to improve student success. For example, the nursing program found the retention of students that identify as Hispanic/Latino decreased to 67.5% (from 78.6%). To increase retention, nursing faculty participated in training intended to better support minoritized students, both nationally through the National Association of Nursing Academic Coaches and the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) and locally through training provided by the college's Equity Steering Committee. Additionally, an operational planning request to hire a student retention specialist was recommended based on data from the most recent

program review cycle. Separately, data from the program's 2024 annual review prompted the creation of a tutoring program which was piloted last year.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

In 2019, after an extensive analysis of completion pathway, the college identified the completion of college-level math as the single biggest obstacle to student completion rates. Students at SVC were placing below college-level math at very high rates (approximately 74% in 2017-2019), and the completion of a college-level math course within one year of enrollment ranged from 5 -19% for students who came in below college-level and was just 27% for all students. Students of color, first-generation college students, and part-time students were disproportionately more likely to place below college-level math and subsequently even less likely to complete a college-level math course. For students placing three levels below college-level math, successful completion of a college-level math course was in the single digits.

In response to these data, the college took a number of steps to prioritize the improvement of the college math pathway at SVC.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

During operational planning for two cycles (four academic years), the improvement of math pathways, math transition to college level, and completion of math within the first year of enrollment was made the top priority for not only Academic Affairs but also was identified in the institutional Operational Plan. Funds were allocated to replace a number of tenure-track math positions that had been lost in subsequent years. The college prioritized the creation and hiring of a director of teaching and learning position with a clear focus being the improvement of math completion rates. The college prioritized the writing of and application to several outside sources of funding specifically focused on improving college-level math completion rates, resulting in the successful acquisition of a College Spark grant and an NSF IUSE grant. These grants required matching institutional funds as well as a reallocation of human capital (e.g. deans, vice presidents, faculty chairs, etc.) to address the systemic change required.

RESULTING CULTURAL AND PROGRAMMATIC CHANGES

The college utilized these resources to produce a number of changes. A yearlong Community of Practice for all math faculty, led by the executive dean for instruction and the director of teaching and learning, focused on reviewing current math data and outcomes, critically reviewing and discussing the relevant literature on math pathways and interventions to improve math learning and completion, and Inclusive Pedagogy Training. The process resulted in the creation of new pre-college to college-level math pathways eliminating nearly all required pre-college math courses, the redesign of math placement, and the staged implementation of a co-requisite instructional model. All these changes resulted in a significant decrease in tuition revenue due to 1) the elimination or significant shortening of pre-college math pathways, 2) higher placement rates into

college-level math, and 3) higher instructional costs due to the implementation of a (more) costly co-requisite instructional model.

Resulting college-level math success rates have increased dramatically. Currently 42% of students complete college-level math within one year of enrollment, a 15% increase over a six-year period. In addition, placement into college-level math has increased dramatically and transition rates from students who do place below college level math have increased to 31%, an 11% increase over six years. Finally, when these data are disaggregated and analyzed by a variety of demographic factors including race/ethnicity, we see disproportionately larger gains in students from racialized minority groups, especially students who identify as Hispanic/Latino.

CONCLUSION

Skagit Valley College is well-positioned to show sustained progress toward mission fulfillment and continued improvement in equitable student success. The new four-year Strategic Plan builds on SVC's previous Core Themes of Access, Achievement, and Community by implementing more targeted KPIs, metrics, and especially objective targets for each outcome statement, and by adding additional strategic focus on equity and institutional capacity. The college has also made significant progress in the areas of institutional effectiveness, planning, strategic enrollment management, student learning, and student support, and has committed to expanding its support of these areas. The college will continue to focus on continuous program improvement by expanding implementation of area program review across all divisions of the institution, and by integrating the results of this process into our updated operational planning cycle. The importance and use of data to inform planning and effectiveness, especially disaggregated data to identify equity gaps and inform improvements to address disparities, will remain central to our work and the college has committed to increasing its support of this capacity. In turn, we will continue to systematically advance equitable student success and institutional sustainability. Finally, SVC continues to closely follow current and projected educational, demographic, and economic shifts, and is committed to using its strategic planning and focus on improving institutional effectiveness to successfully address these local, societal, and national changes.

The materials in this report represent an honest presentation of SVC as required by the NWCCU's accreditation standards. Although the last seven years proved to be extremely challenging, the college continues to be proud of the work it has done, the improvements it has made in increasing equitable student success rates, and progress it has made in creating an institution designed to serve its students. Importantly, SVC also acknowledges the lessons learned from past accreditation visits and evaluations, and has utilized these findings to implement changes to better serve and support its students. Our work continues to be focused on maintaining our positive momentum and continuous improvement and effectiveness. SVC looks forward to gaining additional insight from the NWCCU evaluation team visit for our Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness.



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