



Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)
Annual Update for WSQA
Academic Year 2013-2014
Due October 31, 2014

College Name: Clark College

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Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation	Actions taken by the college to address recommendations	Improvement results
<p>Fall 2013: The Evaluation Committee recommends that for each year of operation, Clark College undergo an external financial audit and that the results from such audits, including findings and management letter recommendations, be considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the Board of Trustees (Eligibility Requirement 19 and Standard 2.F.7).</p>	<p>The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), with Clark College as a member, has worked diligently to develop a process for all of the 34 public community and technical colleges to be compliant with Eligibility Requirement 19 and Standard 2.F.7. The process includes three milestones that each college must complete to fulfill the standard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. 	<p>The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has developed the resources and process within the state government for all the state’s public community and technical colleges to comply with the Commission’s Eligibility Standard 19 and Standard 2.F.7. Clark College has made progress to comply by developing a comprehensive plan to receive the audit. Clark College expects to be fully in compliance by summer of 2015.</p>

2. Contract with professionally qualified personnel to **audit** the financial statements.
3. The college's **administration and board** must review and consider the results of the financial statement audit in a timely, appropriate and comprehensive manner.

Financial Statements

Washington community and technical colleges historically have been included in the state of Washington's financial statements. The state follows the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB) pronouncement number 34 (GASB 34) *Basic Financial Statements—and Management's Discussion and Analysis—for State and Local Governments*. General purpose governments, such as the state of Washington, engage in both governmental and business-type activities and must prepare statements that reflect both. As a result of reporting to the state, the college's financial information and financial systems are configured to meet the reporting standards applicable to the state, where some activity is reported as governmental while other activity is reported as business-type activity. Roughly ninety-two percent of Washington State's community and technical colleges' spending in fiscal year 2013 was reported using the accounting standards applicable to governmental type activities with only eight

	<p>percent being reported as business-type activities.</p> <p>In contrast, GASB requires that special purpose governments, such as public colleges, that are engaged in only business-type activities should present the financial statements required for enterprise funds. As a result, Washington State’s community and technical colleges are faced with reviewing and restating approximately ninety-two percent of their activity from one accounting standard to another. Since the accounting systems were not designed to do this, it requires a painstaking review and adjustment process for each college.</p> <p>In order to share knowledge about the restatement process across colleges, the SBCTC convened a pilot group consisting of nine colleges. (Clark College was not a member of the pilot group.) A variety of tools were developed to assist colleges with the process of restating their financial information to business-type activity reporting. Starting in December 2013, these colleges began the process of preparing an inaugural set of financial statements for FY2012-13. Throughout the process, as additional challenges were identified, additional tools were developed and pilot colleges shared the knowledge gained with one another. The first colleges completed their statements in May 2014.</p>	
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As a non-pilot college, Clark College will complete an inaugural set of financial statements for FY 2013-14. Although the pilot resulted in improvements to the tools used to prepare the financial statements, each college is expected to experience a significant learning curve when preparing its inaugural financial statements. Four Clark College business services administrators and staff attended a financial statement preparation workshop hosted by the SBCTC on August 25, 2014. As a result, Clark College estimates its statements will be completed sometime no later than March 2015.

Audit

On behalf of Clark College, the SBCTC contracted with the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) to audit the college's financial statements. SAO conducts financial statement audits using generally accepted governmental auditing standards as promulgated in the U.S. Government Accountability Office's Government Auditing Standards (the "Yellow Book"). Washington state law establishes SAO as the auditor of public accounts. SAO employees are experienced in auditing public universities' business-type activity financial statements, having audited five of Washington's six public four-year colleges since GASB 34 became effective in 2002.

As stated above, Clark College estimates its statements will be completed –no later than

March 2015. Depending on SAO availability, the audit is expected to begin sometime between April and May 2015, with the auditors' field work taking approximately one month to complete. The college anticipates receiving the auditor's report, including an opinion and any management letter or findings, approximately one month after field work is completed.

Administration and Board Review

Clark College's Vice President of Administrative Services and the Director of Business Services will review the financial statements with college administration once they are prepared by March 2015. In addition, auditing standards require the auditor to present their report to college management and the governing board. By then end of May 2015, the Clark College President, at least one member of the Clark College Board of Trustees, and the college's financial managers will attend the audit exit conference. Secondly, the President will review and consider the financial statements and audit results during the board's summer retreat scheduled in July 2015, depending on the timing of the completed auditor's report.

The Washington State community and technical college presidents (convening as the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges, or WACTC) recognized that they and their board members have not previously seen financial information in business-type activity format. As a result, the

	<p>SBCTC will present an initial overview in November 2014 of what the presidents can expect the financial statements to look like – and how to read them.</p>	
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<p>Fall 2013: The Evaluation Committee recommends that Clark College ensure that all courses have published learning outcomes and that assessment methodologies are being used for program improvement and learning across the institution (Standards 2.C.2 and 2.C.5).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clark College inventoried and documented all learning outcomes for 97% of offered courses. 2. During 2013-14, numerous coordinated activities were implemented to increase the use of assessment methodologies for program improvement and learning. The college continued to employ two faculty liaisons and one institutional researcher for outcomes assessment, who led campus-wide faculty work to develop assessment plans, and 75% of programs had plans in place as of Fall 2013. Throughout the year, regular professional development sessions were offered to strengthen faculty capacity to conduct assessment projects. Additionally, the faculty liaisons and researcher met with individual program faculty to support assessment work, including aligning assessment with industry accreditation requirements and curriculum mapping. Faculty were offered the opportunity to request funding to support their assessment projects, and the Outcomes Assessment Committee awarded 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As of October 2014, 97% (out of 1,529) of courses have course learning outcomes documented in a centralized college database. Approximately 91% of course learning outcomes were documented at the time of catalog publication and are published in the 2014-15 Clark College catalog. 2. As of the close of the 2013-14 academic year, 58% of programs had used assessment methodologies to assess student learning and had planned actions to improve student learning.

	<p>funding to support sixteen distinct projects. With a Title III-funded software developer, twenty new web-based applications have been developed for use in documenting and managing assessment of learning outcomes, including managing course and program learning outcomes and documenting assessment projects. As of the close of the 2013-14 academic year, 58% of programs had used assessment methodologies to document student learning and plan actions to improve student learning, including 22% that had been documented in the new web applications. A new application designed to document actions taken based on assessment results has been developed and released as of October 2014. The Program Improvement Process is also in its third year, with all degree and certificate programs scheduled for review over a five-year cycle. In this process, a committee reviews data related to student outcomes such as completions, retention, transfer, course success, and other indicators, and facilitates further inquiry and program improvement based on findings.</p>	
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