



Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)
Annual Update for WSQA
Academic Year 2009-2010

College Name: **Clark College**

Contact Person: **Shanda Diehl, Associate Vice President of Planning and Effectiveness**

Contact Phone: **360-992-2421**

Contact email: **sdiehl@clark.edu**

| Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation | Actions taken by the college to address recommendations | Improvement results |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Fall 2008 – General Recommendation One: The committee recommends that the college continue to develop and implement a systematic, transparent institutional planning and evaluation system. Essential conditions, elements, and uses of this system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define the planning and evaluation processes. • The planning and evaluation processes are ongoing. • The planning process is participatory involving appropriate constituencies such as faculty, administrators, staff, students, and other interested parties. • Results of the planning and evaluation processes influence resource allocation | <p>Institutional planning and evaluation are being incorporated into the work of all areas of the College. Linked to and directed by the college-wide Strategic Plan, the work of the College is evaluated for effectiveness; areas of success as well as those needing improvement are identified. The continuous improvement cycle is conducted on an annual basis both at the college level and operational level. The College expects full implementation of the continuous improvement process by 2011-2012. Further, the college will abide by a process of allocating resources based on mission fulfillment as all organizational units will tie their operational objectives to college goals. Consistent focus of goals and assessment of work has already begun to make Clark College more deliberate</p> | <p>Clark College has made substantial progress in institutional planning and evaluation since the full-scale evaluation visit in October 2008. The College has adopted and implemented a strategic planning and continuous improvement process both at the college level and operational level. The continuous improvement process aligns goals, objectives, activities, measureable outcomes, and improvement strategies to the Clark College 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. One full cycle of continuous improvement has been completed at the college level.</p> <p>Currently, one full cycle of college-wide continuous improvement has been completed and 17 departments have completed one full assessment cycle as documented in the</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>decisions and are used to improve programs and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessary resources are provided for an effective planning and evaluation system to function. • Institutional research is integrated with and supportive of institutional evaluation and planning. • The college uses information from its planning and evaluation processes to communicate evidence of institutional effectiveness to the public. <p>(Standard 1: 1.B.1, 1.B.3, 1.B.4, 1.B.6, 1.B.7, 1.B.9)</p> | <p>and effective in its strategies and initiatives to serve students.</p> <p>The Clark College continuous improvement process has four components: Plan, Do, Assess, and Improve. Specifically, at Clark College, the process consists of the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, the operational plans, the scorecard, and the one-year institutional goals.</p> <p>Plan The 2009-2014 Strategic Plan sets forth the direction of the college for the next five years. The Strategic Plan has four major components: 1) Mission, 2) Vision, 3) Strategic Directions, and 4) Five-Year College Goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission – a statement that identifies and defines the work of Clark College • Vision – a statement of what we want to work toward or be in the future • Strategic Directions – the core themes that direct our work toward accomplishing the mission and vision • Five-Year College Goals – the statements that describe how we will accomplish our mission and vision <p>Do Clark College will accomplish the Strategic Plan based on the work of the college community through the development and implementation of each functional area’s operational plans. The operational plans are developed at each organizational grouping of the college, e.g., departments, divisions, units. These plans represent the objectives, activities, desired outcomes, assessment, and improvement actions taken within the year. Each operational plan’s objectives are related to the five-year</p> | <p>operational plan.</p> <p>All resource allocations made in the past two years have been critically tied to the Strategic Plan despite the fact that the College has endured significant budget cuts during that time.</p> <p>The college publicly reports institutional effectiveness in a variety of ways. The Clark College 2009-2014 Strategic Plan is posted on the internet. The Vision and Mission statements are located in most common areas throughout the college. Institutional data is available on the internet, identifying student enrollment and demographics for each quarter. This data also includes various studies that measure institutional effectiveness, including graduate follow-up survey results by educational programs, student satisfaction reports, transfer outcomes, and high school graduate follow-up studies.</p> <p>The College has made significant progress and this is no longer a recommendation, as reported.</p> |
|--|---|---|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>college goals and, if appropriate, the one-year institutional goals.</p> <p>Assess The scorecard measures how well Clark College is meeting its Strategic Plan through a series of indicators and related benchmarks. The scorecard will be updated and evaluated annually to measure progress and identify areas in need of improvement or attention.</p> <p>Improve The evaluation of the scorecard will identify areas that need improvement in order to accomplish the strategic plan. These areas of improvement will be transformed into the one-year institutional goals. These goals will serve as priorities for the college to assure progress toward the strategic plan.</p> | |
|--|--|--|

| Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation | Actions taken by the college to address recommendations | Improvement results |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Fall 2008 – General Recommendation Two: The committee found evidence that some programs, but not all, conduct regular and systematic program reviews and assessments. Therefore, the committee recommends that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the institution’s processes for assessing its educational programs be clearly defined, encompass all of its offerings, including General Education and programs offered through e-learning, be conducted on a regular basis and be integrated into the overall planning and evaluation plan. (Standard 2.B.1, Policy 2.2 and Policy 2.6). through regular and systematic assessment, the institution demonstrates that all students who complete their programs have achieved the stated outcomes of these programs. (Standard 2.B.2 and Policy 2.2) <p>Spring 2010 Recommendation: While a time line is in place and work has begun, it is recommended the College identify and publish the expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate</p> | <p>Clark College has made deliberate changes to the educational program review and assessment process since the 2008 ten-year accreditation evaluation visit. As noted in the 2008 self-study, the instability in college leadership over the past ten years resulted in different priorities and misunderstood expectations in the college’s educational program review and assessment activities. The changes made since 2008 are being institutionalized through the Instructional Planning Team (IPT), just as future changes will be. Moreover, the recent stability in leadership has afforded IPT the opportunity and clear direction to develop a program review and assessment process, consistent with the accreditation standards, that measures student outcomes in programs.</p> <p>To address the lack of learning outcomes identified for the AA degree, IPT formed another subcommittee during the summer of 2009. This group created a timeline and work plan to draft learning outcomes associated with the general education program, specifically the transfer degree. Through discussion and literature reviews of educational assessment processes, the subcommittee recommended the learning outcomes be developed based on the distribution areas of the AA degree: communication skills, quantitative skills, health/physical education, humanities, natural science, and social science.</p> | <p>Clark College has reevaluated and modified its program assessment practices over the last four years. During this time, stability in the college leadership has enabled the college to continuously improve and strengthen the program assessment process. While the college continues to solidify and improve this process, faculty continue to participate in activities that strengthen curriculum and student learning.</p> <p>The College continues to be out of compliance and this remains a recommendation.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>programs. Furthermore, it is recommended the College demonstrate, through regular and systematic assessment, that students who complete their programs, no matter where or how they are offered, have achieved these outcomes. (Standard 2.B.2 and Policy 2.2)</p> | <p>Clark College begins each academic year a couple weeks before fall quarter with Fall Focus. At Fall Focus 2009, faculty were invited to learn, discuss, and provide input about the change in the definition of program and its implications to the assessment process. This only began the conversation. A faculty group was formed to draft the learning outcomes for the AA degree within each distribution area. As the learning outcomes were drafted, they were presented to the college community for feedback and critique. After comprehensive discussions across a variety of instructional committees (e.g., IPT and Outcomes Assessment Committee), constituencies, intranet feedback forms/surveys, and email, the AA degree learning outcomes have been finalized. IPT adopted these learning outcomes on January 27, 2010. Any course that falls within a distribution area (including eLearning and other modes) will now be expected to incorporate the learning outcome associated with that distribution area. Student work related to each of these outcomes will be collected throughout the student's enrollment at Clark.</p> <p>During Winter 2010, the administrator spearheading the program assessment initiative for the AA degree solicited faculty participation in the development of assessment rubrics associated with each AA degree learning outcome. The notice stated that the rubric would be drafted during spring break or the first part of spring quarter. Faculty were selected based on their disciplinary expertise relevant to the chosen AA outcome and their relevant assessment experience, particularly</p> | |
|---|--|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>rubric development. Each selected faculty member drafted a rubric with no more than six elements and three evaluation categories; these rubrics were examined and refined by broader faculty groups in each of the distribution areas.</p> <p>Because a significant amount of activity has occurred to develop and plan for the assessment of the AA degree, in February 2010, IPT charged CTE programs with identifying both the learning outcomes associated with the program as well as the assessment methods to determine if students are meeting the outcomes. A report form for program assessment, identifying learning outcomes and assessment methods, was created and distributed to the deans for completion.</p> <p>CTE faculty have historically focused their program assessment efforts on outcomes specifically related to the discipline, rather than including general education requirements. Currently, some of the career and technical programs have completed the report form for program assessment and submitted the program outcomes.</p> <p>To fund the training necessary for faculty with varying levels of skill and expertise in program outcome assessment, the college submitted and received a Perkin's grant that was used to instruct CTE faculty. The faculty training was conducted prior to July 2010.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

| Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation | Actions taken by the college to address recommendations | Improvement results |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Fall 2008 – General Recommendation Four: The committee recommends that the college make necessary adjustments in the advising and counseling area in order to assure that a systematic program of academic and other educational program advisement is in place that adequately informs and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function. The college should assure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors help students make appropriate decisions concerning academic choices and career paths. • Specific advisor responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students (3.D.10) | <p>Advising at Clark College has improved significantly since the last accreditation self-study and evaluation. Many activities have occurred to improve the students’ advisement. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising Department Reorganization The Advising Department reorganization plan identifies lead advisors by program area. These programs include 1) Health Occupations/Education; 2) Business Technology/Computer Technology/Database Networking/Associate of Arts Transfer; and 3) Transfer/Developmental Education. These three areas encompass all of the certificate and degree programs at Clark College. Each area will be led by an advising divisional manager and have multiple direct report advisors who will work with students in the programs. This organizational structure will allow advisors to specialize in specific programs and keep up with program changes. Ultimately, advisors will become experts in these programs, professionalizing the advising services at Clark College. It will be phased in over the next three years. • The Clark College Advising Plan The plan defines the current system and outlines the future advising system. The advising plan takes into account the diversity of students’ educational intents and situations. Clark College students access educational opportunities for a variety of reasons, including | <p>The comprehensive system of advising at Clark College has been assessed, evaluated, and improved since October 2008. The college has developed and assessed concrete, integrated, and comprehensive plans to improve the effectiveness of advising and the student experience. Representatives throughout the college have collaborated to design improvement strategies, procedures, processes, and plans that have been implemented or are planned for implementation in the near future. These changes identify the roles and responsibilities of the advisors within different departments and provide tools so that advisors can help students make appropriate decisions concerning their educational goals, academic choices, and career paths.</p> <p>Significant progress is contingent on the implementation of the plans and the College is in compliance. This is no longer a recommendation.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>basic skills education, the selection of certificate and degree programs, classes needed to transfer, and more. In addition, students access education through various mechanisms such as online courses, the Weekend Degree Program, and classes at multiple campus sites. They also utilize numerous funding initiatives such as Workfirst, Veterans, and Running Start. The Advising Plan outlines the college's role in making sure students receive accurate and consistent information regardless of how or why they are seeking the educational opportunities Clark College offers. Moreover, the plan outlines the responsibilities of both students and those serving as advisors within the college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising Educational Plans In June 2009, advisors were directed to create educational plans for the degree-seeking students they advise. Each educational plan lists the student's identification information, the advisor who assisted in its creation, and the program the student intends to complete. Each plan also provides space for students to record data for nine quarters of classes. The advisor works with students to enter the necessary classes by quarter to complete their educational goals at Clark College. Since June 2009, more than 3,000 degree seeking students have an educational plan on file. • The Degree and Certificate Worksheet Taskforce In September 2009, a group of advisors from the Advising Department were tasked with creating worksheets for all degree and certificates offered by Clark College. The worksheets identify the distribution areas and | |
|--|--|--|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>total credits required for each area within each degree and certificate. When the advisor meets with the student, he or she fills in the courses completed within each distribution area of degree or certificate. Advisors have lists of eligible courses for each distribution area to help the student choose appropriate coursework. In addition, advisors utilize the digital direct transfer agreement worksheets to further identify required courses within the distribution areas. These worksheets, coupled with the educational plan, are expected to be a valuable advising tool that will assist advisors with accuracy and consistency of information.</p> <p>• Advising and Registration Procedures As part of the current registration process, an advisor assigns each student a personal identification number (PIN) that is required to register for classes. The assigned PIN ensures that full-time students receive advising. The exceptions to this procedure are part-time students and students who identify as self-advised. These students receive a PIN set as their date of birth. Problems with this procedure identified through student complaints and workload issues are 1) part-time students do not receive accurate and timely advising, 2) advisors cannot effectively advise all students due to the high volume of full-time students, and 3) students may circumvent the process by receiving their PIN after standing in line at registration.</p> <p>In Fall 2009, a PIN Taskforce was convened, charged with exploring alternatives, and asked to identify a workable PIN number procedure to ensure effective advisement and enrollment of all students. The taskforce comprised</p> | |
|--|--|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>representatives from the Advising Department, Registration, Instruction, Faculty, and Financial Aid and developed a new system.</p> <p>Under the new system, all students, part-time or full-time, will be required to see an advisor at certain points to ensure they take the correct classes. The system produces a workload that is far more manageable because the timeframe for advising is much longer. Students have more time to address the registration/advising requirement and are not forced to see an advisor so close to, or during, their actual registration time. Lastly, it does not prevent a student from seeking additional advising services as needed.</p> <p>• Academic Early Warning Academic Early Warning (AEW) is one of the college-wide efforts to improve student retention. Piloted in Fall 2008, the AEW has become an important college-wide tool to alert students when they are not performing well academically in their coursework during the beginning and middle of the quarter. Instructors use the AEW system to get information to students about inadequate academic progress in their class. Instructors identify their perception of what is not going well in the students' performance. The student receives a letter in the mail identifying what the instructor reported. The letter offers the student assistance and recommends he or she work with the instructor to address the issues.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

| Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation | Actions taken by the college to address recommendations | Improvement results |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Fall 2008 – General Recommendation Five: The committee recommends that the college assess the effectiveness of its internal system of governance to facilitate the successful accomplishment of its mission and goals. Elements to be addressed by the resulting system of governance are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators, faculty, staff, and students understand and fulfill their respective roles in the governance system • The system of governance ensures that the authority, responsibilities, and relationships among and between the administrators, faculty, staff, and students are clearly described in policy documents. • The system of governance makes provision for the consideration of faculty, student, and staff views and judgments in those matters in which these constituencies have a direct and reasonable interest. <p>* The role of faculty in institutional governance, planning, budgeting and policy development is made clear and public. (Standard 6.A.1, 6.A.2, 6.A.3, 6.D)</p> | <p>Clark College has defined shared governance as follows: <i>Shared governance at Clark College is a decision-making framework in which institutional policies and priorities are determined in collaboration with those affected. Roles and responsibilities of student, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees are clearly defined and communicated to ensure accountability. Effective shared governance requires all members of the college community to contribute to an environment of mutual respect and trust.</i></p> <p>Clark College has responded to Recommendation Five pertaining to Shared Governance through assessing the methods and roles of administrators, faculty, staff, and students in governance. Clark College has determined that, in order to improve in this area, the College needs to clarify the 1) responsibility for types and breadth of decisions, 2) methods to both solicit and communicate feedback pertaining to decisions in which the college community has direct and reasonable interest, and 3) roles within the governance system. The College has made a focused effort to assess strategies of shared governance, revise its policies and procedures, and elicit feedback from those who will be impacted by decisions. This work has further clarified the roles of administrators, faculty, staff, and students in the shared governance system.</p> | <p>Clark College continues to work on improving shared governance. Both the Board of Trustees and the College have identified further work on improving the college-wide common and shared definition of shared governance as one of the most significant goals/priorities for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years. In addition, shared governance is represented in one of the College’s five-year goals in the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. Over the next year, the College expects to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the recommendations of the College Council subcommittee of shared governance; • Conduct another climate survey in Winter 2011 to measure change in employees perceptions of their influence in decision-making; • Clarify the decision-making model by identifying for each decision whether it is a decision that will be made based on consensus or influenced by feedback; and • Develop and formalize processes to “close” the communication loop in the decisions that are made. <p>The College has made significant progress and is in compliance. This is no longer a recommendation.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>The assessment strategies employed by the College include many different activities. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review past climate surveys that identified satisfaction among college employees about their influence in the decision-making process, • Review of the Clark College 2008 Self-Study, • Discussions of shared governance at College Council, • Assessment of goals by the Board of Trustees, • Discussions at a Penguin Roundtable, and • Development of a College Council subcommittee to assess and provide recommendations to improve the governance structure at Clark College. <p>The results of the assessment found that Clark College must make shared governance a priority for the College and clarify the methods for employees and students to provide input on decisions that affect them.</p> <p>During the 2009-2010 academic year, five recommendations were presented to the President by College Council to improve shared governance. These five recommendations are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a Shared Governance Decision-Making Process 2. Establish a Shared Governance Oversight Committee 3. Establish a Budget And Finance Committee 4. Build an Interactive Organizational Schematic Charting How Stakeholders Participate in the Decision-Making Process 5. Include shared governance information in new employee training | |
|--|---|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | During the 2010-2011 five recommendations will be fully implemented. | |
|--|---|--|