Feedback from the Fall 2017 HLC Visits on PPCC’s Assessment Efforts

Questions asked by the HLC Reviewers:
- How do you assess student learning?
- How do you gather and share assessment data?
- What have you learned as a result of your assessment efforts? What have you done with the results?
- Can you give me an example of how you have used data to inform changes?
- How do you connect your assessment process with your budgeting process?
- How do you make sure departments close the loop on assessment efforts?
- How do you differentiate assessment and program review?

Related core component and sub-components

4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Bachelor of Applied Science in Emergency Service Administration - Change Visit (October 2017)

Purpose of the visit: A Change Visit consists of a team of two or more HLC peer reviewers who review applications for approval of substantive change submitted by institutions. The Change Visit team may recommend that the change be approved, approved with modifications, or denied.

Reviewers’ Feedback

- The plan for the assessment of student learning is well developed. Interviews with the executive director of institutional effectiveness demonstrate that she has developed a comprehensive student learning outcomes assessment program, launched in Fall 2015.

- The plan clearly responds to concerns raised as a result of the 2014 comprehensive visit and describes methods and procedures used to conduct assessments for all programs, including the proposed bachelor degree program.

- It contains clearly articulated program outcomes and measurements to determine success in the didactic components of the program. PPCC monitors and evaluates program effectiveness and quality through multiple measures using formative and summative assessment activities. Included is documentation to show how data are used to “close the loop” in the assessment cycle.
- PPCC has developed a new **assessment platform**. Every program now has a **strategic action plan** with outcomes; the data on outcomes is a component of the annual **program review** process.

- PPCC has made **strides to address previous concerns** from the 2014 comprehensive visit regarding assessment and program review.

  6d. **Evaluation, assessment and improvement processes for the proposed change**

  ☑ Acceptable
  □ Not acceptable

**Multi-location Visit (November 2017)**

**Purpose of the visit:** Institutions with three or more off-campus additional locations are required to undergo a Multi-Location Visit every five years. The visit is conducted by an HLC peer reviewer and involves a representative sample of the institution’s additional locations. The purpose of the Multi-Location Visit is to confirm the continuing effective oversight by the institution of its additional locations.

**Locations:** Downtown Studio Campus, Early College High School, and Aspen Valley Ranch

**Reviewer’s Feedback**

- **Identical expectations** are in place for outcomes, rigor, and assessment processes for programs and classes regardless of the location at which those offerings are provided.

- All PPCC certificate and degree programs have a **set of program outcomes**, and the programs are comprised of courses for which shared student learning objectives are established.

- Another faculty member mentioned that while the hard work of assessment is a matter of compliance and PPCC employs an assessment director, instructional assessment is **faculty-led and well-resourced**.

- PCC is almost three years into its new student learning assessment effort. Faculty and staff characterize the last three years as a time of **growth, learning, and assessment-focused professional development**.

- Faculty interviewed during the visit were quick to assert their **understanding of the importance of student learning assessment**, as well as the notion that the instructional assessment efforts are **very much faculty led**. They are proud of their use of **faculty coaches** and a culture that they claim is very "people empowering”.

- **Embedded** within each course is a "**signature assessment**, "which is generally a **common exam** or a consistent assignment scored by a **common rubric**. Signature assessments are required regardless of the location at which a course is offered or the mode of course delivery.

- PPCC’s assessment plan requires departments to: consider aggregate data, reflect plan improvements as needed for the following year based on assessment results, and **assess the effectiveness of implemented improvement efforts** that were based on data from each year’s reports.

- The assessment report template also includes an opportunity to request **funding** needed for improvements.
- The peer reviewer was given temporary access to the PPCC assessment system. The 2016/17 Music Department's Assessment Report was reviewed as a sample completed assessment report, and was found to be compliant with the expectations noted above.

- Assessment data shows that dual enrollment students at ECHS demonstrate mastery of learning outcomes as other PPCC students.

- Examples of curricular improvements made based on student learning assessment data include addition of a required course in the Early Childhood Education Program, a revised course sequence in the Architecture program, and item analyses resulting in delivery modifications within the Outdoor Leadership program.

- While PPCC is admittedly early in its revised assessment effort, it is the judgment of the peer reviewer that the institution has a long-term, sustainable plan in place for the assessment of student learning and that it is making reasonable progress at this time.

- PPCC's strengths are many, and it has provided ample evidence of its commitment to student success, student learning assessment, student support services, faculty empowerment, and continuous improvement.

**Evaluation and Assessment**

What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

**Judgment of reviewer.** Check appropriate box:  ■ Adequate  ■ Attention needed