

YAKIMA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MID-CYCLE EVALUATION REPORT NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

Table of Contents

Part I: Overview of the Entire Assessment Plan.....	2
Institutional Level Assessment	
Core Themes	
Part II: Representative Examples of Assessment Process from Beginning to End.....	6
Examples	
Objectives	
Indicators	
Part III: Evaluative Overview in the Light of Parts I and II.....	14
Appendix A: Institutional Effectiveness Team.....	15

Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC)

Mid-Cycle Evaluation Report for Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Part I: Overview of the Entire Assessment Plan

Institutional Level Assessment:

In October 2011, Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC) was reaccredited by the Northwest Commission on College and Universities (NWCCU), and received commendations for the level of understanding the college community demonstrated about the mission, core themes, and the extensive use of data to analyze performance. In January 2012, the YVCC Board of Trustees reaffirmed the following mission, definition of mission fulfillment, and core themes for the 2012 Year One Report.

YVCC Mission: YVCC enriches and enhances individuals and communities by delivering accessible, student-centered education. YVCC addresses the needs of its diverse communities by providing learning opportunities in basic literacy; academic, professional and technical education; and lifelong learning.

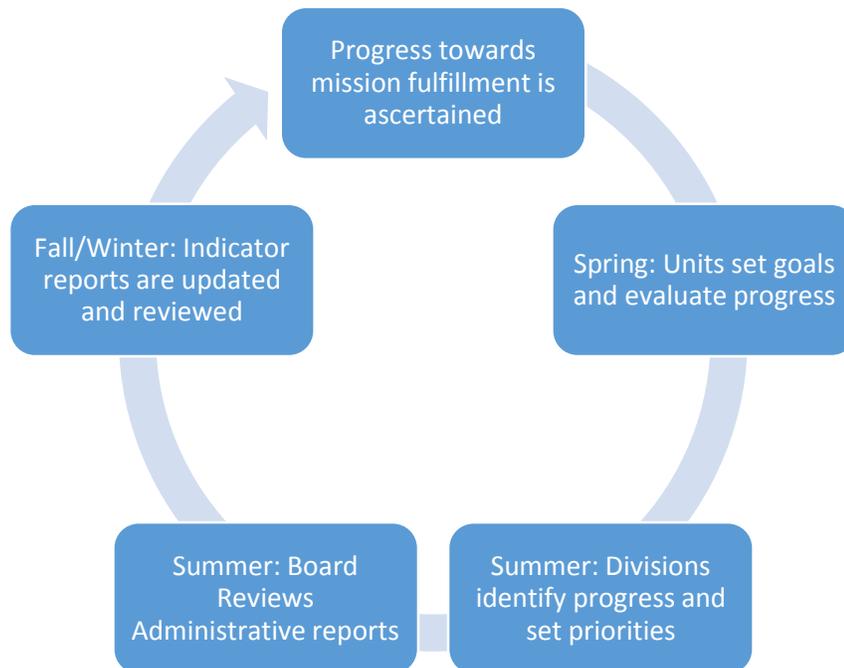
Definition of Mission Fulfillment: YVCC will strive to meet each of the objectives associated with the three core themes of Community, Access, and Success. The college will consider its mission fulfilled to an acceptable degree when at least 70% of the objectives associated with the core themes have been met.”

As of June 2014, YVCC has been monitoring its progress towards meeting 13 objectives under three core themes: Community, Access, and Success. Each core theme is delineated by multiple objectives with related indicators. The indicators are an array of descriptive statistics (i.e., numbers served, percentage), comparative statistics (i.e., pre/post comparisons, cohort analyses), contextual descriptions (i.e., lists of programs offered) and qualitative measures (i.e., focus groups, case studies). Some indicators are based on YVCC data, while others are based on community data. In general, those indicators based on YVCC data are focused on improving performance on an objective, while indicators based on community data are focused on understanding the context in which YVCC operates and how YVCC’s programs and services link to the broader community. In order to standardize the collection of data and ensure that the data are replicable, YVCC uses data from end of the year reports or final summaries of efforts to populate indicators and identify trends. “Live data” are used at various times during the academic year to ensure that the college is on track to meet targets. For example, weekly FTE reports generated by the Registrar are used to make changes to course schedules as needed to meet FTE allocations, but only final FTE counts received in July are used for ascertaining the degree to which YVCC met its FTE targets.

YVCC has institutionalized processes that serve as continual reminders of the focus on Community, Access, and Success. All reports given to the Board of Trustees during their monthly meetings are linked to the core themes, including budget reports, strategy reports, student government

reports, and featured presentations such as Faculty Excellence Awards. The YVCC President provides the Board of Trustees with a monthly accounting of her work relative to each of the core themes, detailing specific actions that are aimed at improving performance at meeting objectives. Annual reports to the community present data and information related to the core themes. YVCC employees frame all equipment and professional development requests in terms of the core theme(s) addressed and the importance of the request to meeting objectives.

The YVCC administration and Board of Trustees monitor performance relative to the core theme objectives and identify strategies for improvements. Each spring administrative units and/or programs are directed to review goals and outcome data relative to the core themes and to submit a progress summary that includes updated information about their programs, progress in meeting goals, goals for the next academic year, and strategies for improvement. In June of each year, YVCC holds an Annual Administrative Retreat to ascertain progress towards meeting objectives and, ultimately, fulfilling the mission. During this retreat, the administration reviews indicator data, analyzes indicator trends, identifies strategies related to meeting objectives, suggests changes to objectives and/or indicators, and makes plans for addressing areas of concern during the following year. Information gathered from these retreats is shared with the YVCC Board of Trustees during their summer retreat and incorporated into Core Theme Reports with updated indicator data that are shared with the Board during a Fall Quarter meeting. The Board reviews conclusions reached by the Administrative Team and the data that supported these conclusions and reaffirms the college's commitment to the core themes and objectives. This cycle is represented in the schematic below:



Since inception of YVCC's three core themes in 2009, each theme has undergone refinement that includes clarification of the focus of the themes and modifications to objectives and indicators that reflect changes in the college's foci and growing understanding of appropriate and manageable indicators. The most recent revisions were proposed by the administration following their Annual Administrative Retreat in June 2014. The YVCC Board of Trustees will review and vote to accept or

reject the revision of the Core Theme articulations at their September 2014 Board Meeting. Following is a summary of the changes and rationales behind these changes.

Core Theme One: Community

2012 and 2013 iteration: “YVCC embraces its role as both the provider of higher education and an employer and actively seeks partnerships to provide opportunities for the economic, social, and cultural development of its external and internal communities.” The 2012 Year One report included four objectives and twenty-five indicators. In 2013, the indicators were reduced to twelve as YVCC acknowledged that data for some indicators was not available and that other indicators were more clearly associated with Standard Two.

In June 2014, the YVCC administration proposed changes to the language of the Community Core Theme, objectives, and indicators: “YVCC embraces its role as both the provider of higher education and an employer and actively seeks partnerships to provide opportunities for the economic, social, and cultural development of its *students, employees, and communities*.” This change reflects a more purposeful focus on stakeholders and more clearly directs YVCC to identify indicators of impact on students, employees, and communities. Accordingly, the objectives and indicators were reviewed and refocused. The Core Theme of Community is now delineated by five objectives and fifteen indicators.

Core Theme Two: Access

2012 and 2013 iteration: “YVCC strives to provide access to its diverse community. YVCC encourages and supports its community members’ participation in services and educational programs.” The 2012 Year One Report included four objectives and seventeen indicators. In 2013, there were three objectives with fourteen indicators.

In June 2014, the YVCC administration proposed changes to the language of the Access Core Theme, objectives, and indicators: “YVCC provides educational opportunities, enrollment, and support services that facilitate entrance into and success in postsecondary education throughout its service district.” This change prompts YVCC to focus on the purpose of the services in supporting success rather than on simply providing the services. Objectives were focused on student outcomes, and two additional indicators were included. The Core Theme of Access includes five objectives and eighteen indicators.

Core Theme Three: Success

2012 and 2013 iteration: “YVCC’s learning-centered environment focuses on its diverse students, providing a foundation for lifelong learning and enabling the achievement of educational goals.” The 2012 Year One Report included five objectives and 30 indicators. In 2013, there were six objectives and 19 indicators.

In June 2014, the YVCC administration proposed changes to the language of the Success Core Theme, objectives, and indicators: “*Students achieve educational goals through completion of courses and programs of study and are prepared to further their life goals through employment, transfer, and participation in the community.*” This change prompts YVCC to focus on student success rather than the services provided. The objectives are directed towards assessment of student outcomes, and reflect the integration of student learning outcomes at the course and institutional level. The Core Theme of

Success includes six objectives and sixteen indicators, with several indicators still identified in need of refinement.

In addition to processes for analyzing institution wide objectives, considerable assessment work is done at the division level. The deans monitor the contributions each divisional department makes to the core theme objectives, and report on strategies and the supporting data at division and institutional meetings. Curriculum Committees in Arts and Sciences, Basic Skills, and Workforce Education Divisions direct faculty to include course level objectives and outcomes, college abilities, and representative assessment assignments on all course outlines included in the college catalog. Courses are reviewed and updated at least once every five years by the appropriate curriculum committee. The approved objectives and outcomes are communicated to students via course syllabi developed by individual instructors. The supervising deans receive copies of all course syllabi and review them to ensure that each syllabus conforms to the approved outlines. The majority of the transfer curriculum courses and many of the professional technical program courses use the common course numbering system for Washington State, thus ensuring consistency in curriculum and transferability within the Washington higher education system.

In spring 2012, YVCC adopted two overarching student learning outcomes: Analytical Reasoning (AR) and Communication (C). These outcomes are identified on course outlines and syllabi as appropriate to the courses, but YVCC is still in the process of identifying a college-wide means of gathering and using assessment data regarding these outcomes. The Arts and Sciences Division has expended considerable effort at creating rubrics for AR and C and gathering examples of assignments and student work that demonstrates practicing and assessing these outcomes. The process needs further refinement to ensure that it has influential results on the curriculum. Professional-technical program faculty incorporate AR and C into their program level assessments, but there is no consistent means of gathering, reporting, or comparing results. The Basic Skills Division does not gather specific data about AR and C, but regards improvement in CASAS scores and completion of programs as evidence of growing abilities. In September 2013, YVCC administered the College Learning Assessment (CLA) of analytical reasoning and communication skills to a representative sample of 96 entering students and in March 2014 administered the CLA to a representative sample of 98 graduating students. Results of this assessment will be available for analysis in September 2014.

Following is a brief summary of the academic and student services departments and the assessment work being done by each of YVCC's four academic divisions.

Arts and Sciences Division: Oversees eight administrative departments and 21 programs offering developmental and general distribution courses associated with the Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA), two STEM related degrees (the AS-T Track 1 for Biology and Chemistry majors and AS-T Track 2 for Engineering majors), and prerequisite coursework for admission to healthcare programs. Distribution includes courses in English, Humanities, Math, Natural and Social Sciences. Credit-bearing developmental English and Math coursework is overseen by the Arts and Sciences Division as are academic support services offered by the Math, Speech, and Writing Centers. The Arts and Sciences Division oversees co-curricular activities related to its departments, including the Larson Art Gallery, Drama productions, and the Latin Music Festival. The Arts and Sciences division has created rubrics that define student performance on college abilities (AR and C) and periodically collects examples of assignments that incorporate assessment and student responses to these assignments. Examples of assessment work at the department level include the standardization of rubrics for developmental

English courses, creation of common worksheets for Biology courses, and creation of computer-assisted self-paced coursework in developmental math.

Basic Skills Division: Oversees Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, GED preparation, High School Completion, and Integrated Basic Education and Skills (IBEST) programs, as well as WorkFirst programming. Assessment work focuses on tracking overall student persistence, the numbers of students making academic gains as measured by the CASAS exam, the number of students earning a GED or high school diploma, the successful completion of students in I-BEST programs, and the transition of students from ESL to ABE and from ABE to college. Basic Skills faculty members have worked closely with their counterparts in the Arts and Sciences and Workforce Education Divisions to create English, Math, and Reading curriculum and assessment processes that align Basic Skills courses with developmental curriculum in English and Math as well as with precollege content in natural sciences, visual arts, social sciences, and computer technology. Basic Skills faculty members meet regularly to align curriculum, score student work, and development program-wide assessment processes.

Student Services Division: Oversees Athletics, the Counseling and Advising Center, Disability Support Services, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Student Life, Running Start Dual Enrollment, Student Support Services, Testing Services (GED, Placement, and other), and Veterans' Services. Assessment processes for Student Services departments includes submission of annual goals, with identification as to how the goals align with the core themes and accreditation standards; descriptions of the assessment measures and intended results; and descriptions of strategies. Once the revision of service or intervention is concluded, outcomes are analyzed and revisions are made to the programs as needed.

Workforce Education Division (WED): Oversees professional-technical programs in 23 business, education, healthcare, and technical fields, including the Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Management. Eight workforce programs participate in outside accreditation that requires each program to meet industry and program standards and to document these standards in self-studies: Allied Health, Dental Hygiene, Master Automotive Service, Nursing, Radiologic, Surgical and Veterinary Technology, and Worker Retraining programs. Workforce programs have advisory boards that meet quarterly to provide oversight of program curriculum and equipment as well as to ensure that programs meet current needs. YVCC receives Carl D. Perkins funding to assist in the support of professional-technical programs in meeting the needs of business and industry fields. In order to continue qualifying for Perkins funding, WED programs continually assess enrollment of non-traditional students and the cost of attending versus future wages. The WED program department heads are in the process of revising the self-study report for WED programs to ensure that YVCC captures needed information for reports as well as linking WED program goals to the college objectives.

Part II: Representative Examples of Assessment Process from Beginning to End

YVCC has selected two examples to illustrate the assessment process from the Core Theme objectives to indicators to outcomes to mission fulfillment. The first example, from the Core Theme: Access, exemplifies YVCC's focus on the Basic Skills portion of the mission and the overarching intention of increasing college access for Basic Skills students. The second example, from the Core Theme:

Success, focuses on the retention of transfer and workforce students to completion. These data are disaggregated by ethnicity because historical performance indicates that the success of different ethnic groups may need attention. In each example, YVCC provides the indicator data, the most current analysis of that data, and the strategies (outputs) in which the college is engaged for improvement and attainment of the objective. Baselines were established for the seven year accreditation cycle that commenced in fall 2011 by averaging data from the three years prior (2008-11).

Example One: Core Theme Two – Access

“YVCC provides educational opportunities, enrollment, and support services that facilitate entrance into and success in postsecondary education throughout its service district.”

Objective 2.4: Increase transition to college programs from Basic Skills. (two indicators)

- **Indicator 2.4.a:** Increase the percentage of students in ABE levels 4/5/6 who participate in college coursework within the same year or the next academic year.

ABE level 4/5/6 students participating in college coursework (developmental and college level)				
	Academic Year	Number of ABE Level 4/5/6 students	Number of ABE Level 4/5/6 students in college coursework	% ABE Level 4/5/6 student in college coursework
Benchmark		384	160	41.7%
2018 Accreditation Cycle	2011-12	431	193	44.8%
	2012-13	436	Update Available September 2014	

June 2014 Analysis: The number and percentage of level 4/5/6 students participating in college coursework during the same year they are enrolled in Basic Skills or the next year increased over the baseline.

- **Indicator 2.4.b:** Increase percentage of high school equivalency students studying at YVCC who matriculate to college within one year.

High School Equivalency Student Matriculation within One Year				
	Cohort Year	GED Students	Matriculated within one year	% Matriculated within one year
Benchmark	2008-10	218	54	24.8%
2018 Accreditation Cycle	2011-12	255	50	19.6%
	2012-13	227	38	16.7%
	2013-14	198	Update available September 2015	

June 2014 Analysis: Changes to the GED were announced and students had to complete their studies by December 2013 or face starting an unknown and yet to be determined process. The changes resulted in

a surge in the number of students earning a GED in 2011-12. A lower percentage of these students matriculated to college within the year following completion of the GED. The new GED test was implemented in 2013-14 and the number of GED graduates was down in 2013-14. In the spring of 2013 it was announced that the state of Washington would promote a new high school completion program, High School 21+ (HS 21), with an emphasis on helping students earn high school diplomas while preparing to enter postsecondary education. During the 2013-14 academic year, YVCC began development of the HS 21 curriculum for implementation in fall 2014. The new curriculum is being developed with the intent to transition into college.

Strategies employed to increase college participation by Basic Skills students:

- I-BEST programs pairing Basic Skills and vocational coursework.
- Align Basic Skills Math Level 4/5/6 with Developmental Math 049T, 050, 075, and 084
- Align Basic Skills Reading/Writing 4/5/6/ with English 081T (Reading) and English 090 and 095 (Writing).
- Stack Basic Skills level 4/5/6/ courses with Developmental English 081T + English 90T, English 095, Math 084, BA 115, PTECH 115, and SD 102 and enroll qualifying Basic Skills students into complete developmental coursework simultaneously to completing coursework needed for taking the GED and/or high school completion.
- Provide COMPASS placement testing and college admission and placement advising to level 4/5/6 students.
- Use the curricular alignment between Basic Skills and developmental math and English courses to facilitate student progression in lieu of the COMPASS placement test as they move through the curricular sequences.
- Articulation of level 4/5/6 courses to college developmental courses in writing by the use of rubrics and assessment co-created by Basic Skills and college-department faculty.
- Provide GED testers and ABE students with YVCC admissions and enrollment information as well as information on applying for financial aid funding.
- Develop new curriculum and processes for awarding high school credit and high school diplomas.
- Assign Basic Skills faculty to New Student Orientation and Mandatory Advising teams. Basic Skills faculty will become familiar with YVCC's expectations and can inform their college instructor peers of the Basic Skills programs.
- Ensure that all sites offering Basic Skills offer a sufficient amount of hours of instruction aimed at student progression.
- Provide wrap around support services using a case management approach to increase student retention.
- Offer a college navigation class "Transition to College" intended for high level ESL and ABE students.
- Integrate technology into all ABE and ESL classes enhanced with Canvas and utilizing tablet computers in the classroom.
- Develop and implement pathway advising for ABE students.

Summary of indicator and strategy data for objective 2.4: YVCC is engaged in several efforts aimed at increasing transition to college, despite these efforts, the number and percentage of students matriculating to college has decreased. The college is aware that changes to the GED and the statewide push for high school completion may contribute to this decrease, however nothing in the currently available data adequately explains the decrease in matriculation and further investigation is warranted.

Using data on Basic Skills Transition to impact college services and contribute to mission fulfillment: Basic Skills in Washington State has undergone considerable transformation and received considerable attention in the past five years. The primary focus of Basic Skills funding and programming is on preparing students for further postsecondary education, not simply on earning high school equivalent credentials or upgrading skills. To this end, YVCC's Basic Skills programs continue to increase relationships with college academic programs and encourage transition from Basic Skills to postsecondary education in more seamless ways.

- Beginning in fall 2014, YVCC's Basic Skills program will offer the High School 21+ program, which is a competency based adult high school diploma program. Creation of the program has resulted in the formation of clear curricular pathways through Basic Skills courses directly into college level courses in the areas of English, math, visual arts, natural sciences, social sciences and computing. The curricular alignment has also resulted in the development of pathway maps leading from Basic Skills into the different Mandatory Advising Pathways and their associated degrees and certificates. As a competency based diploma, students will earn high school credit when they demonstrate competency of course objectives. This allows YVCC to recognize high school credit already earned and grant credit based on prior learning, test scores earned on standardized exams, and passing summative course assessments.
- Integration of computer technology into ABE and ESL courses. Students taught in Basic Skills need some basic computer skills to pass the new computer-based GED exam and to succeed in college. With this in mind, the use of computer technology is being integrated into all ABE and ESL courses. First, all faculty teaching ABE courses have completed a training on how to navigate the Canvas on-line learning system. Faculty teaching ESL courses are beginning to complete the training as well. The division is developing a list of best practices for using Canvas in courses set to be implemented the 2014-15 academic year. Faculty will conduct peer review sessions and provide each other feedback on how to improve courses aimed at meeting the best practices. Finally, due to the limited access to a computer lab, the program has purchased classroom sets of tablet computers intended for instructor use.
- With the implementation of the High School 21+ program and the integration of Canvas into all courses, it is necessary to adjust the registration and advising systems in Basic Skills. The new processes being implemented this year include an orientation to Canvas, the evaluation of student high school transcripts, and an additional advising session mid-quarter wherein student learn the results of their transcript evaluation, select one of YVCC's Mandatory Advising Pathways, identify the High School Diploma or GED exam option to pursue, and learn of the next steps they need to take that will lead them towards college. In addition, the Basic Skills program is implementing a course for high level ESL students and another course for high level ABE students that will provide information regarding program options, advising pathways, college navigation, and student success strategies.

Example Two: Core theme Three – Success

“Students achieve educational goals through completion of courses and programs of study and are prepared to further their life goals through employment, transfer, and participation in the community.”

Objective 3.3 – Increase student progress towards certificates and degrees and ensure that all groups progress at comparable rates. (four indicators)

- **Indicator 3.3.a:** Fall to winter retention disaggregated by race/ethnicity as a rolling three-year average.

Fall to Winter Retention Rolling Average by Race/Ethnicity								
	Years	All	White	Latino Hispanic	African Am	Native Am	Asian	All Other
Benchmark	2007-2011	80.3%	80.3%	80.5%	87.5%	77.6%	85.5%	68.0%
2018 Accreditation Cycle	2010-12	80.9%	80.0%	82.7%	78.1%	75.0%	88.9%	73.0%
	2011-13	80.7%	78.8%	83.4%	69.4%	81.6%	87.1%	79.3%

June 2014 Analysis: Despite the fact that rolling three-year averages were used to create larger n's to allow for analysis, many of these groups have n's smaller than 60. African American, Native American, and Asian groups are small, but at least 40 students. Trend analysis and/or interpretation can be questionable for groups with small n's. A small change in the number of students returning can appear to have a large effect on percentages. The 2010-12 data were not statistically significantly different from the benchmark. First quarter retention appears to be holding relatively steady, however the decrease in African American retention warrants follow-up.

- **Indicator 3.3.b:** Fall to next fall retention rates disaggregated by race/ethnicity as a rolling three-year average.

Fall to Fall Retention Rolling Average by Race/Ethnicity								
	Years	All	White	Latino Hispanic	African Am	Native Am	Asian	All Other
Benchmark	2007-2011	52.2%	50.9%	55.4%	37.5%	46.6%	58.2%	54.0%
2018 Accreditation Cycle	2010-12	55.1%	49.6%	58.5%	21.9%	41.1%	55.6%	51.4%
	2011-13	Update available September 2014						

June 2013 Analysis: See analysis description from 3.2.a for explanation of small n's. The overall retention rate from the first fall of enrollment to the second fall is an area of concern as students are highly unlikely to complete certificates and/or degrees in less than a year of attendance. Retention of Hispanic students is increasing and exceeds the overall benchmark of 52.2% for the college. The retention rate for all other ethnic groups is decreasing as a result of the number and percentage of Hispanic students increasing. The net effect is that the overall retention rate is increasing due to the rate of Hispanic students increasing.

- **Indicator 3.3.c:** Percentage of students making “momentum” towards certificates and degrees as defined in the Student Achievement Initiative.

Percentage of Students Earning >0 SAI momentum points						
	Year	Basic Skills	Workforce	Transfer	Personal Goal	All Students
Benchmark	2009-11	43.1%	57.4%	59.1%	43.3%	53.1%
2011-18 Accreditation Cycle	2011-12	44.6%	56.7%	59.8%	41.9%	54.4%
	2012-13	41.6%	53.0%	56.7%	46.1%	51.5%
	2013-14	Update available November 2014				

June 2014 Analysis: The Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) is a performance-based funding program that awards funds to colleges based on the numbers of students earning various “momentum points.” The SAI point system and performance funding structure underwent major revision in 2013-14, with added emphasis on retaining and transitioning students from Basic Skills/developmental education to college coursework, and progress towards completing courses distribution requirements for degrees . The percentage of YVCC students that earned momentum points in 2012-13 decreased from the previous year and decreased from the benchmark for all groups except those with the intention of meeting a personal goal (about 2% of the YVCC student population).

- **Indicator 3.3.d:** Percentage of students on academic probation, suspension, or dismissal disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

Students on Academic Probation, Suspension or Dismissal by Race/Ethnicity								
	Fall	All	White	Latino Hispanic	African Am	Native Am	Asian	All Other
Benchmark	2008-2010	14.5%	12.6%	17.1%	19.9%	15.6%	14.4%	15.3%
2018 Accreditation Cycle	2011	16.5%	14.5%	18.9%	18.6%	16.5%	6.8%	17.4%
	2012	15.8%	14.5%	17.3%	27.7%	16.7%	11.2%	9.8%
	2013	16.3%	13.6%	18.1%	23.0%	24.6%	19.1%	20.9%

June 2014 Analysis: See analysis description from 3.1.a for explanation of small n’s. The percentage of students on probation, suspension or dismissal is increasing for all groups. The difference of 1.3% between the fall 2012 data and the benchmark is statistically significant, indicating that the rising percentages of students in academic jeopardy needs addressing. The percentage of White students on probation is the lowest for all ethnic groups. The percentage of Hispanic students on academic notice consistently remains approximately four and a half points higher than that of White students. The percentage of African American and Native American students on academic notice is higher and varies more each year as it is affected by the number of smaller sizes in population for each group.

Strategies to increase progress towards degrees

- Mandatory New Student Orientation
- Mandatory Advising, including an emphasis on taking the appropriate quantitative courses continuously from the first quarter of enrollment through completion of the degree requirement
- TRiO learning communities for first year students
- Academic Early Warning (AEW)

- Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) in English and Math
- Counselor initiative to contact students who did not return from Fall NSO to Winter
- Counseling Center Reengagement project for students who dropped out within the last two years and had at least 60 credits towards a degree
- Student clubs and co-curricular programs
- Tutoring and academic support services
- Review and strategize appropriate course pre-requisites to ensure successful completion of courses
- Streamlined reinstatement procedures for students on financial aid probation
- Use of Degree Audit with faculty and students (Degree Audit tool matches student transcripts to the programs of study offered, identifying where students have met requirements and what is needed to complete the chosen program of study)

Summary of indicator data for objective 3.2: Retention is a concern, as it is integrally linked to completion. Overall, students are being retained at higher rates, with Hispanic students retained at the highest rates, however the increase in retention does not appear to be resulting in increased progress towards degrees. As measured by the Student Achievement initiative, the percentage of students earning momentum points decreased for all mission areas – Basic Skills, Transfer and Workforce, except personal enrichment, which is a very small fraction of YVCC’s service. Additionally, the percentages of students placed on academic probation, suspension, or dismissal has increased, with student of color significantly more likely to be in poor academic standing than White students.

Given the indicators YVCC has regarding retention, it appears that about 20% of students do not return from their first quarter to the second consecutive quarter, and about 45% do not return for a second year. YVCC has accessed Student Clearinghouse data to try and determine whether drop-outs are actually transfer out students, and appears that this may be the case for about 10% of students, particularly for African American students. Additionally, when data on retention is extended out beyond fall-to-fall analyses, it is apparent that student enrollment “swirls” as students enter and leave at various points for unknown reasons. A spring 2014 campaign to try and reengage students who were no longer attending but who had amassed 60 or more credits before leaving, revealed that significant numbers of drop-outs were struggling with issues that YVCC is not equipped to address, such as poverty and mental illness.

Measuring progress towards degrees is more difficult than simply measuring retention because what is considered progress depends upon the chosen program of students. Measuring “progress” is further complicated by students changing their intentions, program requirements changing before students are actually admitted to the programs, and the large numbers of YVCC students who require multiple developmental courses before they can enter what is considered college coursework. Additionally, students in high demand fields such as Information Technology may be hired before completing their degrees and appear as drop-outs when, in fact, they were successful at gaining employment. The Student Achievement Initiative offers a means of investigating momentum towards degrees, on the other hand it is really a measure of the credits taken, not an indicator of whether those credits actually result in momentum towards an intended outcome. The new SAI indicator of progress for transfer and workforce students may prove useful for analysis, however it was only adopted in 2013-14 and data has yet to be provided. As YVCC develops the Mandatory Advising program, it is anticipated that better means of ascertaining progress towards earning degrees will be identified and new indicators will be developed.

Overall, YVCC is making progress at measuring and strategizing retention and momentum, and hopes to identify additional indicators that more clearly identify progress towards certificates and degrees rather than simply identifying whether students continue to be enrolled.

Using data on progress towards degrees to impact college services and contribute to mission

fulfillment: Data on retention and progress towards degrees is being used to spur development of additional strategies for improvement.

- First quarter persistence rates increased for all groups and achievement gaps in persistence were eliminated following implementation of Mandatory New Student Orientation in 2010. YVCC developed the NSO program in 2008 as part of involvement with the national Achieving the Dream initiative and after two years of implementation made it mandatory when data revealed that students who participated were more likely to be retained from the first to the second quarter of enrollment. The key features of NSO are continually revised based on student and faculty feedback obtained through surveys and focus groups.
- The data revealing that only about 55% of students are retained for a second year prompted concerns about how to best retain students throughout the entire first year of enrollment into college-level coursework. Survey and focus group data from faculty and students indicated strong support for creating a mandatory advising program. Since fall 2012, YVCC has been in the process of creating a Mandatory Pathway Advising Program structured around six academic pathways (meta-majors). The process of developing this model was the topic of a June 2014 case study provided to the PRESS for Completion Program. The YVCC Board of Trustees endorsed this approach in January 2014 by adopting academic policy mandating participation in advising until students have 30 college-level credits.
- Data from the TRiO Student Support Services program from 2010-2014 indicated that students who entered YVCC by enrolling in TRiO sponsored learning communities that paired developmental English with a student success course, were retained in the first quarter and from the first year to the second year at statistically significantly higher rates than a matched cohort. TRiO students also completed developmental education sooner than the matched cohort. Given this data, YVCC is investigating the logistics of mandating a “directed schedule” for all students who enter the college at developmental levels with a target implementation date of spring 2015. This “directed schedule” would include having students take needed developmental English and/or Math before they could enroll in other coursework.
- When data indicating that Hispanic students are retained at higher rates was viewed alongside the data about degree completion rates that indicates that Hispanic students complete at significantly lower rates than White students, concerns surfaced about why the retention rate is high, but the completion rate is low. Further analyses revealed that Hispanic students were much more likely to place into the lowest levels of developmental coursework, requiring them to take multiple quarter of developmental classes. These students lost “momentum” towards degrees and were more likely to drop out and/or did not have any continued financial aid funding. In response to this, faculty from YVCC’s Basic Skills, English and Math departments have done considerable curriculum revision in attempts to accelerate developmental education and/or to provide developmental education in tandem with college coursework.
- Concerns about retention and progress, particularly for non-traditional students, has led to investigation of instructional and advising strategies, including surveying faculty about professional development for working with non-traditional students and classroom based strategies for increasing persistence. As part of this effort, the college identified and leveraged funding sources for professional development of part-time faculty, including adding a \$10,000 Faculty Excellence

Award set-aside fund to support adjunct faculty participation in professional development, including creating options for on-campus activities.

Part III: Evaluative Overview in the Light of Parts I and II

In response to the new NWCCU Mid-Cycle Report and instructions from the Commission for colleges to carefully review their core themes, objectives, and indicators to determine whether they are capturing the essence of student success, YVCC has determined that there is a need to more carefully structure the institutional assessment processes into a coherent whole. In Standard Three of the 2011 Comprehensive Evaluation Report, YVCC articulated its assessment plan in terms of ongoing, annual, and cyclical activities that provided both formative and summative information. College units set annual departmental goals aligned with divisional goals and core theme objectives, with data from college units consolidated at the divisional level to determine the major areas of focus and the allocation of resources. The core themes were at the center of the planning processes, and mission fulfillment was described simply as the attainment of 70% of the core theme objectives. This articulation of the institutional assessment process was reaffirmed for the 2012 Year One Report.

As of September 2014, YVCC is in the process of reorganizing the institutional assessment process around key areas from which data is needed, integrating the planning cycles into the appropriate areas. To accomplish this, the college is reviewing existing structures and practices and organizing them according to the type of information about the college and student success that they provide to the assessment of institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment. Appendix A outlines the first attempts at defining this structure, the stakeholders, the planning cycle for these groups and the types of reports the groups will provide to the Institutional Effectiveness Team that will monitor mission fulfillment. YVCC anticipates that the creation of a more cohesive structure for reporting progress and outcomes will inform the definition of mission fulfillment and that the delineation of core themes and objectives may change in ways that help guide the institution toward a fuller understanding of how the various components weave together to create a student experience that supports success.

Appendix A:

Institutional Effectiveness Team						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership identified from all contributing units Charged with monitoring ongoing progress towards attainment of institutional objectives, provide input into initiatives, and determine the extent of mission fulfillment 						
Category	Strategic Planning	Academic Program Effectiveness	Co-curricular Program Effectiveness	Administrative Program Effectiveness	General Education Program	Student Success Initiatives
Primary Question Addressed	“What should YVCC be focused on in the next five years?”	“Are YVCC’s courses and programs of study resulting in students meeting appropriate objectives and contributing towards overall student learning outcomes?”	“Are YVCC’s co-curricular programs contributing to student success?”	“Are YVCC’s facilities and business services providing an infrastructure that supports student success?”	“Are students gaining outcomes that contribute to real-world competencies?”	“Are students who participate in success initiatives succeeding at higher rates and, if so, what should YVCC consider taking to scale?”
Administrative Lead	President VP Admin VP ISS	Academic Deans	Dean of Student Services	VP of Admin Services	VP ISS	OIE Director
Stakeholder groups	BOT College Personnel Students Community	Curriculum Committees Faculty Students	Assistant Dean Program Directors Coordinators Counselors Academic Support Faculty/Staff	Business Facilities Purchasing	Faculty Students Community	Grant and Initiative directors and staff
Planning cycle(s)	Five year plan with annual review (new report 2015)	Ongoing curriculum review Three-year program review Program accreditation cycle	Annual review of services	Annual review of services Every Three Years	Annual Every three years	Ongoing Annual
Reports	Strategic Plan Environmental Scan	Program Evaluations NWCCU Annual Report Program Accreditations		Capital Improvement Plan PACE	CLA	
Focus of Efforts 2014-15	New Strategic Plan in 2015	Create template and schedule for Program Effectiveness Review that incorporates Program Accreditations	Create template and schedule for Program Effectiveness Review	Create template and schedule for Program Effectiveness Review	Identify College Outcomes and measures	Create template and schedule for Initiative Review that incorporates Annual Performance Reviews for grants