



Assessment Plan

2012-2017

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Introduction

History of Assessment at Northwest Indian College

Development of assessment formally began at Northwest Indian College (NWIC) in 1999 in response to evaluators' recommendation, "to adopt and consistently implement an educational assessment plan, which provides for a series of assessments that are internally consistent and in accord with its mission." (from the evaluator report to the NWIC 1998 self-study to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)). The College hired an external consultant who drafted an assessment approach which informed later assessment work. In 2002, NWIC hired its first Director of Assessment. Over the subsequent five years NWIC produced the Assessment Report (2002-2007) and drafted and approved the first Assessment Plan (2007-2012). NWIC has moved deliberately forward to create the beginnings of an integrated campus culture focused on student learning, retention, and graduation by developing clear learning outcomes.

The Assessment Plan (2007-2012) provided structure to the assessment program by clarifying the function of assessment activities as they align with the College's mission and strategic plan, and their relationship to institutional, program and course level outcomes. The plan created structures to the collection and analysis of baseline data and the continued tracking of institutional data that strengthens the institutional approach to continuous improvement.

The Assessment Plan (2007-2012) also articulated priorities, "to set up procedures to report results back to the tribal college community in a more timely, consistent and ongoing way; reflecting upon and using the information to improve student learning; emphasizing cultural values and knowledge; developing cultural outcomes and meaningful assessment strategies; increasing student, faculty, staff and administrator participation; educate students about the mission of the college and the role of assessment in their education; creating a cycle of surveys and reports; and developing a program outcomes process." These priorities will continue to be foundational to the ongoing assessment program.

Purpose of the Plan

This Assessment Plan (2012-2017) is designed as a college-wide assessment resource for faculty, non-academic staff, academic program directors, and administration. The primary purpose of the plan is to facilitate assessment of institutional effectiveness as it relates to student success. A successful student at NWIC acquires and demonstrates knowledge, skills and abilities that strengthen personal and tribal identity. Upon attainment of their educational goals successful students lead healthy and productive lives promoting tribal sovereignty and prosperity.

As assessment is an evolutionary process, the assessment plan provides information to clarify structure and individual roles and responsibilities as they relate to assessment. Clearly defined tasks and timelines of assessment activities are outlined, based on a cycle of continuous improvement, while there are opportunities to develop and improve methods over time. The continuous improvement structure guides data gathering, analyses, interpretation of results, and decision-making in relation to educating NWIC students who are primarily Native Americans coming from diverse backgrounds. The plan also describes the Assessment Team's role in the assessment process.

Overview of the Assessment of Student Learning

The assessment process is guided by the Continuous Improvement Model, as shown below. The articulated student learning outcomes guide the process. These outcomes may be at the institutional level, academic program level, course level, or be student support program outcomes. In the next step, appropriate strategies are identified that are to be used as indicators to assess attainment of learning outcomes and thresholds for success are identified to determine whether the outcomes have been achieved or not. The appropriate data is then gathered for each assessment strategy and analyzed. The results of the analysis are then reported and recommendations are made that inform decisions about how to make programmatic improvements, which closes the loop of the evaluation process. As the cycle begins again, outcomes are re-evaluated and updated, as needed, in light of the programmatic changes.

Cycle of Continuous Improvement



Three types of data are used in the assessment of student learning at NWIC: institutional data, direct indicators (measures of student performance), and indirect indicators (student perceptions). Each of these three types of data may be useful for assessing specific outcomes at any of the levels.

Assessment and evaluation are meaningless if results are not communicated with the stakeholders. Communication of results should inform all stakeholders of the actions or recommendations. It is an institutional goal during this next phase of the assessment plan to fully develop and implement the processes for regular reporting of assessment results to all stakeholders.

Assessment Team- Purpose, Goals, and Role in the Assessment Process

The purpose of the Assessment Team is: *In support of Northwest Indian College's continuous improvement, The Assessment Team will support the mission, strategic plan, and coordinate the assessment process to assure that the data collection, data analyses, and reporting processes are useful, relevant, and meaningful. The Assessment Team supports the improvement of programs and services through training and education and brings together diverse perspectives to support the institution's capacity to use data across campus.*

The goals of the Assessment Team are to:

1. Research best practices of institutional assessment
2. Provide oversight and guide the institutional assessment process
3. Make recommendations to the NWIC institutional assessment process
4. Assess staff training needs in the use of data for analysis of institutional effectiveness and document measures of continuous improvement

The role of the Assessment Team is to support the institutional assessment process and serve as a review board for the annual assessment reports in an effort to help make further meaning of the data analysis and give guidance on the plans for improvement.

The Assessment Team will collectively have an institutional perspective by drawing members from across campus departments. Members will be appointed annually and include:

Co-chairs – Director of Assessment and the Director of Institutional Research

The Associate Dean of Instruction and Distance Learning

Director of Indigenous Service Learning

Academic Program Developer

At least one representative from each of the following areas:

Administrator from Center for Student Success

Academic Program Director

Faculty member

Community Education Department

Enrollment Services

Institutional Frameworks that Guide the Assessment Plan

Assessment at NWIC is guided by and aligns with the college mission, "Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge."

Strategic Plan Academic Goals

The NWIC Strategic Plan (2010-2017) provides the foundational goals of the institution and will provide focus to all outcome development. The strategic plan addresses four core themes and ten goals. These goals guide the institution toward strong educational programs that meet the needs of the tribal communities in the Pacific Northwest.

Core Themes:

1. Engage Indigenous knowledge
2. Commitment to Student Success
3. Access to Higher Education Opportunities at all levels for Tribal Communities
4. Advance Place-Based Community Education and Outreach

Goals:

1. Promote student self-identity through the tribal college experience.
2. Indigenous knowledge is the foundation for all programs of study
3. NWIC actively engages faculty and students in research and scholarship in support of the college's mission and programs.
4. Prepares students to be successful at the associate, baccalaureate and graduates levels.
5. Promote student success in college level courses through the First Year Experience Program
6. NWIC offers career and workforce opportunities in response to community and individual needs
7. NWIC provides access to and opportunities for engagement in the tribal college experience at all entry points.
8. NWIC increases access to program of study courses through distance education modalities and site-based services.
9. NWIC promotes healthy living and nutrition, tribal leadership, and financial security through place-based community education.
10. NWIC promotes Land Grant programming that builds institutional and community capacity in the marine sciences, aquaculture and natural resources.

Data Used in the Assessment Plan

Assessment of student learning is based upon three types of data: institutional data, direct indicators, and indirect indicators. Direct indicators measure learning through assignments, portfolios and other student work while indirect indicators ask students to reflect on their learning. The assessment of student learning occurs at multiple levels within NWIC at the institutional, academic program, and course levels, as well as through student support programming that supports student learning.

Institutional Data

The first type of data collected and analyzed in this assessment plan is institutional data. Institutional data are measures that do not necessarily indicate student learning but do reflect the overall condition and effectiveness of the college’s educational programs. To this end, NWIC will continue to track student enrollment numbers and rates, graduation numbers and rates, retention rates at the institutional and program levels, and completion numbers and rates of identified key courses. In addition, the Assessment Plan (2012-2017) will improve tracking of transfer numbers and rates and start tracking graduates’ career information. It will focus on reporting and reflecting upon the data and using the information to improve the student learning experience.

The following institutional data are analyzed and reported annually and the results are posted as part of the annual Student Success Report on the NWIC Assessment website.

Type of Data	Details		Units	Baseline 2011-12	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017
Enrollment Numbers (Annual)	Indian Student count (ISC)		#	759	690.2	730.7	680.3	668.5	
	Full-time Equivalent (FTE)	Overall	#	851	843	850	786	760	
		Lummi	#	307	363	426	377	378	
		Tulalip	#	37	37	57	39	51	
		Swinomish	#	21	23	33	33	27	
		Port Gamble	#	44	45	73	57	53	
		Nez Perce	#	48	48	72	60	62	
		Nisqually	#	1	15	23	38	65	

		Muckleshoot	#	133	62	90	79	75		
Type of Data	Details		Units	Baseline 2011-12	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	
	Continuing Education Units (CEU) – FTE		#	63	94	90	74	72		
Course completion Rates (Annual)	First Year Core Courses	Math 99	%	47%	59%	55%	53%	66%		
		English 98	%	48%	78%	58%	64%	56%		
	Students who complete FY Core course with a grade 'C' or better		CMST 101	%	65%	65%	66%	72%	72%	
			HMDV 110	%	57%	50%	60%	51%	67%	
			CMPS 101	%	50%	55%	56%	62%	57%	
			ABE/GED	%	74%	80%	74%	75%	73%	
	Workforce		%	57%	59%	33%	81%	83%		
Retention Rates	Overall Fall - Fall	All Degree seeking students who completed one or more credits one fall quarter, the % who completed one or more credits the following fall quarter	%	39%	49%	47%	49%	52%		
	FYE fall cohort	First-time, program of study students who enroll for 2 or more college courses fall and continue to enroll through spring	%	43%	38%	47%	39%	49%		

Type of Data	Details		Units	Baseline 2011-12	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017
Graduation by type of degree	Bachelors	BA	#	0	0	3	22	29	
		BS		8	10	10	10	8	
	Associate	AAS (DTA)	#	59	57	54	55	68	
		AST	#	2	0	0	0	1	
		AAS-T	#	3	2	4	2	1	
		ATA	#	4	3	7	2	7	
		Certificate	#	2	1	1	2	1	
		Awards of Completion	#	0	1	3	2	13	
Graduation Rate	Bachelor		%						
		Overall	%					41%	
		Lummi	%					33%	
		Off Campus	%					8%	
		Associate		%					
		3-yr rate	Overall	%	14%	15%	9%	14%	15%
			Lummi	%	9%	17%	10%	23%	8%
		Off Campus	%	19%	14%	9%	7%	23%	
Transfer to four-year Institutions	Retention	(plan for tracking will be developed)							
	Graduation								
Career	Job Placement	(plan for tracking will be developed)							

Indicators of Student Learning

The continuous improvement model presented on page 5 consists of five steps which are further elaborated in the following 14 steps, which drive the process for assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, academic program, and course levels, as well as for student support programming.

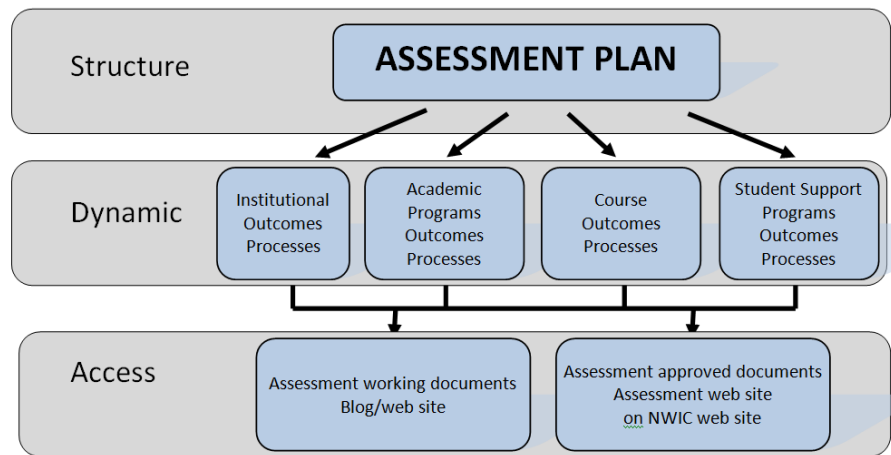
The 14 Step NWIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS and TIMELINE for the Four Levels of OUTCOMES

	Action Steps	Institutional	Academic Programs	Courses	Student Support Programs
1.	Articulate outcomes	2012-13 Gather indirect data 2012-14 Review & update Outcomes	All programs by 2014	All courses, regularly taught, by 2017	2012-13 – Identify 3 programs & all programs by 2015
2.	Develop outcomes rubrics	2012-13 Tribal Outcomes, 2013-14 Communications Outcomes	All programs by 2014	For all scheduled courses	2013-13 – for identified programs & all programs by 2015
3.	Identify direct and indirect assessment opportunities at entry, midway, and exit	2012-13 Tribal Outcomes, 2013-14 Communications Outcomes All by 2017	Using a phase II curriculum map Assess 7 programs 2012-13 & all regularly taught programs by 2014	For all scheduled courses	For identified programs
4.	Include outcomes on syllabi or disseminated materials	Identify courses during curricular review	Review progress following curricular review All required courses in programs regularly taught by 2017	Review progress following curricular review. FIG's are responsible for changes to identified courses and all courses, regularly taught, by 2017	All program materials and advertising for identified programs

5.	Determine or create the instructional activities or assignments that will be used to teach	2012-13 Tribal Outcomes, 2013-14 Communications Outcomes All by 2017	For identified courses, all regularly taught programs by 2014	For all scheduled courses	Student activities or intentional interactions
6.	Determine or create the activities, assignments, or tool that will be used to assess	2012-13 Tribal Outcomes, 2013-14 Communications Outcomes	For identified courses, all regularly taught programs by 2014	For all scheduled courses	Develop survey, evaluation, or other tool
7.	Develop assessment strategy rubric	2012-13 Tribal Outcomes, 2013-14 Communications Outcomes	For all identified courses by 2014	Quarterly for scheduled courses	For identified activity
8.	Identify the measurement goal	Annually	Review and update annually for all programs	Annually	For each program outcome
9.	Assess students for outcome attainment	Quarterly in identified courses	Quarterly in identified courses	Quarterly	Ongoing
10.	Analyze the assessment data	Quarterly and annually at the end of spring quarter	Quarterly and annually at the end of spring quarter	Quarterly	Quarterly and Annually
11.	Compare the outcome data over time	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually
12.	Report analysis results and recommendations	Annually to administration, faculty, and students	Quarterly within discipline group and annually at the end of spring quarter to faculty, students, and administration	Quarterly written report provided to administration	Quarterly and annually to CSS staff, administration and students
13.	Use data to inform curricula	Annually	Annually	Quarterly	Ongoing

14.	Track the results of changes through annual reports and on-going assessment	Quarterly and Annually	Quarterly and Annually	Quarterly and Annually	Quarterly and Annually

The 14 step process is the framework that structures assessment activities during the period 2012-2017 for each of the four outcomes levels. It is not intended to articulate details of the processes for the outcomes levels. Details of the processes and the specific tools for assessing each of the outcomes levels are developed and updated dynamically, as shown in the following diagram.



The detailed descriptions of the processes, timelines, and tools for each of the four levels of direct measures of student learning are accessed on the NWIC Assessment website: <http://www.nwic.edu/assessment>. The Assessment web site is a publically available location that presents approved outcomes, processes, reports, and other useful resources and dissemination materials. The main Assessment web site also contains links to the assessment working documents web site, which contains tools and working documents for staff to progress through the 14 step process.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

NWIC articulated six competencies in the first phase of the assessment efforts. Students who complete a program of study at NWIC will have a solid foundation in the areas listed below.

Native Leadership – To Acquire a Quality Education

Educated Native leaders are essential to the survival and advancement of Tribes. NWIC graduates are leaders in their own right and have the ability to communicate in diverse situations, listen deeply, think critically, and organize and articulate ideas. Upon degree attainment, a successful student will be able to ...

- effectively communicate in diverse situations, from receiving to expressing information, both verbally and non-verbally
- use analytical and critical thinking skills to draw and interpret conclusions from multiple perspectives including Indigenous theory and methods

Way of Life - To Give Back

Education is relevant when Indigenous ways of thinking, learning, and doing are infused into the educational framework. NWIC graduates possess the knowledge of how Tribal values are interpreted and practiced through healthy lifestyles, language, and decision-making. Upon degree attainment, a successful student will be able to...

- demonstrate knowledge of what it means to be a people
- practice community building through service learning

Inherent Rights – To Apply Indigenous Knowledge

Knowledge of Tribal history, language and culture is integral to the advancement of sovereignty and self-determination. NWIC graduates actively engage in the decolonization process using an Indigenous perspective and are able to differentiate between inherent rights and acquired rights. Upon degree attainment, a successful student will be able to ...

- exhibit a sense of place
- recognize Tribal rights as they relate to human rights

Community Minded – To Utilize Education Through Work

Indigenous knowledge advances the capacity of Tribes. NWIC graduates acquire the skills to identify their role as a community member, including how they are integral to advancing the collective good of the community. Upon degree attainment, a successful student will be able to ...

- meet the technological challenges of a modern world
- work cooperatively toward a common goal

Assessment of institutional outcomes will be completed through direct and indirect methods. Direct methods will follow the 14 step process and are reported annually. The current six institutional outcomes will be reviewed for appropriateness and updates, as necessary, beginning in the 2012-13 academic year. The review and update process will be completed no later than the 2013-14 academic year. Details of the processes, timelines, and tools used in the institutional outcomes assessment are posted on the NWIC Assessment web site and will be updated as the process evolves.

Academic Program Outcomes

As of 2012, program outcomes have been developed for 11 of the 13 programs of study at NWIC. The first cycle of program assessment has been completed for five of the programs of study and will continue each year by identifying assessment opportunities, developing assessment strategies, performing assessment, and reporting annually. In addition, beginning with this assessment plan, NWIC will assess award of completion programs. Work will continue with designing a communication system to ensure that the findings are accessible and used to refine policy and practice at the program level, determining whether a program is meeting its objectives, discovering the strengths and challenges in the learning process, and determining whether the program is meeting the needs of the target audience. Details of the processes, timelines, and tools used in the program outcomes assessment are posted on the NWIC Assessment web site and will be updated as the process evolves.

Course Outcomes

The development and approval of course outcomes is monitored by the Curriculum Committee and through the curricular review process, scheduled bi-annually for identified courses and programs of study. During this phase of the assessment effort two goals are set. First, faculty inquiry groups (FIGs) will be responsible for updating course outcomes identified during the review process. Second, standards will be established to measure course outcomes, creating assessment tools, using multiple methods to assess outcomes, conducting and reporting on the course assessment following the 14 step process. Details of the processes, timelines, and tools used in the course outcomes assessment are posted on the NWIC Assessment web site and will be updated as the process evolves.

Student Support Program Outcomes

Assessment of student support programs is new in this phase of assessment at NWIC. A focused effort will be on identifying programs for assessment, prioritizing the programs for assessment development, and training staff to fully participate in the assessment process. Student support programs include programs implemented through the Center for Student Success, including athletics, career services, academic advising, student leadership, and residence life, as well as programming outside of the department including indigenous service learning, library, and the Math and Writing Center. Data collected will be utilized to improve student support programming and student learning.

Indirect Indicators of Student Learning

NWIC will continue to gather indirect assessment data through identified surveys, faculty peer reviews, and course evaluations. The surveys will be conducted on a four year cycle with the exception of the annual graduation survey. The purposes of the surveys are to assess the student experience within all areas of the college while enrolled and beyond graduation as well as evaluate the faculty engagement with the students and their understanding of the assessment process. To strengthen the assessment of student support programming, a survey specific to this area will be identified and conducted during the 2014-2015 academic year. A process will be developed for reporting the results to the community and tracking the improvement activities. Details of the processes, timelines, and tools used in the indirect indicators of student learning are posted on the NWIC Assessment web site and will be updated as the process evolves.

Survey	Baseline Data	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Community College Survey of Student Engagement	Winter 2005	Conducted Fall 2011				Conduct survey (Fall)	
Faculty Survey of Student Engagement	Winter 2005	Conducted Fall 2011				Conduct survey (Fall)	
Alumni survey (ACT with NWIC specific questions)	Winter 2004 (1990 – 2003 graduates)		Conduct survey (all graduates)				Conduct survey
Student Opinion Survey (ACT with NWIC specific questions)	Spring 2003			Conduct survey (Fall)			Conduct survey
Assessment Survey	Summer 2006	Conducted 2011				Conduct revised survey	
Academic Advising Survey					Identify and conduct survey		
Non-Returning Survey					Identify and conduct survey		

On-going Surveys

Survey	Baseline Data	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Quarterly Online Course Evaluation	Annual average overall participation 34.3%					
	Faculty use of student feedback-% of faculty utilizing feedback to change their teaching methods	Develop report process connected to faculty evaluations				
Annual Faculty Peer Review	15 of 17 FT Faculty or 88.2% participated during 2011-12					
Annual Faculty Self Evaluation	13 of 17 Faculty or 76.5% participated during 2011-12					
Annual Faculty Classroom Evaluation Process	17 full-time and 5 part-time faculty or 100% participated during 2011-12					
Annual Graduate Survey	42 or 56% of graduates completed survey 2012					

Linkages with other College Plans and Initiatives

The Assessment Plan (2012-2017) links to and is part of a holistic approach to improving student learning and aligns with the NWIC commitment to student success. In addition, this plan aligns with the work of the Curriculum Committee, faculty inquiry groups (FIGs), and efforts to advance the student success agenda, such as the first year experience (FYE) initiative, and indigenous service learning. Detailed implementation of the Assessment Plan (2012-2017) will maintain and strengthen these linkages.

Initiatives that are linked to the Assessment Plan (2012-2017) include but are not limited to:

- Program Evaluation
- Program and course curricular review
- Teaching and Learning Initiative Plan
- Student Success Agenda