



# Assessment Plan

## 2018-2024

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## Introduction

### History of Assessment at Northwest Indian College

Assessment is foundational to teaching and learning and has occurred at Northwest Indian College (NWIC) since its inception. Development of a more comprehensive institution-wide assessment process began at Northwest Indian College 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.

The NWIC Board of Trustees approved an initiative to indigenize the institution in June of 2017. This mobilized college leadership to reflect upon the way in which it governs itself. The NWIC board of trustees held a visioning session with college leadership in order to define what an indigenized institution would look like, what infrastructures would need to change and how are the students and community we serve represented within the governing structure.

The review and planning of the 2018-2024 Assessment Plan has been a collaboration across the institution. An Assessment team was established with sub-committees tasked with facilitating the two sections, academic and non-academic assessment.

### Purpose of the Plan

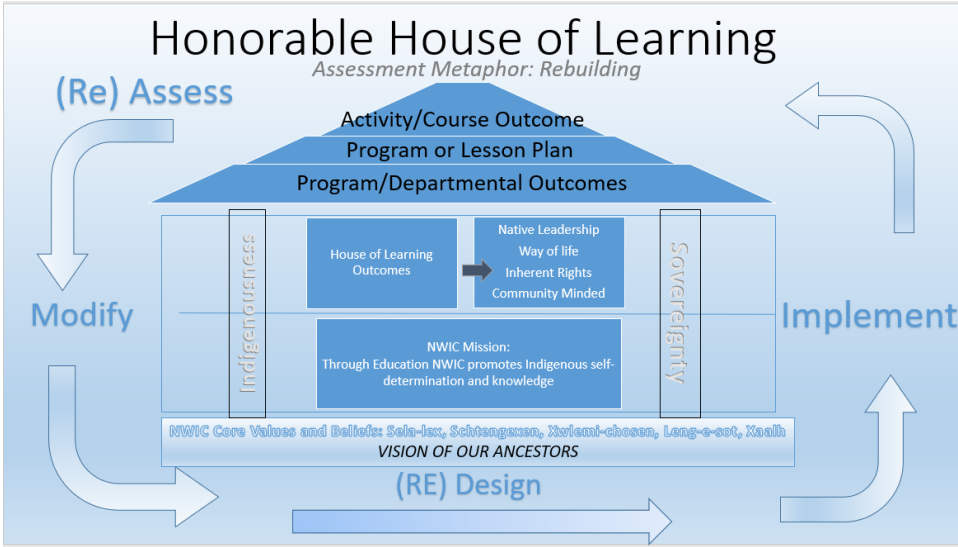
The Assessment Plan (2018-2024) is designed as a college-wide assessment resource for faculty, non-academic staff, academic program directors, and administration. The primary purpose of the plan is to facilitate assessment of institutional effectiveness as it relates to student success and mission fulfillment: Through

education Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge. A successful student at NWIC acquires and demonstrates academic and cultural knowledge, skills and values to positively impact Tribal communities. 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 the Honorable House of Learning Metaphor, while there are opportunities to develop and improve methods over time. The House of Learning 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 Honorable House of Learning Metaphor, 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 of the process, 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 improvements, which closes the loop of the evaluation process. As the cycle begins again, outcomes are re-evaluated and updated, as needed.



In the Honorable House of Learning assessment is grounded in the NWIC Core Values and Beliefs. Which are as follows:

Sela-lex<sup>w</sup> : Our strength comes from the old people. From them we receive our teachings and knowledge and the advice we need for our daily lives.

schtengex<sup>w</sup>en: We are responsible to protect our territory. This means that we take care of our lands and the water and everything that is on and in it.

Xwlemi-chosen: Our culture is our language. We should strengthen and maintain our language.

Leng-e-sot: We take care of ourselves, watch out for ourselves and love and take care of one another.

Xaalh: Life balance/sacred.

It is from these values everything is designed, implemented, assessed and modified in a cycle of continuous improvement.

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

Both formative and summative assessment strategies are used to assess student learning. It is the use of both strategies that strengthen how NWIC students are assessed in the classroom. It is the continual dialogue students get with their faculty that insures comprehension and growth. Paired with summative strategies allows for a true analysis of program outcome attainment. Using both strategies forms relational accountability between student and faculty, allowing for open communication, trust and a shared understanding of expectations.

Assessment and evaluation are enhanced when results are communicated broadly and purposefully. Communication of results should inform actions or recommendations for improvement. Currently annual assessment results are shared across departments within the institution and also with the board of trustees. The departmental sharing of best practices and strategies, strengths individual programs and allows for continuity of the assessment process. The board of trustees is not only interested in assessment findings but also in providing input for continual improvement of program outcome attainment. The goal for this assessment phase is to include regular reporting of assessment findings to the communities NWIC serves. This may take place during the annual NWIC report to the Lummi Nation. A mechanism for reporting to the 6 extended campus sites we serve will be identified within this assessment cycle.

## **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
5. Utilize on-going evaluation and assessment results to inform resource allocation
6. Utilize the continuous improvement model to continually make changes and improvements to the assessment plan itself

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 by the president and include:

Academic: Dean of Academics (co-facilitator), Associate Dean, Department Chairs, Faculty representative from each program/department, Director of Extended Sites, E-Learning Coordinator, and Site Managers.

Non Academic: Director of Institutional Effectiveness (co-facilitator), Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Registrar, Dean of Student Life, Donor Advancement and Foundation Relations Coordinator, BFET Coordinator, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Institute Director, and the Center for Health Department Manager.

**All are welcome to join the Assessment Team**

## **Institutional Frameworks that Guide the Assessment Plan**

### **Strategic Plan Academic Goals**

The NWIC Strategic Plan (2018-2024) provides the foundational goals of the institution and will provide focus to all outcome development. The strategic plan addresses four core themes and 15 objectives. 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

#### Objectives:

1. NWIC implements an Indigenous governance system (CT1)
2. NWIC establishes and sustains an internal organizational climate aligned with NWIC vision and values. (CT1)
3. NWIC implements an Indigenous Research Agenda (CT1)
4. NWIC faculty and staff build the capacity to engage Indigenousness and sovereignty (CT1)
5. NWIC incorporates Indigenous knowledge in all areas of instruction (CT1)
6. NWIC promotes a community of wellness and balance (CT2)
7. NWIC fosters student leadership (CT2)
8. NWIC supports students in achieving their educational goals (CT2)
9. NWIC prepares students to work for and serve tribal communities (CT2)
10. NWIC provides holistic support to ensure student access at all campus locations (CT3)
11. NWIC provides college preparation and support for Native youth for an academic future (CT3)
12. NWIC provides educational opportunities responsive to Tribal community needs and grounded in place-based pedagogy (CT4)
13. NWIC performs Indigenous research and build the research capacity of students and communities (CT4)
14. NWIC builds the capacity of Tribal communities through responsive community engagement (CT4)
15. NWIC promotes Indigenous wellness programming to restore balanced lifestyles and Tribal prosperity (CT4)





**Data Used in the Assessment Plan**

Assessment is based on data: institutional data, direct indicators, and indirect indicators. Institutional data includes graduation rates and course completion rates, among others. 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.

**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 (2018-2024) 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 2017- 2018	2018- 2019	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024
Enrollment Numbers (Annual)	Indian Student count (ISC)		#							
	Full-time Equivalent (FTE)	Overall	#							
		Lummi	#							
		Tulalip	#							
		Swinomish	#							
		Port Gamble	#							
		Nez Perce	#							
		Nisqually	#							

		Muckleshoot	#								
Type of Data	Details		Units	Baseline 2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	
	<b>Continuing Education Units (CEU) – FTE</b>		#								
<b>Course completion Rates (Annual)</b>	<b>GE core courses</b>	CMST 101, 210	%								
		ENG 101, 102	%								
		CMPS 101	%								
	<b>Students who complete GE core course with a grade 'C' or better</b>		HMDV 110	%							
			CSOV 101, 102,120	%							
			MATH 102,107	#							
		ENVS 108	#								
		POLS 225	#								
<b>Retention Rates</b>	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	%								
	General Ed		%								

Type of Data	Details		Units	Baseline 2017- 2018	2018 - 2019	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024
Graduation by type of degree	Bachelors	NES, CARE, TGBM, NSL	#							
	Associate	AAS (DTA)	#							
		AST	#							
		AAS-T	#							
		ATA	#							
		Certificate	#							
			#							
Graduation Rate	Bachelor		%							
		Overall	%							
		Lummi	%							
		Off Campus	%							
	Associate		%							
	3-yr rate	Overall	%							
		Lummi	%							
		Off Campus	%							
Graduate school		Alumni Association/N SC	%							
Career	Job Placement									

## Indicators of Student Learning

The continuous improvement model (see page 5) drives the process for assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, academic program, and course levels, as well as for student support programming.

### The 8 step NWIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS and TIMELINE for the Four Levels of OUTCOMES

The process is the framework that structures assessment activities during the period 2018-2024 for each of the four outcomes levels. It is not intended to articulate details of the processes for the outcome levels. Details of the processes and the specific tools for assessing each of the outcome levels are developed and updated dynamically, as shown in the following diagram.

	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Institutional</b>	<b>Academic Programs</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Student Support Programs</b>
1.	Articulate outcomes	Gather indirect data. Review & update Outcomes	All programs	All courses, regularly taught	Identify all programs
2.	Develop or revise outcomes rubrics	Tribal Outcomes, Communication Outcomes	All programs	For all scheduled courses	Identified programs
3.	Identify direct and indirect assessment opportunities at entry, midway, and exit	Tribal Outcomes, Communications Outcomes	Using a phase II curriculum map Assess 7 programs	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	Review progress following curricular review. FIG's are responsible for changes to identified courses and all courses, regularly taught	All program materials and advertising for identified programs
5.	Determine or create the instructional activities or assignments that will be used to teach or assess	Tribal Outcomes, Communications Outcomes	For identified courses, all regularly taught programs	For all scheduled courses	Student activities or intentional interactions  Develop survey, evaluation, or other tool

6.	Develop rubrics to assess instructional activities	Tribal Outcomes, Communication Outcomes	For all identified courses	Quarterly for scheduled courses	For identified activity
7.	Assess students for outcome attainment	Quarterly in identified courses	Quarterly in identified courses	Quarterly	Ongoing
8.	Analyze and report assessment data	Quarterly and annually at the end of spring quarter  Annually to administration, faculty, and students	Quarterly and annually at the end of spring quarter  Quarterly within discipline group and annually at the end of spring quarter to faculty, students, and administration	Quarterly through a narrative report	Quarterly and Annually  Quarterly and annually to CSS staff, administration and students

### The 8 Step NWIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS Explained in Detail

1. **Articulate Outcomes** – Develop or revise the outcomes – requires Curriculum Committee review and approval. Follow guidelines posted on the NWIC Assessment website course outcomes page.
2. **Develop or revise outcome rubrics** – Identify criteria and articulate measurable standards for Beginning (B), Developing (D), and Accomplished (A) levels of student proficiency for each outcome (students will be able to.....). Fill out outcome rubrics.
3. **Identify direct and indirect assessment opportunities at entry, midway and exit** – Create or revise curriculum map listing all required courses for the program and the level of student proficiency (B, D, or A) for each program outcome. Align course, program, and institutional outcomes.
4. **Include outcomes on syllabi** – List all course, program, and institutional (as appropriate) outcomes on course syllabi.
5. **Create or revise the instructional activities, assignments, and/or tools that will be used to teach and assess** – Intentionally link assessment to teaching activities, assignments, and/or tools to effectively measure outcomes.

6. **Develop rubrics to assess instructional activities** – Establish measurable criteria for attributing levels of proficiency (Beginning, Developing, or Accomplished) to each student and reporting for the course, program, and/or institution as a whole.
7. **Assess students for outcome attainment** – Collect student data and include on the quarterly course assessment narrative. Each program has a process for evaluating student outcome attainment.
8. **Analyze and report the assessment data** – Identify a regular schedule and appropriate audience to report course, program, and institutional assessment results, which are compiled annually into a comprehensive institutional document.

**Course Assessment Narrative**

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students enrolled at the beginning of quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students enrolled at end of quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some of the things I changed from the last time I taught this course?
2. What did I do to determine what the students learned? Identify your assignment strategies.
3. What did the students learn? Connect with course and program outcomes.
4. Were there any strategies that stood out as being especially effective to student learning?
5. What support strategies did I implement?
6. How did the course modality affect teaching and learning?
7. In what ways did I integrate indigenous pedagogy into the curriculum? A place-based teaching and learning approach, story sharing, genealogy, origin stories, and/or identity development.
8. What direct feedback did I receive from students?
9. What are some things I plan on changing the next time I teach this course?

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 publicly 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 8 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.

1. Native Leadership- To acquire a quality education
  - a. Effectively communicate in diverse situations, from receiving to expressing information, both verbally and non-verbally
  - b. Use analytical and critical thinking skills to draw and interpret conclusions from multiple perspectives including Indigenous theory and methods
2. Way of Life- To give back
  - a. Demonstrate knowledge of what it means to be a people
  - b. Practice community building through service learning
3. Inherent Rights- To apply Indigenous Knowledge
  - a. Exhibit a sense of place
  - b. Recognize Tribal rights as they relate to human rights
4. Community-Minded- To utilize education through work
  - a. Meet the technological challenges of a modern world
  - b. Work cooperatively toward a common goal

### Academic Program Outcomes

As of 2019, program outcomes have been developed for all 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 are 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 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 essential within assessment at NWIC. A focused effort will be on the assessment and evaluation of all non-academic student support programs. In alignment with the new NWCCU standards, two piloted processes will be implemented within this assessment cycle. The first being a value-based program evaluation, the second being a productivity-based analysis. The merging of these two processes as well as utilizing the results to inform resource allocation are goals within this assessment cycle. Student support programs include (but are not limited to) 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 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, surveys will be conducted during the 2018-2024 assessment cycle. 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.

#### On-going Surveys

<b>Survey</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Alumni survey (ACT with NWIC specific questions)								
Non-Returning Survey								
In house survey regarding student learning attainment								
CESSE								
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Quarterly Online Course Evaluation								
Annual Faculty Peer Review								
Annual Faculty Self Evaluation								
Annual Faculty Classroom Evaluation								

Process								
Annual Graduate Survey								

**Linkages with other College Plans and Initiatives**

The Assessment Plan (2018-2024) 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 (2018-2024) will maintain and strengthen these linkages.