

# GREAT BASIN COLLEGE

NWCCU Mid-Cycle Report

March, 2023



“The Gold Standard in the Silver State”

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## Introduction

As requested from the reaffirmation accreditation letter dated February 12, 2021, Great Basin College (GBC) is submitting a Mid-Cycle Report to provide updated information regarding Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 2: Fall 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness.

### **Recommendation 1 reads as follows (NWCCU letter dated February 12, 2021):**

The recommendation from the site team, adopted by NWCCU, reads as follows:

*Develop a regular, coherent, and comprehensive program of assessment of learning outcomes that standardizes and memorializes course-level outcomes, that explicitly maps course-level outcomes to program-level, institutional and/or general education outcomes, and that is used deliberately and intentionally for institutional planning and resource allocation. 1.C.2; 1.C.5; 1.C.6; 1.C.7*

GBC's response is below based on the standards from recommendation 1.

*1.C.2 The institution awards credit, degrees, certificates, or credentials for programs that are based upon student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.*

*1.C.5 The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs.*

*1.C.6 Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.*

*1.C.7 The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.*

Standards 1.C.2, 1.C.5, 1.C.6 and 1.C.7 will be addressed together. At the time of the seven-year virtual visit during the pandemic, GBC had established course assessment, and program reviews. However, the new strategic plan was not complete, and the previous strategic plan was not aligned with current practices as identified in the self-study. Currently, the strategic plan (Attachment A) and the institutional effectiveness assessment plan (Attachment B) are complete. GBC is now collecting data for institutional effectiveness plan for 2022-23 and will use this document for the annual report. Since the development and approval of the strategic plan, GBC is implementing the process for assessment to actively align current practices at GBC with the new mission of *Transforming Lives Through Education* (Attachment C).

Another area identified as needing improvement was the process to explicitly map course-level outcomes to program-level, institutional and/or general education outcomes. In 2018, GBC approved changing the general education process from being course dependent to a program. This was implemented in the fall of 2018 with the assessment process starting in 2019. (Attachment D). GBC is in the third year of collecting data for the General Education Program. As for other programs, GBC is actively working on curriculum mapping from courses to programs to institution (Attachment E and F). These changes are in alignment with the Closing the

Loop Plan that was previously referenced and submitted with the Self-Study and Ad-Hoc Report. This plan has been updated and reflects the changes (Appendix G).

## **Recommendation 2**

The recommendation from the site team, adopted by NWCCU, reads as follows:

*The evaluation team recommends that the institution establish clear goals, objectives, and indicators, including widely available disaggregated data, to define mission fulfillment and develop an ongoing and systematic institutional evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement. 1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.3, 1.B.4, 1.C.7, 1.D.2, 1.D.3, 1.D.4*

GBC's response is below based on the standards from recommendation 2.

***1.B.1** The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.*

During the NWCCU evaluation process, the GBC 2014-2020 strategic plan was ending, and the college realized it did not reflect the changes that have occurred over the seven years. Therefore, GBC realized the assessment for institutional effectiveness was not completed as explained in the self-study completed at that time. Since the Ad-Hoc Report submitted in March of 2022, GBC has completed the new 3-year strategic plan (Attachment A) that reflects who GBC is now. GBC takes the strategic planning process seriously and has used an integrated approach to include internal and external stakeholders. Through this gathering of data and reflective process, GBC has finished the strategic plan (Attachment A) and it was approved by the Nevada Board of Regents in December of 2022. The new strategic plan has a new mission, values, vision, themes, and objectives and is data driven. The strategic plan/institutional effectiveness assessment (Attachment B) has been completed, as well. GBC is in the process of collecting data for the assessment.

***1.B.2** The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.*

***1.B.3** The institution provides evidence that its planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.*

***1.B.4** The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it considers such findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, planning, intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement of its goals.*

***1.D.2** Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison, with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).*

Standards 1.B.2, 1.B.3, 1.B.4 and 1.D.2 will be addressed together. Within the new strategic plan process (Attachment A), GBC has received input from internal and external stakeholders through surveys and focus group meetings. From this information the college strategic plan committee has developed meaningful goals, objectives, and has identified necessary resources. The surveys, focus groups, and the strategic plan committee includes community members, faculty, staff, and students. The survey and focus group sessions included all the communities we serve, Institutional Advisory Board, and the Foundation Board. Inclusion of faculty, staff and student's future participation is included through-out the new strategic plan. GBC did receive a compliment under 1.B.4 regarding external partnerships. "Compliment #2: The college has developed remarkable external partnerships with public school districts and the University of Nevada, Reno". GBC has expanded this opportunity by reaching out to more external partners through the development of the strategic plan to identify growth opportunities.

Since the Ad Hoc Report dated March of 2022, mission fulfillment and institutional effectiveness has been defined (Attachment A and B). Reporting for this standard is supported by updated data from institutional research and effectiveness. This data includes strategic metrics for 2022 and 2021, [annual enrollment trends](#), and more. The regional and national peer institutions comparisons can be found in the following dashboards on [enrollment](#), [awards conferred](#), [dual enrollment](#), [employee headcount](#), [fall enrollment](#), [graduation rates \(plus transfer rates\)](#), [IPEDS reporting](#) and compliance with the NSHE [strategic plan metrics](#). All the dashboards will inform the annual reporting for the strategic plan. Additionally, an understanding of the [demographics](#) of our primary service areas helps to complete the enrollment picture and allocate resources wisely. These include county-level breakdowns for [Elko](#), [Esmeralda](#), [Eureka](#), [Humboldt](#), [Lander](#), [Lincoln](#), [Lyon](#), [Mineral](#), [Nye](#), [Pershing](#), and [White Pine](#) counties. GBC has already started reviewing the ongoing continuous improvement process with disaggregated student achievement data and this is included in the new strategic plan. GBC did receive a compliment under 1.B.2 and this area was only enhanced. "Compliment #1: The Office of Institutional Research and senior administrators have put forth a great deal of effort to disseminate data and educate the college community about how to use data".

These resulting reports, to be published on GBC's website and distributed to stakeholders, will be an inclusive process and will form a central component of GBC's data management. With shared responsibility throughout the college and a transparent drafting and reporting process, GBC will achieve participation and transparency as should be the goal of any institution seeking shared governance and inclusion. Through the strategic plan and assessment design process GBC has implemented the objectives to meet these standards.

*1.C.7 The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.*

GBC did have course and program assessments at the time of the NWCCU site visit, but the institutional planning was not connected in a meaningful way as identified by evaluators. In the new strategic plan, assessment will be connected from the course to program to department to institution in a continual loop (Attachment B and C). This connection with a continual loop of review will inform the institution, departments, programs, faculty, staff, and students of current trends and help to make plans for continuous improvement to student learning outcomes. With the implementation of the institutional effectiveness assessment plan and curriculum mapping GBC will meet this standard, however it is in the infancy stage.

*1.D.3 The institution's disaggregated indicators of student achievement should be widely published and available on the institution's website. Such disaggregated indicators should be aligned with meaningful, institutionally identified indicators benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.*

*1.D.4 The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.*

1.D.3 and 1.D.4 will be addressed together. GBC recognized the gap noted by the evaluators regarding the data not being incorporated into a planning or budgeting process which would inform continuous improvement. The college will continue to use the NSHE five strategic goals and has begun to disaggregate those metrics throughout the institution. These metrics are in the new strategic plan along with other dashboards identified as needed for improvement of student success.

The assessment of student achievement in the strategic plan utilizes disaggregated data to identify benchmarks and comparisons to other institutions for continual improvement. GBC was already using disaggregated data and was transparent in the process and methodology. Now, GBC has connected this information to a continual improvement process within the strategic plan to meet this standard.

## **Summary of Response to Recommendation 2**

The institution has worked hard to develop this new strategic plan process through a transparent and inclusive approach. This process is resulting in a new strategic plan that is designed to be reportable and flexible, resulting in an improvement on assessment, evaluation, and subsequent planning and allocation of resources. The goal is to establish KPIs and indicators, to define mission fulfillment and develop of an ongoing and systematic institutional evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

In conclusion, GBC is confident the changes evident within the new strategic plan for 2022-2025 will lead the institution to a new continuous improvement process. An accountable, data-informed culture begins here. With a big-picture approach combined with an on-the-ground mentality, this plan is designed to create a top-down/bottom-up cohesion for the institution that will be refined as the plan runs its course and the continual annual reporting process enables improvement. The Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan will document the data and the annual reporting process.