



Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness 2026

Submitted to the Northwest
Commission on Colleges
and Universities

South Puget Sound
Community College
Olympia, Washington
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South Puget Sound
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Institutional Overview

Who We Are

South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC) is a public two-year institution of higher education that provides transfer, professional technical, pre-college, and transition studies curricula to more than 8,600 students in 2024-25. Additionally, the College's Corporate & Continuing Education (CCE) program served more than 4,900 students in 2024-25. In fall 2024, 63% of SPSCC students were enrolled in academic transfer programs, 20% in workforce programs, and 9% in basic skills programs. Additionally, 58% of students are enrolled full-time and 42% are enrolled part-time. The College also served more than 1,500 dual-enrolled students (Running Start and College in the High School (CiHS) programs). The average student age is 25, and 41% are students of color.

SPSCC is one of 34 Washington State community and technical colleges. The College has been a vital institution in the Olympia community since it was founded as Olympia Vocational Technical Institute (OVTI) in 1962. OVTI subsequently merged with Centralia College in 1967, changed its name to Olympia Technical Community College in 1976, and adopted its current name of South Puget Sound Community College in 1984. The College serves students on its main Mottman Road campus and a campus located in nearby Lacey. Additionally, SPSCC has a Craft Brewing and Distilling instructional facility located in Tumwater, which is partnered with the City of Tumwater, and a center for health education near the Olympia Campus.

Regional Context

SPSCC is located in Thurston County, which is situated halfway between two of the Northwest's largest and most complex cities, Portland and Seattle. We are bordered on the east by Mount Rainier (Takhoma), the north by a large military base (Joint Base Lewis McChord), farmland to the south, and quiet forests to the west that eventually meet the Pacific Ocean. We inhabit an area that has a long, rich history for Indigenous communities that thrived for centuries in a regional ecosystem that supported abundant fishing, farming, timber resources, a moderate climate, and plentiful wildlife. Our Indigenous community legacies and icons are still ubiquitous in the Pacific Northwest, and their present-day work continues transforming our region for the better.

Our county is heavily centralized around three large and intertwined cities: Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. We are home to the state government. Our county's total population is just over 300,000 and growing.

We are the only community college in our area, and are well-respected thanks to a long reputation for stable leadership and high-quality, relevant academic and community programs. Two small four-year universities are here, as well, and include a regional public university and a private Catholic university. We have strong relationships with both.

Our College operates within the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) system, which sets statewide policies on funding, enrollment, and program approval. Locally, our Board of Trustees and shared governance structures (faculty and staff councils) influence priorities and resource allocation.

Preface

Institutional Change Since Mid-Cycle (2021)

Select Highlights

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accreditation report centers on institutional effectiveness, student achievement, and student learning. Each section of the report provides detailed evidence of how SPSCC meets these standards through systematic planning, assessment, and continuous improvement. At the same time, we recognize the importance of elevating the broader narrative that frames this work, how we continue to capitalize on the momentum from our mid-cycle report, and lessons learned since launching the strategic plan. Guided Pathways provides the overarching structure for how we design, deliver, and evaluate the student experience. Our engagement with the Aspen Institute further strengthens this framework, establishing our work in national research and measurable outcomes focused on completion, transfer, and livable-wage employment. In addition, SPSCC's partnerships across the region reflect our commitment to community responsiveness and workforce vitality. Finally, while our strategic plan defines mission fulfillment through measurable goals, we have also engaged in thoughtful reflection about how those measures function and what they truly reveal about equity and student success. The following highlights bring these themes to the forefront as the full report is reviewed.

Guided Pathways

As defined by the Community College Research Center (CCRC) (2026), "Guided pathways is a whole-college redesign framework designed to help all students explore, choose, plan, and complete programs aligned with their education and career goals efficiently and affordably."¹ Guided Pathways has been part of the College's work for the past 10 years and is fully ingrained in our philosophy, culture, and strategic plan. Since launching in 2016 with ten inclusive pathways intentionally named with students' input to reflect clear career identities (i.e.: Cultural Studies, Healthcare) rather than traditional academic labels (i.e.: Humanities, Allied Health), SPSCC has embedded pathway strategies and structures across student outreach, onboarding, advising, retention monitoring, instruction, faculty evaluation, and student communication. Every degree and certificate is supported by a structured Pathway Map, integrated into our catalog and degree planning software, ensuring students and advisors co-create clear,

¹ Community College Research Center. (n.d.). Guided Pathways. Teachers College, Columbia University. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/research/guided-pathways.html>

personalized plans. Pre-college Transition Studies options appear at the start of every map, so students see an on ramp regardless of entry level.

These practices are operationalized across instructional sequencing, advising workflows, and student-facing tools. Our math outcomes illustrate this sustained, integrated effort. In 2017, 29% of new students completed college-level math in their first year. Today, that figure stands at 49%, the highest in our history. Early reforms included weighting college-level math into the first two quarters and implementing co-requisite models that increased early credit momentum.

The Math department tells their story in their words, “The department developed comprehensive placement tools, including study guides and self-placement resources, empowering students to accurately place themselves into pre-college and co-requisite courses. Accelerated pathways were created across all degree plans to support students who only needed targeted review before progressing.”

“To strengthen support for co-requisite students, the department expanded offerings of the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program, which provides team-taught instruction in basic skills along with the students' professional technical or academic program. Additionally, the department collaborated closely with the Learning Support Center (LSS) to embed tutors in Science, Engineering, and Math (SEM) track courses with historically low success rates.

“Financial barriers were reduced by providing free course materials, and accessibility was prioritized through the creation of diverse instructional resources, including videos, in-class materials, activities, and online content. Faculty enhance student engagement by designing a relevant curriculum that connects mathematics to content in future courses and real-world applications. Faculty also actively monitor student placement, particularly in the first week of classes, to help students move into the most appropriate course when possible. Ongoing collaboration with institutional research helps evaluate outcomes, identify gaps, and implement data-informed improvements.”

Together, these integrated advising, instructional, and communication strategies demonstrate that Guided Pathways is how we operate.

Aspen Institute

SPSCC's engagement with the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program has been a defining element of our student success work. Aspen's approach using rigorous data, national research, and continuous improvement closely aligns with the CCRC's evidence on Guided Pathways reforms and the standards set forth by NWCCU. These standards reinforce our strategic focus on equitable outcomes, clear academic and career pathways, and measurable results that matter to students and our region.

Across six Aspen recognition cycles, SPSCC has demonstrated sustained excellence and momentum:

- 2017, 2019, and 2021 – Named among the Top 150 Aspen Prize contenders
- 2023 – Recognized in the Top 10 nationally
- 2025 – Top 3 and awarded Finalist with Distinction, receiving a \$100,000 prize, which was endowed through the SPSCC Foundation to support emergency grants for students facing unexpected financial challenges
- 2027 – As of the submission of this evaluation, SPSCC has been named a top 10 finalist for the national Aspen prize.

These recognitions validate the impact of our comprehensive institutional transformations based on the Guided Pathways framework and provide guidance, tools, and resources that strengthen our student success agenda.

Beyond prize recognition, Aspen's leadership development opportunities have elevated institutional capacity. In 2023–24, Dr. Timothy Stokes, President of SPSCC, participated in the Aspen Presidential Fellowship, strengthening our student success agenda through national research and peer collaboration. In 2025–26, Dr. Tysha Tolefree, Vice President of Finance and Operations, is serving as an Aspen Fellow.

Currently, SPSCC's participation in Aspen's Unlocking Opportunity initiative focuses on post-college outcomes for our students. Unlocking Opportunity focuses on ensuring that professional technical graduates leave SPSCC prepared to enter jobs that provide a livable wage in our community. The initiative also prioritizes strengthening transfer pathways so students who intend to pursue a bachelor's degree can transfer and complete in a timely manner. Through data-informed analysis of post-completion employment and transfer outcomes, SPSCC is refining program design, advising structures, information to students, and employer partnerships to better align credentials with regional workforce demand and bachelor's degree attainment.

Together, Aspen's tools, benchmarking, leadership development, and outcome focus, integrated with Guided Pathways principles, continue to advance SPSCC's commitment to improving completion, transfer, and livable-wage employment outcomes for students.

Community Partnerships

SPSCC maintains a strong and visible presence within our community through sustained partnerships that respond directly to workforce, economic, and educational needs. Our approach begins with listening; engaging employers, tribes, state agencies, and community organizations to design programs that serve both current and future employees while strengthening transfer and career mobility pathways.

SPSCC partners with local tribes, including the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, which are significant and growing

economic drivers in sectors such as education, healthcare, telecommunications, construction, hospitality, and IT. Through both credit and non-credit offerings, along with exploration of new degree pathways aligned with tribal enterprises and hospitality, we support workforce development that reflects regional priorities and cultural partnerships.

Our CCE programs operate through a nimble, market-driven process. The team meets directly with major employers, particularly state agencies, to identify emerging skill gaps. Programs often begin as proof-of-concept classes and expand into certificate series when demand is sustained. Because most non-credit programs are self-supporting, enrollment, completion, and employer feedback continuously inform curriculum and pricing adjustments to ensure relevance and sustainability.

A standout example is the non-credit Residential Construction Academy, developed in partnership with United Way, Olympia Master Builders, and the Building Industry Association of Washington. Funded by external partners, the Academy addresses a regional workforce shortage by providing hands-on training and industry-recognized credentials that connect graduates directly to local employers and living-wage jobs.

SPSCC also strengthens long-term opportunities for students through transfer partnerships with our higher education community partners: The Evergreen State College, Washington State University – Vancouver, University of Washington – Tacoma, Saint Martin's University, and soon to be Western Washington University. Our collaboration with these partner universities creates seamless local pathways for associate degree graduates to complete bachelor's degrees in high-demand fields.

Because SPSCC is located in the state capital, our executive leadership maintains an active legislative presence. President Dr. Stokes champions policies that support students locally and across Washington's community and technical college system, reinforcing our commitment to opportunity, workforce vitality, and regional prosperity.

Mission Fulfillment Reflection

SPSCC is deeply committed to equity. Ensuring that all students, especially those historically underserved and most vulnerable, can attain their academic goals is a core theme of our strategic plan. When the College launched its current strategic plan in 2019, we intentionally selected indicators that went beyond overall retention and completion rates. Rather than measuring aggregate success alone, we committed to narrowing the equity gap between dominant and vulnerable student populations. We also incorporated a three-year rolling average to reduce year-to-year volatility.

In principle, this was a powerful and unanimously supported measure of mission fulfillment. Our intent was clear: vulnerable student outcome rates would rise to match those of the dominant population, thereby closing the gap. Over time, however, we discovered that the equity gap calculation did not consistently measure what we intended. In some years, the gap narrowed because dominant population outcomes

declined, not because vulnerable student outcomes improved. In other instances, both populations improved, but dominant student gains outpaced those of vulnerable students, resulting in a persistent gap despite meaningful progress.

This misalignment between the metric and our intent has resulted in our pre-defined mission fulfillment not being met. However, a closer annual specific examination of disaggregated outcomes tells a more complete story. Four of six key indicators for vulnerable populations have improved compared to the baseline cohort seven years ago. Most notably, fall-to-fall retention for historically underrepresented students increased from 58.4% to 66.8% (+8.4 points). Retention gains were also evident for part-time students (+4.7 points) and Pell recipients (+7.7 points). Completion outcomes for part-time students improved (+4.7 points), even as completion rates for historically underrepresented students and Pell recipients declined slightly.

While the technical measure of mission fulfillment was not achieved, the underlying objective, to improve student success outcomes for vulnerable students, has produced meaningful gains, particularly in first-year retention. This experience has strengthened our commitment to refining how we measure equity while continuing the work of expanding opportunity and success for all students.

Response to Outstanding Recommendations

Not applicable, SPSCC does not have any outstanding recommendations.



Standard 1.A Institutional Mission

Standard 1.A: Institutional Mission

1.A.1

The institution's mission statement defines its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement.

On May 13, 2010, the Board of Trustees [reviewed](#) SPSCC's [mission statement](#), defining our primary objectives as an institution. The mission was reevaluated as part of the current strategic plan and [adopted](#) by the Board of Trustees June 11, 2019. This mission serves as the guiding principle for every campus initiative and is the basis for the seven-year strategic plan, resource allocation through the biennial planning, and daily operations. Furthermore, our vision, value statement, and commitment to diversity statement expand upon this foundation, underscoring our dedication to providing an impactful, student-focused educational experience.

Mission

SPSCC's mission is to support student success in postsecondary academic transfer and workforce education that responds to the needs of the South Sound region.

Vision

SPSCC supports student success and builds prosperity by collaborating with leaders in industry, education, and our community to offer innovative, accessible, and affordable learning experiences. We employ devoted people who mirror the diversity of our community and contribute to an inclusive, welcoming environment. By investing in the creativity of our staff and faculty, we construct clear and compelling pathways that lead our students to successful outcomes on their educational journeys. We are fiscally strong, and our mindful use of technology embedded in purposeful instruction helps students persist and achieve their academic goals. Our graduating class reflects the community we serve, and our students successfully transition from higher learning into the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

Values

- **Pursues excellence** – We use our resources responsibly and ethically in pursuit of excellence. We continuously improve our programs, services, and operations.
- **Operates in an atmosphere of accountability and respect** – We work cooperatively in taking on challenges, making good decisions, helping each other be successful, and promoting a respectful, open, and safe communication.
- **Responds to and partners with the communities we serve** – We continually monitor and are responsive to the community's changing needs in an increasingly global economy. We seek opportunities for effective partnerships with community members, businesses, and organizations.

- **Fosters inclusiveness at our campuses** – We honor diversity and encourage compassion for individual expression. We promote inclusiveness and equity on our campus and in the community.
- **Provides student-centered education** – We facilitate student success by maximizing learning opportunities and reducing barriers. We provide resources to support students in achieving their goals.

Diversity Statement

SPSCC is a learning community that embodies social justice, equity, and inclusion. The College seeks to empower students, faculty, and staff to fully participate in a society of increasingly diverse identities and experiences. SPSCC actively works to eliminate all forms of discrimination and provide an education that reflects the diversity of our community and a deeper understanding of the dynamics of power and privilege that perpetuate inequity and inequality.

Strategic Plan

The 2019-26 SPSCC [strategic plan](#) was [adopted](#) by the Board of Trustees on June 11, 2019. The three core themes of the strategic plan are: (1) Student Achievement, (2) Equity, and (3) Learning and Engagement. The core themes are measured by seven goals and 20 indicators of achievement.

Self-Analysis

The next cycle of the strategic plan will begin in Fall 2027. As part of this work, the college's mission, vision, and values will be reviewed. The expectation is that the strategic plan will align with the NWCCU accreditation cycle.

Exhibits 1.A.1: Key Evidence

- Mission | Vision | Values: [Webpage](#)
- Diversity Statement | Strategic Plan: [Webpage](#)
- Board of Trustees Review: [May 13, 2010](#) | [June 11, 2019](#)



Standard 1.B
Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Standard 1.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

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.

Institutional Effectiveness

SPSCC demonstrates a comprehensive, systematic, and continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness that is led by [shared governance](#) and integrates strategic planning, operational planning, and unit level planning. These processes are intentionally designed to inform decision-making, guide resource allocation, and improve student learning and achievement.

Strategic Plan and Core Themes

SPSCC's assessment of institutional effectiveness is anchored in its mission, vision, values, and commitment to diversity and implemented through the [strategic plan](#), which is organized around three core themes that reflect and measure mission fulfillment:

1. **Student Achievement:** We prepare students for further education and employment.
2. **Equity:** Given the diversity of our changing community, we cultivate an environment that reduces barriers and removes equity gaps.
3. **Learning and Engagement:** We create accessible and enriching student experiences.

These three core themes provide a common framework for planning, assessment, and improvement activities across the institution. The core themes, along with their associated goals and indicators of achievement, are developed, reviewed, and refined through established shared governance structures and are used consistently to guide institutional priorities and actions.

Strategic Planning and Ongoing Assessment

Every seven years, SPSCC conducts a comprehensive [strategic planning process](#) that aligns with the NWCCU accreditation cycle, includes a review and, when appropriate, revision of the mission, vision, values, commitment to diversity, and core themes. This process also establishes strategic goals and measurable indicators of achievement for each core theme. The most recent strategic planning process was conducted during winter and spring 2019 and was facilitated by an external consultant to ensure broad engagement and structured dialogue (kickoff [agenda](#) and [presentation](#)).

The Strategic Planning Committee—comprising executive leadership, members of the President’s Advisory Group (PAG), Institutional Effectiveness Committee representatives, and student government leaders—developed initial drafts of the core themes and strategic goals for each theme. These drafts were shared with the college community through many engagement sessions, providing multiple opportunities for feedback and refinement. Indicators of achievement were developed by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and designed to ensure they were meaningful, assessable, and verifiable. Each indicator was selected to assess student achievement, equity, and student learning and engagement. The indicators were reviewed through the shared governance process, the Executive Team, and the Board of Trustees. The strategic plan was adopted by the Board of Trustees in spring 2019.

Integrated Planning Structures

Throughout the seven-year life of the strategic plan, SPSCC faculty and staff are invited to engage in continuous review of progress toward mission fulfillment through the operational planning process, ensuring that planning remains evidence-informed and responsive to institutional priorities.

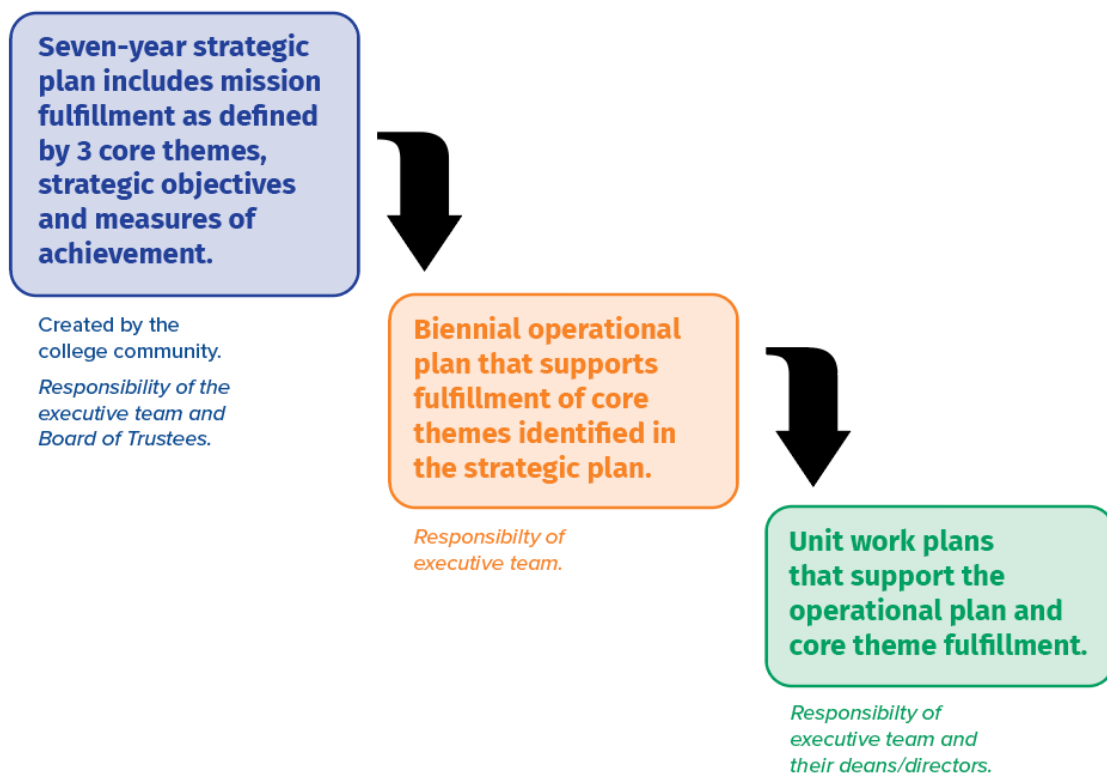
SPSCC’s institutional effectiveness framework is operationalized through an aligned set of planning and assessment processes led by the PAG and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, institutionally labeled operational planning:

- **Strategic Plan:** Establishes core themes, strategic goals, and measurable indicators of achievement through a college-wide, facilitated process. The strategic plan's measurable indicators are evaluated annually and shared with the college community through the operational planning process. The Board of Trustees monitors the strategic plan annually by presentation and has the opportunity to provide feedback. The strategic plan status is available to the public on a public-facing [dashboard](#), and a detailed Institutional Effectiveness report is generated annually and is available on the website.
- **[Biennial Operational Plan](#):** Serves as the primary mechanism for implementing strategies aligned with the core themes. The plan is developed collaboratively during the first year of each biennium and is created by a shared governance process. Faculty, staff, and administrators participate in open [planning forums](#) facilitated by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, where institutional [core theme data and peer data](#) are reviewed, areas needing focused improvement are identified, and proposed strategies are developed. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee collects and prioritizes these strategies, working collaboratively with the PAG to ensure alignment with core theme indicators, equity priorities, and institutional capacity. The prioritized strategy list is sent to the Executive Team for review, budget allocation, and unit plan development. The operational plan is approved by the Board of Trustees. The [operational plan](#) is shared with the college community. Progress is reviewed quarterly by the Executive Team and annually by the Board of Trustees. A [formal assessment](#) of accomplishments and

areas requiring focused improvement is completed by the Executive Team at the end of each biennium.

- **Annual Unit Work Plans:** Institutional effectiveness is further supported through annual unit work plans developed by major work units under the supervision of Executive Team members. Units review progress throughout the biennium and assess outcomes at its conclusion, reinforcing the connection between institutional priorities, assessment results, and daily practice. Examples: [Student Services](#), [Instruction](#)

These aligned planning processes create a coherent structure that connects institutional goals, unit-level work, assessment results, and resource allocation.



To complement institutional-level planning, SPSCC systematically collects and analyzes disaggregated data to inform targeted improvements in student success and support services. These data sources include:

- A quarterly [student experience survey](#)
- The [graduation survey](#)
- Identification of [high-enrollment, low-success courses](#) with an annual plan for improvement
- Disaggregated [course success data](#)

These data are routinely reviewed by faculty, staff, and administrators and are used to identify equity gaps, prioritize interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

Student Learning Assessment

Student learning assessment is done by faculty through a three-year process called the Data Analysis and Action Plan (DAAP). The process is a review of program and course data by student demographics and a systematic review of the 5 College-Wide Abilities (CWAs). This process is detailed in standard 1.C.5.

Self-Analysis

Over the past seven years, SPSCC has intentionally developed a systematic framework for institutional effectiveness. Assessment processes are embedded within strategic planning, biennial operational planning, and unit-level work plans, creating a clear and coherent link between mission fulfillment, evidence, action, and resource allocation. Evaluation is ongoing, structured, and widely understood across the institution.

Faculty, staff, administrators, students, and the Board of Trustees engage in the College's continuous improvement cycle through established shared governance structures to review findings, set priorities, and allocate resources. Student success, examined through both achievement and equity lenses, remains central to institutional decision-making. Assessment at SPSCC is a mature, evidence-informed practice that strengthens institutional practices and student outcomes.

Exhibits 1.B.1: Key Evidence

- Shared Governance: [Overview](#) | [Committee Membership](#)
- Strategic Plan: [Strategic Plan Process](#) | [Kickoff Agenda](#) | [Presentation](#) | [Strategic Plan](#) | [Dashboard](#) | [IE Report](#)
- Operational Plan: [Planning Forums](#) | [Data Review](#) | [2024-26 Operational Plan](#) | [2022-24 Operational Plan Final](#)
- Annual Unit Plans: [Student Services](#) | [Instruction](#)
- 2026 Board of Trustees: [Presentation](#)
- Surveys: [Student Experience](#) | [Graduation](#)
- Course Data: [High-Enrollment](#), [Low-Success](#) | [Course Success](#)
- Student Learning Assessment: Refer to evidence in Standard 1.C.5

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.

As described in Standard 1.B.1, SPSCC's mission fulfillment framework is structured around three institutionally defined core themes—Student Achievement, Equity, and Learning and Engagement—which were developed collaboratively by faculty, staff,

administrators, and the Board of Trustees. Each core theme includes clearly articulated goals supported by measurable indicators that assess progress toward mission fulfillment and guide continuous improvement for student success.

Goals and Indicators of Mission Fulfillment

The SPSCC's strategic plan has three core themes, seven goals, and twenty indicators of achievement:

1. Core Theme 1 – Student Achievement

We prepare students for further education and employment.

1.1. Increase student persistence

- 1.1.1. Student transition from prior basic skills into pre-college math
- 1.1.2. Student transition from 0 to 15 college-level credits within the year
- 1.1.3. Student transition from 30 to 45 college-level credits within the year
- 1.1.4. Students complete a college-level math course within their first academic year
- 1.1.5. Students are continuously enrolled during their first academic year

1.2. Increase certificate and degree completion in transfer and workforce programs

- 1.2.1. Students graduate with a degree/certificate within 3 years

1.3. Increase job placement for workforce education students

- 1.3.1. Workforce students are employed within 12 months after completion/graduation

2. Core Theme 2 – Equity

Given the diversity of our changing community, we cultivate an environment that reduces barriers and removes equity gaps.

2.1. Close equity gaps

2.1.1. Achievement gap: Fall-to-fall retention

- a) Comparison between full and part-time students
- b) Comparison between historically underrepresented and Caucasian/Asian students
- c) Comparison between students who receive need-based financial aid and students who do not receive need-based financial aid

2.1.2. Achievement gap: 3-year completion

- a) Comparison between full and part-time students
- b) Comparison between historically underrepresented and Caucasian/Asian students
- c) Comparison between students who receive need-based financial aid and students who do not receive need-based financial aid

2.1.3. Proportion of historically underrepresented graduates mirrors the fall enrollments of historically underrepresented students

2.2. Increase the ethnic diversity of faculty, staff, and administrative/exempt employees

- 2.2.1. Faculty by ethnic demographics
- 2.2.2. Classified staff by ethnic demographics
- 2.2.3. Administrative/exempt staff by ethnic demographics

3. Core Theme 3 – Learning and Engagement

We create accessible and enriching student experiences.

- 3.1. Enhance general education competency
 - 3.1.1. Students who meet the College-Wide Abilities
- 3.2. Enhance quality student experiences and campus life activities
 - 3.2.1. Student satisfaction with student life activities
 - 3.2.2. Student satisfaction with campus support services

The Board of Trustees has identified mission fulfillment for SPSCC as 80% of core theme indicators above the initial baseline measurement or meeting the intended mission fulfillment targets. In spring 2026, the final year of the strategic plan, the mission fulfillment indicators of achievement reflect a 60% institution mission fulfillment rate. We monitor the progress toward mission fulfillment through the [strategic plan dashboard](#), which provides transparent, color-coded mission fulfillment status indicators that are developed from verifiable data sources. Furthermore, the progress of mission fulfillment is reviewed during the operational planning process.

Use of Data and Benchmarking

SPSCC uses institutional student achievement data to evaluate persistence, retention, completion, post-college outcomes, equity gaps among student populations, student learning, and student engagement. To contextualize performance, SPSCC benchmarks institutional outcomes against [regional](#) and [national](#) peer institutions. The [peer selection process](#) was developed by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and is detailed in standard 1.D.3. Regional benchmarking relies on student achievement data from the SBCTC and is aligned to Core Theme 1 indicators of achievement, which creates value for benchmarking. For regional comparisons, SPSCC identified five peer colleges using explicit and replicable criteria, including enrollment size, student demographics, instructional mix (transfer and professional technical), Running Start participation, and geographic proximity. The publicly available dashboard on the Institutional Research website is disaggregated by demographics aligned with the College's strategic priority populations.

In addition, SPSCC uses a transparent, data-informed national peer methodology using NCES and College Scorecard data to identify public, predominantly associate-degree institutions with comparable size, mission, and student demographics. From an initial pool of approximately 200 colleges, four comparable peers were selected for ongoing benchmarking, along with an outcomes-based aspirational peer to inform our retention and completion outcomes. Comparisons use publicly available retention and completion data to ensure transparency and replicability.

Communication and Campus Engagement

Mission fulfillment goals, progress, and areas requiring focused attention are widely shared and discussed across the institution. Every two years, the College engages in a biennial [operational planning process](#) that invites broad participation from faculty, staff, and administrators to review progress, identify improvement areas, and develop strategies aligned with the institutional core themes. The [summary](#) of the operational planning sessions, along with a list of prioritized strategies for consideration in the operational plan, is presented to the Executive Team. A new [biennial plan](#) is launched during Kickoff Week, which includes the President's address, faculty in-service, workshops, and a garden party to celebrate our successes and build community.

Self-Analysis

Strategic plan indicators are systematically monitored through the public dashboard, benchmarked against clearly defined regional and national peers, and reviewed through biennial operational planning and Board of Trustees engagement. This alignment ensures that data are not only collected, but actively discussed, interpreted, and used to guide action.

As SPSCC prepares for the next strategic planning cycle, the institution will build on this foundation in three focused ways. First, we will refine select equity indicators to prioritize direct improvement in outcomes for specific strategic populations, strengthening precision and actionability while maintaining our commitment to equity gap analysis. Second, we will expand measurements of post-college outcomes to include transfer rates, baccalaureate attainment, and workforce wages to more fully capture student success beyond completion at SPSCC. Third, we will continue strengthening campus engagement through routine review of publicly accessible institutional dashboards and operational planning forums that connect data to strategy and resource allocation.

Exhibits 1.B.2: Key Evidence

- [Strategic Plan Dashboard](#)
- Peer Comparison: [Peer Selection Process](#) | [Regional Peer Dashboard](#) | [National Peer Dashboard](#)
- Operational Planning: [Process](#) | [Summary](#)

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.

SPSCC's planning processes are intentionally inclusive and provide multiple, structured opportunities for meaningful participation by faculty, staff, and administrators. As described in 1.B.1, the College's [strategic planning process](#) engages broad constituencies, including students and external community leaders, in the development and ongoing review of the mission, core themes, goals, objectives, and measurable indicators of achievement to define mission fulfillment.

The biennial [operational planning process](#) serves as the primary mechanism for translating strategic plan core theme goals into actionable, resourced strategies to improve institutional effectiveness and student achievement, particularly in areas where performance indicators are below mission fulfillment. This process engages the college community through open college [planning forums](#) facilitated by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. These forums provide opportunities for campus-wide reflection on progress. The initial step is communicating the purpose of operational planning and sending out the publicly available links of disaggregated core theme data ([Core Theme 1](#), [Core Theme 2](#), and [Core Theme 3](#)) as a primer for the scheduled forums. Scheduled forum presentation of [core theme indicator data](#) led to the creation of proposed strategies for improvement.

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee collects and synthesizes all community-generated strategies along with strategies from the prior operational plan. In collaboration with the PAG, the committee reviews, refines, and prioritizes proposed strategies before forwarding [recommendations](#) to the Executive Team during the first year of the biennium. Each approved operational plan strategy is then:

1. Reviewed by the Executive Team using current institutional data and the area needing the most improvement;
2. Allocated appropriate resources;
3. Explicitly aligned to core theme objectives and measurable achievement indicators; and
4. Assigned to an Executive Team member responsible for coordination, implementation, and reporting.
5. The operational plan is finalized and approved by the Board of Trustees.
6. The [final plan](#) is communicated to the college community during Kickoff Week.

Implementation and effectiveness of operational plan strategies are monitored through a structured review cycle over the two-year plan. The Executive Team reviews progress quarterly, while the Board of Trustees conducts an annual review focused on trends, outcomes, and overall performance within the seven-year strategic planning cycle. During Board reviews, Executive Team members present evidence of unit-level strategies implemented to improve outcomes.

Self-Analysis

Overall, SPSCC demonstrates broad-based, transparent, and evidence-informed processes that actively engage our campus community, align resource allocation with institutional priorities, and lead to measurable improvements in institutional effectiveness. The College's planning framework ensures that community input is systematically collected, analyzed, and incorporated into decision-making; that strategies are explicitly tied to mission fulfillment indicators and that progress is continuously monitored and communicated. The sustained use of both technology-enabled and in-person engagement, strengthened during and beyond the pandemic,

further demonstrates institutional commitment to inclusive participation, continuous improvement, and shared accountability for student success.

Exhibits 1.B.3: Key Evidence

- [Strategic Planning Process](#)
- Operational Planning: [Process](#) | [Planning Forums](#) | [Recommendations](#) | [Board of Trustees Approval](#) | [Final Plan](#)
- Operation Planning Data: Disaggregated Core Themes ([Core Theme 1](#), [Core Theme 2](#), and [Core Theme 3](#)) | [Presentations](#)

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.

SPSCC continuously and systematically monitors both its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging trends that inform institutional planning, program development, and service delivery. The College intentionally aligns its educational offerings with the evolving needs of local employers, state agencies, and regional economic priorities, recognizing that these partners represent the primary employment sectors for SPSCC graduates. SPSCC also acknowledges the significant role of local tribal governments in regional economic development and actively partners with tribal communities to support workforce and enterprise growth.

The CCE division at SPSCC is located on the Lacey Campus and serves the region by delivering high-quality, non-credit instruction and consulting tailored to both professional and personal growth. CCE delivered educational content to more than 4,900 community members in 2024-25. Beyond providing essential “just-in-time” training for community organizations, the division acts as a cornerstone for community engagement through its personal enrichment programs. Our comprehensive suite of services supports lifelong learning and professional advancement across a diverse range of categories, including:

- Career and Professional Development: Training in specific topical areas, including project management and leadership development.
- Certifications: Professional non-credit certifications such as Flagger certification and CPR/AED/First Aid certification.
- Technology Training: Specialized instruction in industry-standard software and systems, including Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office
- Personal Enrichment: Lifelong learning opportunities in Food & Drink; Health, Fitness & Wellness; Creative Arts; and Personal Interest.

- Customized Training: Tailored educational solutions designed to meet the organizational needs of our local business community.
- Corporate Consulting: Connecting organizations with specialized consultants for targeted projects. Recent collaborations include:
 - Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC): Quality Assurance Services for Access Database Replacement Project
 - WA State Human Rights Commission (HRC): Project Management Services for Case Management Database
 - WA State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF): Support remediation in Integration for One Washington project design, programming, and testing services
 - Office of the Attorney General (ATG): SharePoint Administrative Services

The College's Lacey Campus is co-located with the Thurston County Economic Development Council (EDC), reinforcing a long-standing, integrated partnership focused on regional workforce development. For more than a decade, SPSCC and the EDC have co-led the Business and Innovation Center and the Small Business Development Center, providing education and training aligned with local business needs. SPSCC also maintains a close partnership with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce, which supports regional economic development and facilitates connections between employers and SPSCC graduates. In summer 2025, SPSCC and the Chamber formalized this collaboration and are finalizing an agreement to expand paid internship opportunities for students. In partnership with the City of Tumwater, SPSCC jointly developed a Craft Brewing and Distilling program to revitalize a historic regional industry impacted by the closure of the Olympia Brewery.

To further inform program alignment, SPSCC has engaged consultant Jason Robertson over the past seven years to conduct regional labor market and employment gap studies. The [most recent study](#), presented to the Board of Trustees in April 2025, confirmed strong alignment between SPSCC's current program offerings and regional workforce needs, while identifying continued growth in healthcare, particularly Registered Nursing and Business Administration. In response, instructional leadership expanded the associate degree in Nursing by increasing daytime capacity and launching evening and weekend pathways. Additionally, SPSCC is actively collaborating with tribal partners to explore the development of an applied bachelor's degree in Hospitality and Tribal Enterprises, designed to support the business and operational needs of tribally owned enterprises across the region.

Beyond required workforce advisory committees, which include employer and labor representation and meet at least twice annually, SPSCC has implemented structured "visioning events" (Example: [Dental](#) and [Computer Science](#)) to deepen employer engagement when programs require a comprehensive review or when enrollment declines despite sustained workforce demand. These facilitated sessions convene regional employers across multiple industry sectors and intentionally center on listening.

Employers identify future job roles, first-year workforce competencies, and emerging industry trends. The resulting knowledge, skills, and abilities directly inform program learning outcomes, curriculum revisions, and advisory committee membership, ensuring programs remain relevant and responsive.

In support of transfer pathways, SPSCC maintains active partnerships with regional universities, including St. Martin's University, The Evergreen State College, Washington State University–Vancouver, and the University of Washington–Tacoma. To inform post-SPSCC transfer outcomes, SPSCC commissioned a year-long research study examining student transfer trajectories and outcomes. Findings from the [transfer study](#) will guide institutional planning and targeted strategies to improve post-completion success at 4-year universities. Beginning in summer 2025, SPSCC expanded its emphasis on early transfer commitment through Accelerated Transfer Agreements (Example: [Evergreen College](#)) that are unique to each institution, reinforcing seamless transitions to bachelor's-degree completion.

- **University of Washington Tacoma (UWT):**
SPSCC partners with UWT to support students in completing an associate degree and transferring in junior standing, major-ready. Through a shared admissions advising position employed by UWT and housed in SPSCC's Advising, Career, and Transfer Center, students receive direct guidance on course selection, program prerequisites, admissions, and financial aid. This collaboration is designed to create a seamless transfer pathway. Students may transfer into any UWT program for which they meet the prerequisite requirements.
- **Washington State University Vancouver (WSU Vancouver):**
SPSCC's agreement with WSU Vancouver includes Assured Admission for students who complete all degree and program requirements with a minimum 2.0 GPA. While this guarantees university admission, it does not ensure entry into a specific major. Students must declare transfer intent by their fourth quarter at SPSCC and meet quarterly with SPSCC and WSU advisors to remain on track. Additionally, a dual enrollment pathway in Nursing allows students to earn an associate degree while progressing seamlessly toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.
 - **UW and WSU Agreements – Accountability and Communication:**
Both the UW and WSU agreements include formal expectations for tracking student outcomes and maintaining ongoing communication with students to ensure academic progress and successful transfer.
- **The Evergreen State College – Guaranteed Admission Program:**
SPSCC's Guaranteed Admission Program with The Evergreen State College provides early admission decisions and coordinated quarterly advising between Evergreen advisors and SPSCC educational planners. Students must declare transfer intent by their fourth quarter, maintain continuous enrollment, and earn a minimum 2.0 GPA (sufficient for general admission but not necessarily for

specific majors). Students may transfer with at least 45 college-level credits. Unlike the UW and WSU agreements, this partnership focuses on specified pathways, including Biology, Business, Government Relations, Public Administration and Law, Computer Science, Social Services, and Education, in addition to a general transfer option.

The College has a [shared governance](#) model that provides the executive team with actionable advice. Part of the model identifies [ongoing committees](#) that serve to monitor internal trends and patterns. The Instructional Council (IC) and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee are discussed throughout this report. However, there are many other committees which provide critical information for monitoring our institutional internal and external environment. A sample of committees includes:

- The Diversity and Equity Committee is tasked with ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles and processes are developed in support of belonging for students and employees (Example: [Agenda](#)). A key component is the annual [Campus Equity Symposium](#) in winter quarter. This is an opportunity for the entire college to come together for a day of learning.
- The PAG is a partner with the Institutional Effectiveness Committee for the operational planning process. Another key task for PAG is providing input for policy development and budget recommendations to the President and executive team (Example: [Agenda/Minutes](#)).
- The Mental Health Committee provides supports for our students and the necessary education for students, faculty, and staff to increase our knowledge, skills, and habits in support of mental well-being. The [Healthy Minds Study](#) was administered in 2024, and its results were shared with the campus community in 2025. The initial administration of this validated, national study provided SPSCC with a detailed picture of mental health and related issues of our students. Using the results of this study, the Committee is developing a framework to address the most pressing findings from the study.
- The SPSCC Safety Committee is responsible for reviewing safety and inspection reports, the identification and mitigation of unsafe conditions or practices (Example: [Agenda/Minutes](#)).

Internally, SPSCC monitors student needs and expectations through multiple feedback mechanisms, including the [student experience survey](#), student government engagement, course evaluations, and quarterly meetings between students and the executive team. During these meetings, students present survey findings (Examples: [Fall 2024](#) and [Spring 2025](#)) and collaborate with leadership to identify solutions. Progress updates are shared at subsequent meetings, ensuring accountability and continuous responsiveness.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC demonstrates a continuous and systematic approach to monitoring both internal and external environments to inform institutional direction. Workforce alignment is

supported through formal labor market analyses, active employer advisory committees, structured visioning events, and long-standing partnerships with regional economic leaders, tribal governments, and transfer institutions. The CCE division further strengthens community responsiveness through just-in-time training and customized consulting services.

Internally, shared governance committees and structured student feedback mechanisms ensure trends in student experience, safety, equity, and well-being are regularly elevated to executive leadership and integrated into planning. Evidence of responsiveness is reflected in program expansions (Nursing), new program exploration (Hospitality and Tribal Enterprises), strengthened transfer agreements, and expanded internship pathways.

This ongoing and intentional review of internal and external trends, carried out through our shared governance and planning processes, ensures that data and community input meaningfully guide our priorities and continuous improvement efforts.

Exhibits 1.B.4: Key Evidence

- [Regional Labor Market Report](#)
- Visioning Event: [Dental](#) | [Computer Science](#)
- [Transfer Study Report](#)
- Accelerated Transfer Agreements Example: [Evergreen](#)
- Shared Governance: [Overview](#) | [Committee Membership](#)
- [Campus Equity Symposium](#)
- Committee Agendas/Minutes: [DEI](#) | [PAG](#) | [Safety](#)
- [Healthy Minds Study](#)
- [Student Experience Survey](#)
- Survey Findings: [Fall 2024](#) | [Spring 2025](#)



Standard 1.C
Student Learning

Standard 1.C: Student Learning

1.C.1

The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

Program Content and Rigor

SPSCC's instructional programs support the college mission of student success in postsecondary academic transfer and professional technical education that responds to the needs of the South Sound region. Academic degrees and professional technical certificates and degrees are offered at the Olympia, Lacey, Craft Brewing and Distilling, and Angela Bowen Center for Health Education campuses. Assurance of program content and rigor is achieved through multiple, integrated processes described throughout Standard 1.C.

Transfer Programs

The College offers associate degree programs for transfer that align with statewide articulation agreements and lead to baccalaureate and advanced degrees in relevant fields of study upon transfer. These include the Associate in Arts–Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA); Associate of Arts–Major Related Programs (MRP-DTAs) in Biology, Nursing, Pre-Nursing, Computer Science, and Business, and the Associate of Science–Transfer Degree (AS-T), Tracks 1 and 2. All degree programs and program degree requirements are available in the college catalog ([online](#) and [print list pages 10-12](#)).

Faculty determines transfer course content, sequencing, and academic rigor in accordance with statewide transfer agreements and the Washington State [Intercollege Relations Commission](#) (ICRC), comprised of admission personnel from all Washington State community and technical colleges, Independent Colleges of Washington, and public universities. This process is guided by the [IRCR Handbook](#) and its [Inter-College Reciprocity Policy](#). By aligning curriculum with recognized fields of study and upper-division requirements within a pathways model, faculty ensure that course rigor and learning outcomes are intentionally designed to prepare students for transfer and success in baccalaureate-level coursework. All transfer or general education courses aligned with the statewide degree agreements are reviewed and approved by the college's IC.

Professional Technical Programs

SPSCC offers professional technical associate degrees and certificates, including the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) and Associate in Applied Science–Transfer (AAS-

T). All programs are reviewed and approved by the College's IC and Board of Trustees and comply with requirements established by the SBCTC.

Program content and rigor are developed and validated through active professional technical advisory committees, composed of local business and industry representatives, labor partners, program faculty, and ex officio student members. Faculty use advisory committee input to ensure programs reflect current industry standards, workforce expectations, and evolving regional needs. Graduates are prepared with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for immediate employment or continued education.

Several professional-technical programs are further guided by specialized accrediting or regulatory bodies. These external standards provide an additional layer of quality assurance and reinforce the rigor, relevance, and disciplinary alignment of program learning outcomes. The programs and their respective bodies are as follows:

- Automotive Technology: The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence Education Foundation
- Culinary Arts: The American Culinary Federation
- Dental Assisting: The Commission on Dental Accreditation
- Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary: The Dental Quality Assurance Commission
- Medical Assisting: The Medical Assisting Education Review Board by the Commission on Accreditation for Allied Health Education Programs
- Nursing: Washington State Department of Health Nursing Commission, National League for Nursing

Student Learning Outcomes and Systematic Review

Identification, alignment, and approval of student learning outcomes for transfer and professional and technical courses and programs are overseen by the IC. The IC has several subcommittees supporting the work of ensuring learning competencies: course review, student learning assessment, map review, and the policy subcommittee. The subcommittees are comprised primarily of faculty, with participation from Student Services within several of the subcommittees.

[CWAs](#) have been a foundational component of teaching and learning at SPSCC since 2007 and are recognized as essential general education learning outcomes embedded across all degree programs. The CWAs were reviewed, revised, and approved by the IC in October 2022, reaffirming their relevance to institutional learning expectations. Since 2020, SPSCC has systematically integrated CWAs into the Canvas learning management system, enabling disaggregated analysis of CWA attainment by course, program, and student demographic groups. This integration allows faculty to examine specific CWAs within individual courses and across student populations. [Early analyses](#) demonstrated consistently high levels of student attainment, and the use of CWA data [continues to mature](#) as faculty refine assessment practices and determine which data most effectively inform pedagogy and instructional improvement. Collectively, the CWAs

articulate core competencies identified by faculty and employers as critical to academic success, career readiness, and responsible participation in a diverse and global society, and they apply to all SPSCC degrees and certificates.

Professional technical programs establish program-level learning outcomes aligned with industry expectations and accrediting standards, in addition to ensuring CWA learning. Each program publishes learning outcomes on the website and the college catalog in their respective areas (Example: [Program Learning Outcome](#)). Course-level learning outcomes are defined for all credit courses, created in CourseLeaf using a [pre-defined form](#). Together, CWAs, program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes are intentionally aligned to provide students with a coherent and progressive learning experience.

Courses undergo [cyclical review](#) every five years by the Course Review subcommittee. Student learning assessment is led by the Student Learning Assessment subcommittee and reviews program and department-level learning assessment on a [three-year cycle](#). These reviews evaluate content relevance, and sequencing, and alignment with transfer requirements or workforce expectations, ensuring continuous improvement and sustained academic quality.

Guided Pathways and Program Coherence

SPSCC is deeply engaged in the national and state Guided Pathways framework. Faculty, in collaboration with educational planners, have developed and refined pathway maps that clearly sequence coursework and reduce barriers to completion. These maps are reviewed by the IC's Map Review subcommittee and approved by the IC. Each program's pathway map is published on the website in the respective program area (Example: [Pathway Map](#)). Pathway implementation is informed by ongoing research from the CCRC and reinforces curricular coherence, appropriate pacing, and intentional learning progression across programs of study.

Corporate and Continuing Education

Content and rigor for CCE offerings are developed collaboratively by the College's CCE Center and regional business and industry partners. Courses are customized to meet employer-identified skill needs and workforce training priorities while maintaining clear learning expectations.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC maintains a systematic, faculty-driven framework to ensure that instructional programs demonstrate appropriate content, rigor, and alignment with recognized fields of study. Through integrated oversight by the IC, regular program review cycles, active industry advisory committees, external accreditation where applicable, and Guided Pathways implementation, the College ensures that students experience coherent, rigorous learning pathways that support successful transfer, employment, and lifelong learning.

Exhibits 1.C.1: Key Evidence

- Program Degree Requirements: [Catalog](#) | [Website](#)
- Transfer Institution Alignment: [Intercollege Relations Commission](#)
- Institutional Learning Outcome (CWAs): [Rubric](#) | [Dashboard](#)
- Program Student Learning Example: [Business Administration](#) | [Biology](#)
- Pathway Map Example: [Business Administration](#) | [Biology](#)
- Learning Content and Rigor: [Course Review Cycle](#) | [Assessment Schedule](#)

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 syntheses of learning.

Awards of Credit, Degrees, and Certificates

SPSCC awards credit, certificates, and degrees based on documented student achievement that is demonstrated through clearly defined course, program, and college-wide student learning outcomes. Credit and grades are awarded in accordance with the College's Grading Policy ([INST712](#)), which establishes consistent, transparent standards for evaluating student learning and is published in the [college catalog](#) (p. 191), and each [course syllabi](#) contains a grading and assignments section. Graduation requirements for all degree and certificate programs, course requirements, learning outcomes, and credits are defined within each program description within the publicly available [college catalog](#), ensuring students and the public have accurate and accessible information regarding academic expectations.

SPSCC's courses, learning outcomes, grading policies, and credentials are recognized by the SBCTC. The college adheres to all statewide direct transfer agreements, including DTAs, MRPs, and Associate in Science-Transfer degrees. Professional technical degrees and certificates meet [SBCTC requirements](#) and, where applicable, the standards of external program-specific accrediting bodies. In addition, SPSCC complies with Washington State's Common Course Numbering (CCN) system and statewide reciprocity agreements, ensuring that awarded credit is comparable in content, rigor, and quality across the community and technical college system and facilitating student mobility and transfer.

Academic transfer degrees are aligned with [statewide requirements](#) and undergo external review through the ICRC, the Joint Transfer Council, and transfer-receiving universities, as well as internal review through the College's IC. Professional and technical certificate and degree proposals originate at the instructional program level and are reviewed by program-specific advisory committees composed of industry partners and faculty, ensuring alignment with workforce standards and evolving industry expectations, before final approval by the IC. These layered review processes ensure that all credentials awarded by SPSCC are based on demonstrated student learning and recognized standards of quality.

SPSCC degree and certificate programs demonstrate coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning aligned with the approved course, program, and CWAs learning outcomes. This alignment ensures students progressively build and demonstrate higher levels of learning over time. By degree completion, students are able to integrate and apply knowledge and skills across courses and learning contexts.

The College has fully institutionalized the essential instructional elements of Guided Pathways, scaling these practices across all programs of study. Key elements include:

- **Clearly defined areas of study and pathway maps** that outline required courses, recommended sequencing by quarter, and aligned learning outcomes connected to professional technical program and college-wide abilities. These pathway maps are publicly available on the college website (Example: [Pathway Map](#)) and are used consistently in advising and educational planning.
- **Predictable and student-centered scheduling**, developed annually through a collaborative [scheduling process](#) (p. 55) involving faculty, deans, and educational planners. This process ensures that required courses are offered with sufficient frequency and consistency to support timely program completion.
- **Multiple course modalities**, including face-to-face, hybrid, and fully online delivery, governed by the Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#)), to meet diverse student needs while maintaining instructional quality.
- **Early placement of math and English coursework** within the first 45 credits of each pathway map, ensuring that all students, whether entering at pre-college or college-level, can complete foundational requirements early in their academic journey.
- **High-engagement instructional strategies** created in Universal Design for Learning, with accessible course materials and inclusive teaching practices.
- **Transparent and formative assessment practices**, including low-stakes assessments and the use of Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT) principles, enabling students to clearly understand expectations, evaluation criteria, and connections between learning activities and outcomes ([Example](#)).

The faculty-led Map Review subcommittee applies [procedures](#) and research-informed [checklist criteria](#) to review and approve [pathway maps](#), ensuring appropriate course sequencing, intentional scaffolding of learning, and meaningful opportunities for breadth, depth, and synthesis across each program of study and the students educational experience at SPSCC.

Self-Analysis

Over the past decade, SPSCC has intentionally strengthened the alignment between student learning outcomes, curriculum design, and the awarding of credit and credentials. Faculty-led curriculum development, systematic mapping of learning outcomes, statewide alignment of transfer and professional technical programs, and full implementation of Guided Pathways collectively ensure that degrees and certificates

are awarded based on rigorous, scaffolded, and well-documented student learning. Students are supported by predictable pathways, accessible program information, and coherent degree structures that promote timely completion and meaningful learning.

Exhibits 1.C.2: Key Evidence

- Program Degree Requirements: [Catalog](#) | [Website](#)
- Grading Policy: ([INST712](#)) | [College Catalog](#) (p. 191)
- Program Approval: [SBCTC Process](#) | [Transfer Degree Policies and Procedures](#)
- Course Schedule Development Process: [Scheduling Process](#) (p. 55)
- Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#))
- UDL/TILT: [Example](#)
- Pathway Maps: [Review Process](#)

1.C.3

The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.

Expected Learning Outcomes

SPSCC clearly identifies and publishes expected program and degree outcomes. Program learning outcomes for all degrees are on the [website](#) and in the [catalog](#). To support program-level outcomes, individual course-level outcomes are communicated to students through the course syllabi. In addition to professional technical program-specific learning outcomes, the faculty, through the IC, have established five CWAs that define essential learning expectations for all graduates of SPSCC transfer and professional technical degree programs:

- Analytical reasoning
- Effective communication
- Information literacy
- Multicultural awareness
- Social responsibility

These CWAs represent institutionally shared learning expectations and are intentionally integrated across the curriculum and communicated in each course syllabus. Each CWA is supported by a common [assessment rubric](#) that allows for multiple levels of student attainment and meaningful assessment across diverse disciplines and instructional modalities.

To align outcomes from course-level to program-level, student learning outcomes are developed by faculty using a standardized [course outline template](#) approved by the IC. These course-level outcomes align directly with professional technical program learning outcomes and the CWAs, ensuring coherence from the course-level through the program and institutional level outcomes. Learning outcomes for all credit-bearing

courses are provided to enrolled students through course syllabi, which are distributed in print or electronically and are required to be accessible through Canvas in accordance with the Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#)).

Professional and technical program learning outcomes are developed and regularly reviewed in collaboration with industry partners through advisory committees composed of local and regional employers. These outcomes reflect current workforce expectations and are intentionally mapped to all five of SPSCC's CWAs. Program-level outcomes are documented for each program in the course catalog, and the specific course-level outcomes that roll up to the program-level outcomes ([Example](#)) are embedded in course syllabi ([Example](#)) so students can clearly see how individual courses contribute to both program completion and broader institutional learning expectations.

SPSCC maintains systematic quality assurance processes to ensure the accuracy, clarity, and alignment of published learning outcomes. The Course Review Committee oversees a structured review cycle for all courses and conducts annual [syllabus sampling](#) across divisions and disciplines to verify alignment between course learning outcomes, program outcomes, and selected CWAs. When revisions are needed, instructional deans monitor and ensure timely updates to syllabi and course documentation.

To support consistency and transparency, the IC has adopted a formal Syllabus Policy ([INST714](#)) and accompanying procedures. SPSCC uses a standardized [syllabus template](#) that pre-populates required institutional policies and ensures that learning outcomes included in syllabi correspond verbatim with approved course outlines, program outcomes, and CWAs. While individual instructors retain responsibility for course-specific instructional design, this structure ensures students receive uniform, accurate, and clearly articulated learning expectations across all sections and modalities. Current and archived syllabi are maintained in CourseLeaf and are accessible through academic division offices.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC demonstrates a strong and sustained commitment to transparency, consistency, and coherence in communicating expected learning outcomes to students. Faculty intentionally design course learning outcomes that align with program outcomes and CWAs, ensuring students understand what they are expected to know and be able to do at each level of their academic experience. The integration of common rubrics, standardized templates, and systematic review processes reflects an institution-wide approach to quality assurance and student learning.

Exhibits 1.C.3: Key Evidence

- Institutional Learning Outcomes (CWAs): [Rubric](#) | [Dashboard](#)
- Communicating Course Learning Outcomes: [Syllabus Template](#) | [Course Outline Template](#)
- Program Degree Requirements: [Catalog](#) | [Website](#)

- Alignment Example: [Introduction to Machining \(CMT 101\)](#) | [Machining Technologies](#)
- Syllabus Assurance Policy: [INST714](#) | [Audit](#)
- Distance Education Policy: [INST736](#)

1.C.4

The institution's admission and completion or graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public.

Admission and Graduation Requirements

SPSCC's Admission Policy ([STSV201](#)) and procedures along with graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public through the college website and the published college catalog. The [catalog](#) (p. 188) and [website](#) provide comprehensive information on general admission requirements and application procedures. Information for programs with selective admission has the admission process published within the applicable program area both on the website and in the catalog, ensuring transparency and understanding of program expectations. The Nursing program is an example of a selective admission program, and the Nursing admission requirements are found in the [catalog](#) (pp. 82-83) and on the [program webpage](#).

General graduation requirements and student responsibilities are clearly communicated on the college [website](#). Students are required to apply for graduation, and all graduation applications undergo a transcript review to verify completion of degree or certificate requirements prior to award conferral, ensuring academic integrity and consistency in credentialing.

Graduation requirements for all degrees and certificates are published and regularly maintained in the catalog under each program area. In addition, the college website provides detailed program-specific information for each area of study, including pathway maps developed by faculty that outline a recommended quarter-by-quarter course sequence aligned with degree requirements. These pathway maps make program expectations explicit and support timely progression and completion.

SPSCC ensures that students are regularly informed of their progress toward graduation and understand the implications of program changes on completion requirements. Utilizing student success software, Navigate360, college staff and faculty have on-demand and real-time access and visibility into a student's academic progress. The system includes academic program plans that are based on faculty-developed degree program pathway maps, allowing for proactive identification of students who are off track due to course sequencing, changes in program intent, or enrollment patterns, enabling timely advising interventions to redirect students toward on-track completion and success.

Through clear communication, faculty-developed pathway maps, required graduation review processes, and systematic use of degree-planning technology, SPSCC ensures that students are regularly informed of their progress toward graduation and understand the implications of program changes on completion requirements.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC demonstrates a well-defined and student-centered approach to communicating and monitoring admission and graduation requirements. Requirements are written for clarity, published in multiple formats, and supported by structured advising and degree-planning tools. The integration of pathway maps with Navigate360 allows students and educational planners to actively monitor academic progress, identify risks to timely completion, and make informed enrollment decisions throughout a student's academic experience.

Exhibits 1.C.4: Key Evidence

- Admission Policy: [STSV201](#)
- Admission Requirements: [Catalog](#) (p. 188) | [Website](#)
- Select Admission Requirement: Nursing Example, [Catalog](#) (pp. 82-83) | [Program Website](#)
- Graduation Requirements: [Catalog](#)

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.

Effective System of Assessment of Student Learning

SPSCC maintains a comprehensive, faculty-led system of assessment to evaluate and continuously improve the quality of student learning across all instructional programs. Faculty hold primary responsibility for establishing curricula; defining, monitoring, and assessing student learning outcomes; and using assessment results to improve teaching, learning, and program design. While student learning assessment has long been embedded in the classroom experience, SPSCC has, since 2017, intentionally advanced this work into a coordinated, institution-wide assessment system that functions as a structured feedback loop. This [evolution](#), as documented by the Association for the Assessment of Higher Education (AALHE), reflects a deliberate shift from isolated classroom-level assessment activities to a systemic institutional process that integrates faculty inquiry, evidence-based reflection, and continuous improvement.

Faculty assessment of student learning occurs at multiple, intentionally aligned levels: instructor, course, discipline/program, and general education (CWAs). Faculty regularly analyze student outcomes using institutionally developed dashboards (Example: [Course Success](#) and [CWA](#)) that disaggregate results by key demographic characteristics. These analyses inform evidence-based instructional and curricular decisions, including

modifications to course content and sequencing, addition or removal of courses, and comprehensive program revisions to ensure alignment with current disciplinary standards and industry needs.

Assessment practices are continually evaluated for efficacy by faculty. An example is the recent Fall 2025 CWA artifact collection activities, which revealed several key insights, including some gaps in the alignment of course-level outcomes to institutional learning outcomes. Subsequently, faculty have emphasized the need for structured, discipline-specific conversations to realign assessments linked to the CWAs. In collaboration with the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC), faculty have already begun refining assessment prompts, improving CWA rubric alignment, and strengthening artifact submission processes. Looking ahead, SPSCC will continue to integrate CWA artifact collection and analysis systematically into its assessment cycles and use the findings to inform both instructional and curricular modifications. This approach contributes to a shared, evidence-based culture of student learning assessment at SPSCC. Faculty leadership has been central to this progression, guiding both the design and ongoing refinement of assessment practices. SPSCC's fully developed learning assessment framework and processes support continuous improvement by generating evidence used for decision-making at the instructional, program, and institutional levels.

The [Instructional Council](#), a standing shared governance body that comprises primarily of faculty from all academic divisions, and meeting monthly with membership from Student Services leadership, oversees all curriculum and instructional policies and practices. The Council has faculty-led subcommittees that position faculty in the central role of establishing/modifying curricula, assessing student learning, and improving instructional programs. Subcommittees operate on established review cycles, apply defined evaluation criteria, and provide structured feedback and professional learning to support faculty improvement and student learning assessment.

The IC committee structure supporting quality student learning includes:

- **Course Review Committee:** Conducts a comprehensive review of all credit course outlines on a five-year [cycle](#) to ensure currency and alignment with course, program, and CWA learning outcomes. The committee also conducts annual reviews of randomly [sampled syllabi](#) across instructional divisions to verify that course, program, and CWA outcomes published to students accurately reflect approved course outlines and comply with instructional policy established by the IC.
 - [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#)
- **Policy Review Committee:** Reviews, develops, and revises instructional policies using an explicit diversity, equity, and inclusion lens to ensure equitable learning environments and assessment practices.
 - [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda November 2025](#) | [PRC Overview](#)

- **Student Learning Assessment Committee:** Oversees the College's systematic process for assessing student learning at the course, discipline/program, and CWA levels. The committee guides faculty and creates resources for robust student learning assessment. The key process is the three-year cycle, DAAP. The primary resource to inform faculty work is the dashboards, which present disaggregated course data, CWA, and post-college outcome data. Through DAAP, faculty identify patterns of student learning, equity gaps among student groups, and targeted strategies to improve outcomes. Results and actions are documented and monitored over time. The process is discussed in-depth under Standard 1.C.6.
 - [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#) | [Assessment and CWA website](#) | [Internal DAAP Support](#) | [DAAP Overview](#)
- **Map Review Committee:** Implements a structured process for reviewing, revising, or creating pathway maps that clearly sequence quarterly course enrollment leading to degree or certificate completion. Pathway maps are evaluated for coherence, rigor, and alignment with learning outcomes and student success pathways.
 - [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#) | [Update Process](#) | [Checklist](#)

Each committee applies clearly articulated criteria for evaluating curriculum, assessment practices, and learning structures. Committee members also provide training and consultation to faculty, ensuring consistent understanding of assessment expectations and effective implementation of institutional assessment processes.

To further support instructional quality and assessment capacity, the [Center for Teaching and Online Learning](#) (CTOL) provides sustained professional development for faculty. CTOL offers group trainings, faculty-facilitated communities of practice, and individualized consultations focused on effective pedagogy, authentic assessment design, and continuous improvement of student learning experiences. The CTOL calendar of events demonstrates the many opportunities available for faculty.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC demonstrates a mature and sustainable culture of assessment based on faculty leadership, transparent governance, and systematic use of disaggregated data. Assessment is not treated as a compliance activity but as an integral component of instructional improvement. Faculty are supported through clear structures, regular review cycles, professional development, and accessible data tools that promote reflective practice and equity-focused decision-making.

Exhibits 1.C.5: Key Evidence

- [SPSCC Learning Assessment Journey](#) by The Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE)
- College Dashboards: [Course Success](#) | [CWA](#)
- IC: [Handbook](#)

- Course Review Committee: [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#) | [Schedule](#) | [Audit](#)
- Policy Review Committee: [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda November 2025](#) | [PRC Overview](#)
- Student Learning Assessment Committee: [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#) | [Assessment and CWA webpage](#) | [Internal DAAP Support](#) | [DAAP Overview](#)
- Map Review Committee: [2025-26 Membership](#) | [Sample Agenda October 2025](#) | [Update Process](#) | [Checklist](#)
- [CTOL](#)

1.C.6

Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor's 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.

College-Wide Abilities and Institutional Assessment of Student Learning

The SLAC, as part of the IC and in collaboration with CTOL, is the overseeing shared governance body supporting student learning outcome assessment. Together, a [complete assessment process](#) is now fully developed at SPSCC. Each month, the SLAC reviews and refines the assessment process. The work includes continuous dialogue to ensure the process is meaningful for faculty and accurately reflects student learning, training adjunct faculty, and creating space to plan in-service faculty exercises for continuous feedback into the assessment process and how to continually improve the work of assessing student learning.

As described in Standard 1.C.3, SPSCC has established five CWAs that serve as the institutional general education learning outcomes for all associate and bachelor's-level programs:

- Analytical reasoning
- Effective communication
- Information literacy
- Multicultural awareness
- Social responsibility

Each CWA is intentionally leveled, allowing students to demonstrate progressively higher levels of attainment across courses, culminating in established learning outcomes. Each level is defined through a [shared rubric](#) that identifies clear, discipline-agnostic performance characteristics while allowing faculty flexibility in instructional design and assessment methods.

In fall 2025, SPSCC conducted the first of an annual planned series of day-long, faculty-led assessment in-service activities focused on examining authentic samples of student work aligned to CWAs ([faculty presentation](#) and [feedback summary](#)). Faculty from across disciplines engaged in structured dialogue to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing leveling structure used in the DAAP process and to identify opportunities for refinement. The initial session focused on effective communication, with future in-services scheduled to rotate through the remaining CWAs. This cross-disciplinary calibration work strengthens the consistency, validity, and shared understanding of institutional learning outcomes while reinforcing faculty ownership of assessment.

Comprehensive, Faculty-Driven Assessment Process

SPSCC's assessment of student learning extends beyond CWA attainment to include course success, discipline and program completion, professional technical program learning outcomes, and equity-focused outcomes. This comprehensive approach is operationalized through the [DAAP](#) process, implemented college-wide in 2022, and led by the SLAC.

DAAP is a three-year, iterative cycle designed to support continuous improvement, closing the loop on discipline and professional technical program learning outcomes while providing faculty flexibility to address discipline-specific student success priorities at the course, discipline/program, and CWA levels with all outcomes disaggregated by selected demographics. The SLAC provides systematic review and feedback in year 1 and year 3 of the DAAP cycle. The [assessment cycle](#) spans three years, with disciplines/programs divided into three groups, with each group beginning its cycle in a different year. This staggered schedule ensures that committee mentoring and training resources are balanced and can provide meaningful support for data analysis and committee review of the plans in year one and year three. The three-year cycle focus is as follows:

- **Year 1 – Analysis and Planning:** Faculty analyze enrollment patterns, course success rates, program completion, and CWA attainment, disaggregated by age, gender, race/ethnicity, course modality, and Running Start status. Findings inform a two-year action plan aligned with program, institutional, and equity goals ([Biology Year 1](#), [Dental Year 1](#)).
- **Year 2 – Implementation:** Faculty implement planned instructional, curricular, and support strategies.
- **Year 3 – Reflection and Evaluation:** Faculty submit a final summary evaluating outcomes, effectiveness of interventions, and implications for future improvement ([Biology Year 3](#)).

The DAAP process is faculty-driven and inquiry-based, supported collaboratively by deans, the Associate Dean of Student Learning and Assessment, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), and CTOL. Faculty new to the DAAP process receive structured onboarding by the Associate Dean of Student Learning and Assessment and

ongoing support focused on the purpose of the process: ensuring high-quality, equity-minded learning outcomes for all students.

Integration with Planning, Professional Development, and Governance

CWA attainment is an [indicator](#) within Strategic Plan Core Theme 3: Learning and Engagement. Progress is reviewed quarterly by the Executive Team and annually by the Board of Trustees, demonstrating institution-level accountability for student learning outcomes.

In addition to DAAP, faculty conduct an annual review of course-level student success data and/or relevant teaching and learning research as required by the [Faculty Agreement](#) (Article 5.1). These reviews, together with DAAP analyses, directly inform each faculty member's [Professional Development Plan](#) and end-of-year reflection, ensuring alignment between institutional priorities, instructional improvement, and individual faculty growth.

Distinction from Program Closure Processes

Importantly, DAAP is explicitly separated from program closure processes, reinforcing trust and ensuring the focus remains on instructional improvement rather than compliance or elimination. Program viability and closure are addressed through a separate, data-informed process led by deans and the vice-president of instruction, with input from faculty. When low enrollment or declining completions are identified, SPSCC evaluates student outcomes, labor-market demand, and required credentials for entry-level occupations. Where employment demand exists, the College convenes employer visioning events (Example: [Automotive Visioning Event](#) and [Dental Visioning Event](#)) involving faculty, administration, and regional industry partners from Thurston, Pierce, and South King counties. These events inform updated program learning outcomes, curriculum redesign, and long-term advisory committee engagement, further reinforcing the relevance and rigor of SPSCC's instructional programs.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC has implemented multiple program review and assessment models over time in pursuit of a process that is both rigorous and meaningful for faculty. The DAAP framework represents a significant maturation of this work. By centering faculty leadership, integrating equity-focused data, embedding assessment within professional development, and clearly separating improvement from program closure, SPSCC has established a sustainable culture of inquiry focused on student learning and achievement.

Exhibits 1.C.6: Key Evidence

- Institutional Learning Outcomes (CWAs): [Rubric](#) | [Dashboard](#)
- Faculty Assessment Collaboration Example: [Faculty Presentation](#) | [Feedback Summary](#)
- Assessment Process: [DAAP](#) | [Cycle](#)
- Assessment Year 1: [Biology](#) | [Dental](#)
- Assessment Year 3: [Biology](#)

- Assessment Integration to Strategic Plan: [Core Theme 3.1.1](#)
- Visioning Events: [Automotive](#) | [Dental](#)

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.

Institutional Effectiveness and Continuous Improvement

SPSCC has intentionally created a strategic plan with a systematic, institution-wide approach to assessing and improving institutional effectiveness that is entirely focused on student success outcomes. Our strategic plan, comprised of three Core Themes, measures and considers the needs of the “whole” student in achieving student success outcomes. As described in Standards 1.B.1, 1.C.5, and 1.C.6, assessment is fully integrated into the College’s strategic and operational planning processes and is used consistently to inform decision-making, allocate resources, and improve student learning, retention, and completion outcomes.

The College’s two-year [operational planning cycle](#) focuses on Core Theme measures that indicate students’ success and culminates in a structured review by the Executive Team and the broader college community. This process includes analysis of progress toward prior strategies, evaluation of institutional core theme indicator data, and identification of persistent or emerging areas for improvement. Findings from this review directly inform the development of the subsequent operational plan and unit plans, ensuring continuity between evaluation, planning, and action. The instructional unit plans follow the operational plan strategies that align with improving student retention, curricular progress, and completion in all student demographic areas needing attention.

Instructional effectiveness is also supported by a comprehensive, faculty-led system of review and assessment. As documented in Standards 1.C.2, 1.C.5, and 1.C.6, all instructional elements, including CWAs, professional and technical program outcomes, areas-of-study pathway maps, course outcomes, course content, and syllabi, are subject to clearly defined review cycles. These reviews are conducted systematically by faculty and, where appropriate, in collaboration with student services personnel to reduce barriers and support student success.

The IC, composed of faculty representatives from every instructional division, oversees curriculum development, assessment practices, and continuous improvement. Its committee structure establishes shared criteria, assessment tools, timelines, and accountability measures across disciplines. In addition, faculty participate in six mandatory in-service sessions annually, which are explicitly focused on improving teaching practices, learning assessment, and student outcomes. These sessions provide structured opportunities for cross-disciplinary analysis of evidence and collaborative improvement planning.

Faculty DAAP and professional development planning efforts also focus on Core Theme indicators for improved student outcomes. Additionally, the [Exceptional Faculty Award](#) (specific funding for faculty to improve student outcomes) and [Sabbatical Awards](#) are tied to our college's Core Theme indicators and improvement of student outcomes.

Student engagement and learning support are central to SPSCC's mission and Core Themes. The College recognizes that improving student learning outcomes requires coordinated support from across the institution. Student Services provides a broad range of learning and support services outside the classroom that play an important role in students' academic success and sense of belonging.

Student Life is a key contributor to student engagement. A quarterly [student experience survey](#), developed and administered by student government, is distributed to the student population. Survey questions are determined by student leaders and ask about belonging, needs, and emerging issues. Results are shared with college executive leadership each quarter (Examples: [Fall 2024](#), [Spring 2025](#)), resulting in rich discussions that lead to partnerships that inform planning, programming, and enhancing the student experience at SPSCC. For example, in spring 2025, the survey results showed student requests for additional physical student activities, such as enhanced intramural sports options and outdoor recreation. Students reported seeking more opportunities to connect in-person and in group physical activities to make campus connections. This feedback set the stage for students and administration to discuss the development of an intercollegiate soccer field on campus and the spectrum of outcomes that can be achieved by providing the addition of this campus space to meet these requests that align with the college budget cycle and planning. In prior years, student survey results requested additional study spaces during evening hours. The collaborative response resulted in expanding evening study spaces and hours to elongate academic support for students. Additional outcomes that have resulted from the student senate survey process in prior years include:

Student Survey Feedback	Outcomes
On-campus food service options	Established on-campus café and coffee shop with breakfast and lunch menu options
Increase availability of academic advising	Added a full-time educational planner staff member to the academic advising team
Improve student support for academic advising/student support questions	Increased technology for student academic advising and degree planning, added a "Raise Hand" feature in Navigate360 software to address student questions in a timely manner
On-campus Wi-Fi connectivity challenges	Improvements made to on-campus Wi-Fi connectivity
Requests for increased support and access to affordable basic needs services	Established a Personal Support Center in fall 2021 to centralize basic needs

(housing, food, childcare, transportation, healthcare resources, phone bills)	services for students experiencing hardship and increase resources available in all categories requested. Developed affordable student housing program in 2019 and emergency shelter housing program established in spring 2020.
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Student Life sponsors a wide variety of [clubs](#), [events](#), and activities designed to help students connect and feel a sense of belonging. Engagement and learning are intentionally combined within [Core Theme 3](#), recognizing that the two are closely connected. Event-level surveys feed into the Core Theme 3 indicator, and over the past seven years, 87% of respondents have reported being satisfied with Student Life activities and finding events valuable.

Student satisfaction with learning support services, along with other experiential questions, is gathered through the [graduation survey](#), which is administered when students apply for graduation. Students are asked about their experiences with a range of support services. Results are reviewed at both the individual service level and in aggregate, then incorporated into the Core Theme 3 institutional indicators. Currently, approximately three out of four graduating students report satisfaction with the support services they received at SPSCC. Key questions from the graduation survey regarding the ability to achieve their objective, satisfaction with the quality of instruction, and preparation for post-college are disaggregated by program pathway and our strategic priorities, which are available to view on the [graduation exit dashboard](#).

Because the satisfaction surveys reflect experiences after the fact, the College also relies on more real-time feedback to better understand and respond to student needs. SPSCC uses a mobile-friendly pulse polling tool within its student success software to send brief surveys of no more than four questions, allowing for timely feedback related to emerging concerns or support needs. This tool was recently used in partnership with Thurston County Transit to better understand transportation needs for on-campus learning.

Degree planning is a cornerstone of SPSCC's approach to student support. As described in Standard 1.C.4, students have on-demand access to tools that allow them to monitor academic standing, track progress toward milestones, and see how each course fits within their pathway to completion. These tools also support proactive outreach when enrollment patterns suggest a potential disruption.

SPSCC has made intentional efforts to use data and assessment results to support students both academically and holistically. The College served as a pilot institution for the Washington State Student Needs Assessment, and the [results](#) helped expand institutional focus on basic needs alongside academic support. These efforts increased

following the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforcing the importance of integrated learning and support services.

The College's student success software, implemented prior to the pandemic and recently upgraded, includes an Early Alert flag system originally intended to address attendance and academic progress. As faculty began using the system, a wider range of student needs began to emerge, including financial aid, housing, food security, transportation, technology access, mental health, and academic advising. Faculty used the alert system to connect students directly with Student Services staff. In response to how the tool was being used, the vendor later added a student-initiated "Raise Your Hand" feature, allowing students to request support throughout the quarter. The benefit of a comprehensive student success software includes the opportunity for faculty and staff to not only learn about and respond to student needs but also provide "kudos" for students who are doing well in classes and meeting academic milestones. These tools complement the Student Needs Survey administered at the beginning of each term, together providing both early and ongoing insight into student needs.

Analysis of this information showed consistent themes and emerging areas of need. Initially, Student Engagement staff absorbed these responsibilities; however, as demand increased, the College made strategic investments by hiring additional full-time staff and opening the [Personal Support Center](#) in 2023. Since opening, the Personal Support Center has provided direct assistance with housing, transportation, food, and financial support to more than 760 students for a total amount of \$331,750 over the last three years. SPSCC's food pantry, established in 2017, has expanded its reach and has served more than 3,000 students. To address technology access, the Information Technology department has provided an average of 460 loaner laptops annually over the past three years.

Students consistently expressed a desire for simple, mobile-accessible ways to interact with the College. In response, SPSCC has designed support systems that allow students to access services, receive timely information, and request help using their phones, reducing barriers to engagement and supporting continuous improvement in student learning outcomes.

Together, these learning support practices and their effectiveness assessments used for improvement reflect a sustained and intentional response to student feedback and assessment results that integrate the entire institution in supporting student success.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC has established a mature, integrated system for assessing institutional effectiveness that is embedded across instructional and student support functions. Assessment results are routinely analyzed through collaborative, cross-functional structures and are explicitly used to inform planning, resource allocation, and improvement efforts. Student learning, student achievement, and student voice are central to these processes.

Exhibits 1.C.7: Key Evidence

- [Operational Planning Cycle](#)
- Faculty Development: [Exceptional Faculty Award](#) | [Sabbatical Awards](#)
- Student Engagement: [Clubs](#) | [Events](#)
- Student Surveys: [Student Experience](#) | [Student Needs Results](#) | [Graduate Survey](#) | [Graduate Survey Dashboard](#)
- Student Survey Presentations: [Fall 2024](#) | [Spring 2025](#)
- Personal Support: [Initial Report](#) | [Personal Support Center](#)

1.C.8

Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality.

Transfer Credit and Credit for Prior Learning

SPSCC maintains clear, widely published, and consistently applied policies governing the acceptance of transfer credit and credit for prior learning (CPL). These policies ensure that all accepted credit is appropriate to SPSCC programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality to the institution's own credit offerings.

Transfer Credit

SPSCC exercises final judgment in the acceptance of transfer credit in accordance with its Transfer-In Credit Policy ([STSV218](#)), except where statewide [reciprocity policy](#) supersedes institutional authority. The College adheres to Washington State's ICRC [Umbrella Policy](#), which establishes common expectations for transferability across institutions.

The Washington State Community and Technical College system's use of common course titles and numbering for most transfer courses further supports consistency, transparency, and ease of transfer among community and technical colleges and with university partners. These structures ensure that transfer decisions are defined within systemwide academic standards rather than ad hoc determinations.

Transfer credit evaluations are conducted by credential evaluators under the direction of the Director of Enrollment Services and the Registrar. Students initiate the process by submitting an [Application for Transfer of Credits](#) and arranging for official transcripts to be sent to Enrollment Services. When equivalency or applicability to SPSCC course requirements is unclear, the Registrar collaborates with discipline-appropriate faculty to determine comparability and alignment with SPSCC curriculum. This faculty engagement provides an essential safeguard for academic quality and ensures that transfer credit decisions reflect current disciplinary standards.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

CPL is governed by policy ([STSV212](#)) and may be awarded through:

- Credit by examination
- Prior experiential learning
- Credit for Alternative Learning Experience (CALE)

Faculty members in the relevant discipline or program determine credit awarded through examination or experiential learning, ensuring that judgments are made in disciplinary expertise and aligned with course-level learning outcomes. CALE credits are evaluated and processed by the Registrar's Office in accordance with clearly defined institutional criteria.

CPL at SPSCC is subject to rigorous safeguards that protect academic integrity. Credit is awarded only:

1. At the undergraduate level and to enrolled students;
2. Up to a maximum of 25% of the credits required for a degree;
3. For documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning outcomes of SPSCC courses; and
4. Upon recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty.

CPL, when granted, is clearly identified on the student transcript and may not duplicate other credit applied toward degree requirements. SPSCC makes no assurances regarding the amount of CPL awarded prior to completion of the formal review process, reinforcing the integrity and consistency of its evaluations.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC's transfer credit and CPL processes are clearly defined, transparent, and consistently applied. Faculty play a central role in determining equivalency and academic rigor, and statewide frameworks such as ICRC policies and common course numbering provide additional structure and consistency. Together, these practices ensure that all accepted credit meets institutional standards for quality and alignment with SPSCC programs.

Exhibits 1.C.8: Key Evidence

- Transfer-In Credit Policy ([STSV218](#))
- [Reciprocity Policy](#)
- ICRC [Umbrella Policy](#)
- [Application for Transfer of Credits](#)
- Credit for Prior Learning Policy ([STSV212](#))

1.C.9

The institution's graduate programs are consistent with its mission, are in keeping with the expectations of its respective disciplines and professions and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. The graduate programs differ from undergraduate programs by requiring, among other things, greater: depth of study; demands on student intellectual or creative capacities, knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or relevant professional practice.

SPSCC does not have graduate-level programs.



Standard 1.D
Student Achievement

Standard 1.D: Student Achievement

1.D.1

Consistent with its mission, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

Student Support Technology

Central to SPSCC's ability to deliver on its commitment to timely, accurate, and personalized student support is the adoption of Navigate360, an integrated student success platform developed by EAB. By connecting recruitment, advising, financial aid, enrollment services, and academic programs within a central system, Navigate360 gives faculty and staff the ability to communicate with students efficiently about their academic path.

Recruitment, Admission, Orientation, and Advising

Consistent with its mission as an open-access public institution, SPSCC provides a comprehensive, integrated onboarding and advising system to ensure students understand academic requirements, graduation expectations, and transfer pathways. These practices are guided by the institutional policies and processes for Outreach and Recruitment ([STSV202](#)), Admissions ([STSV201](#)), Enrollment Services ([STSV200](#)), and Advising ([STSV205](#)). Graduation requirements are published in the college catalog and reinforced through advising sessions, college-wide events, and College and Career Success (CCS) coursework.

Recruitment and Admission

SPSCC uses an intentional, integrated recruitment strategy supported by Navigate360. Recruitment efforts are collaboratively implemented by Instruction, Public Information, Information Technology, and Student Services, ensuring consistent messaging and coordinated outreach.

Navigate360 supports the College's processes by enabling systematic tracking of prospective student inquiries and enrollment progression. QR-code check-in has replaced paper sign-in sheets for campus tours and events, improving efficiency while protecting student privacy and reducing exposure of personally identifiable information. Automated campaigns ensure consistent follow-up with prospective students. To date, our marketing campaigns have a 66% open rate, indicating strong engagement. The Prospects Report within Navigate360 allows staff to monitor how individuals progress from inquiry through the enrollment process, in turn enabling targeted outreach. Furthermore, using Navigate360 in our Welcome Center enables student service staff to provide "just-in-time" assistance across multiple visits and staff members.

A component of SPSCC's recruitment strategy is its high school outreach program that includes several in-school Navigators. Navigators are embedded within high school career centers and work directly with students to connect college and career goals to SPSCC areas of study. Navigators support FAFSA completion, introduce college services, assist with applications for targeted support programs (including IGNITE), and guide students through application and enrollment processes. This high-touch outreach is complemented by a recruitment and outreach team that provides targeted services for Running Start students.

Admission is open to all potential students. SPSCC assesses entering students' math and English readiness primarily through transcript evaluation and guided self-placement. Students who identify that they are not ready for college-level coursework are provided multiple pathways to build academic readiness, including credit-bearing pre-college courses and Basic Education for Adults (ABE and ESOL). Basic Skills programming supports students in earning a high school diploma or GED® and developing English and math proficiency necessary for a successful transition into college-level coursework. Students who do not demonstrate learning progress within three quarters are referred to appropriate external agencies for additional support prior to re-entry, ensuring responsible placement and student readiness.

Orientation, Onboarding, and Placement

After acceptance into the College, new student orientation is the next step and is embedded in the enrollment workflow to support completion prior to the first term. Orientation is delivered in both online and in-person formats and serves as the formal entry point into the College and is the stage at which students select an area of study, learn about institutional resources, and receive real-time registration support. Student feedback is routinely incorporated to improve content and delivery.

Immediately upon completion of orientation, students are assigned an Educational & Career Planner (Advisor) and a financial aid advisor. Advisors work with students to develop an individualized educational plan aligned with the student's selected area of study and long-term goals. This early and systematic advisor assignment ensures consistent contact and continuity of advising throughout the student's academic experience.

The Advising, Career, and Transfer (ACT) Center has streamlined placement evaluation processes through Navigate360, replacing fragmented email exchanges. Staff now use Navigate360 to check in all scheduled testers, with over 1,300 exams logged since implementation, and to communicate placement evaluations directly to students who submit transcripts and supporting documents for review. Over 1,000 placement-related messages have been sent through the platform, with each communication automatically archived, allowing any Enrollment Services staff member to view evaluation status and outcomes. The result is faster service for students and more efficient use of staff time.

Advising and Ongoing Student Success Monitoring

Students are encouraged to complete a formal degree plan within their first two quarters. Educational planners follow a high-touch, milestone-based workflow that typically includes three early-term meetings: (1) discussion of Career Coach results, (2) initial degree plan development, and (3) finalization and publication of the degree plan.

In Academic Year 2025–26, the ACT Center recorded more than 8,200 advising interactions, with documentation rates exceeding 97% each term. Advisors used targeted campaigns to reach students by academic pathway to monitor student progress, view engagement with support services, and respond to early alerts or referrals across the student-assigned support network.

For Dual Credit and Running Start students, Navigate360 has replaced manual data pulls and mail merges with automated weekly messaging during the first seven weeks of the quarter. Approximately 1,600 Running Start students now receive consistent, timely communications via email and text, significantly improving efficiency and responsiveness for student progression and support.

Student [Financial Services workplan](#) details the use of Navigate360 to deliver proactive, targeted support across Financial Aid, Workforce Programs, and Veterans Services. Through structured campaigns, guided Journeys, and the Raise Your Hand feature, financial aid staff identify and reach students at critical touchpoints, such as incomplete aid applications, satisfactory academic progress appeals, and loan decision points, which reduce barriers before they impact enrollment or completion. This intentional integration of financial aid outreach within Navigate360 reflects SPSCC's commitment to meeting students where they are and ensuring financial concerns do not become obstacles to academic success.

Academic Pathways, Career, and Transfer Preparation

All pathways require students to complete CCS 101 and are structured to support completion of English 101 and college-level math within the first 45 credits. These design principles align with national best practices for student momentum and retention.

SPSCC offers additional CCS coursework in career planning (CCS 102), career preparation (CCS 104), and transfer preparation (CCS 103), as well as employer fairs, transfer workshops, transfer fairs, and transfer-focused social events throughout the year. Twice annually, SPSCC hosts [Pathways Day](#), a cross-divisional event that allows students to explore career options, engage with employers, and connect with faculty within their areas of study.

In 2024–25, SPSCC contracted with external educational researchers to conduct a comprehensive [transfer study](#), examining barriers to transfer preparation, characteristics of successful transfer students, and outcomes for students who earned transfer degrees but did not transfer. Findings from this study are informing targeted improvements to advising, curriculum sequencing, and transfer preparation supports.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC's student-centered onboarding and advising process is characterized by cross-campus collaboration, early and sustained advisor engagement, and systematic use of technology to monitor progress and coordinate support. Recruitment, orientation, advising, and student success interventions are not siloed activities, but integrated processes informed by data, student feedback, and continuous evaluation. The College demonstrates a culture of iteration; piloting strategies, assessing outcomes, and refining practices, to better meet the needs of its diverse student population.

Exhibits 1.D.1: Key Evidence

- Outreach and Recruitment Policy ([STSV202](#))
- Admissions Policy ([STSV201](#))
- Enrollment Services Policy ([STSV200](#))
- Advising Policy ([STSV205](#))
- [Financial Services Workplan](#)
- [Pathway Day](#)
- [Transfer Study](#)

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).

Student Achievement Indicators

As identified in Standard 1.B.2, The College's [strategic plan](#) includes three core themes, seven goals, and twenty measurable indicators of achievement that anchor student achievement efforts and guide the biennial operational planning and budget cycle. The [indicator status dashboard](#) is publicly available on the college website.

- **Core Theme 1: Student Achievement** focuses on persistence, retention, completion, and post-college employment.
- **Core Theme 2: Equity** emphasizes closing equity gaps in first-year retention and three-year completion and increasing employee diversity.
- **Core Theme 3: Learning and Engagement** centers on strengthening general education competencies and the quality of student experiences.

Student achievement indicators are intentionally designed to support equity-minded analysis. In alignment with [Core Theme 2](#), SPSCC systematically disaggregates retention and completion outcomes across three institutional priority groups:

- Full-time versus part-time enrollment status
- Historically underrepresented student identity
- Need-based financial aid (Pell) recipients

The same disaggregation is applied to persistence, retention, completion, post-college employment, and learning outcomes indicators under [Core Theme 1](#) and [Core Theme 3](#) as part of the operational planning process (see Standard 1.D.4).

Transparency and Broad Engagement

The status of all strategic plan indicators is widely shared with the college community through annual [operational planning presentations](#) and supporting materials. These presentations inform the development of biennial operational plan strategies submitted by instructional, student services, and administrative units across the institution. Further disaggregation and contextual analysis of indicators are provided through annual Institutional Effectiveness Report.

Student achievement indicators, progress toward goals, and associated strategies are [presented](#) annually to the Board of Trustees, where results are discussed in depth, including institutional strengths, areas for improvement, and progress toward equity-focused outcomes. These practices demonstrate that student achievement data are not only transparent but are actively integrated into decision-making at the unit, institutional, and governance levels.

Peer Comparison and Context

SPSCC benchmarks student achievement outcomes against intentionally selected regional and national [peer institutions](#) using a transparent, collaborative process aligned with NWCCU expectations.

Regional peers provide comparable context for understanding performance among Washington community colleges with similar missions, size, and student populations, while national peers offer broader benchmarking aligned with institutional characteristics such as enrollment patterns, student demographics, and Pell participation. In addition, SPSCC has identified an aspirational peer institution, West Valley College, selected through an outcomes-focused analysis and collegial review process, to inform long-term goal setting and improvement strategies.

Peer comparison data are reviewed by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and integrated into operational planning discussions, ensuring that SPSCC evaluates its student achievement outcomes both internally and in relation to institutions with similar missions and student profiles.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC has a well-established strategic planning and operational planning framework that places student achievement, equity, and learning and engagement at the center of institutional decision-making. Core themes, goals, and indicators are clearly defined, measurable, and consistently used as the anchor for collective campus efforts. Student

achievement data are disaggregated, broadly shared, and actively discussed across institutional committees, governance bodies, and planning processes.

The College has developed a rigorous and transparent peer select methodology that supports meaningful regional comparison, broader national perspective, and aspirational goal setting. Peer comparison data are reviewed annually by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and inform planning conversations across the campus. The Board of Trustees annually reviews the strategic plan indicators, progress toward mission fulfillment, and improvement strategies, engaging in focused discussion to ensure student success and equity remain central to governance and resource decisions.

Exhibits 1.D.2: Key Evidence

- [Strategic Plan](#)
- Dashboards: [Indicator Status](#) | [Core Theme 1](#) | [Core Theme 2](#) | [Core Theme 3](#)
- [2024 Operational Planning Presentation](#)
- [IE Report](#)
- [Board of Trustees Indicator Presentation](#)
- [Peer Institution Overview](#)

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.

Disaggregated Student Achievement Indicators

Student achievement is central to SPSCC's strategic plan and institutional culture. SPSCC maintains a long-standing commitment to data transparency, systematic analysis, and broad access to student achievement information to inform planning, decision-making, and resource allocation.

SPSCC has developed and sustained a comprehensive suite of publicly available data dashboards that present disaggregated student achievement indicators aligned with institutional priorities. The dashboards provide indicator definitions, and cohort descriptions are updated on an established schedule to ensure timely and accurate reporting. These dashboards include [strategic plan indicators](#), [regional peer comparisons](#), [national peer comparisons](#), and equity-focused Core Theme 1 [student achievement outcomes](#). All dashboards are published on the [Institutional Research](#) section of the college website and are accessible without restriction to students, employees, community members, and policymakers.

For more than a decade, [internal dashboards](#) have been embedded in institutional processes, including faculty DAAP/program review, faculty professional development plans, student services support, and college-wide planning and evaluation efforts. Student achievement data are presented annually to the college community and the Board of Trustees, reinforcing shared accountability and transparency.

To support meaningful interpretation and use of data, Institutional Research staff provide sustained professional development. Throughout 2025, Institutional Research staff hosted twice-monthly dashboard workshops in collaboration with the CTOL and regularly presented at faculty in-service events, where student achievement data are used to frame institutional priorities and discussion. In addition, [dashboard documentation](#) is available to all employees, providing clear guidance on definitions, navigation, filtering, and appropriate interpretation of disaggregated metrics.

Alignment with Regional and National Peer Institutions

Disaggregated student achievement indicators are benchmarked against intentionally selected regional and national peer institutions to provide meaningful context for SPSCC's performance. This methodology for the selection process is documented in the [Peer Institution Selection](#) document.

Regional peer institutions were identified using Fall 2019 enrollment data from Washington State community colleges, excluding technical colleges. Variables included enrollment headcount, full-time and part-time distribution, student demographics, program mix, Running Start participation, and geographic proximity. Through this structured analysis and collegial review, SPSCC selected Olympic College, Tacoma Community College, Shoreline Community College, Whatcom Community College, Centralia College, and the SBCTC systemwide average as regional benchmark peers. These peers are closely aligned with SPSCC's strategic plan indicators and are used extensively in operational planning discussions.

For national benchmarking, SPSCC initially relied on the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) to compare retention and completion outcomes across multiple student demographics. VFA data were incorporated into operational planning presentations from [Spring 2021](#) through [Spring 2024](#). When VFA discontinued targeted peer benchmarking in Fall 2024, SPSCC implemented a new peer-selection methodology. Using publicly available data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, SPSCC identified a national comparison pool and evaluated institutions based on enrollment size, institutional type, program mix, student demographics, and enrollment patterns. This process resulted in the selection of a set of comparable national peers: Iowa Western Community College, New River Community College, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Holmes Community College, and the intentional inclusion of an aspirational peer institution, West Valley College, recognized for strong, equity-focused student achievement outcomes.

Use for Continuous Improvement

Regional and national peer comparisons are communicated through the operational planning process. Regional peer data are closely aligned with SPSCC's strategic plan indicators and are used to identify institutional strengths and areas for improvement, such as strong performance in first-year college-level math completion and ongoing work to close equity gaps in retention and completion. National peer comparisons align with retention and completion outcomes and inform conversations around these outcomes. As we benchmark ourselves across retention and completion metrics and reporting years, SPSCC consistently performs within a few percentage points of regional and national peers. Evaluating this data, our efforts are currently prioritized on improving first-year persistence, three-year graduation rates, and post-SPSCC transfer outcomes, specifically baccalaureate attainment and high-wage employment. Participation in the Aspen Institute's "Unlocking Opportunities" initiative is enabling the refinement of strategies to increase baccalaureate attainment and identify academic programs that lead to livable-wage careers. First-year retention is supported by significant investments in the Navigate360 platform, which facilitates systematic student tracking and support. Furthermore, it is expected that the implementation of Navigate360 will increase graduation rates by ensuring all students maintain a comprehensive degree plan that maps their SPSCC pathway directly to their intended transfer institution and employment outcomes.

Self-Analysis

SPSCC has established mature, transparent, and widely accessible systems for publishing and using disaggregated student achievement data. Student achievement indicators are embedded in institutional planning, shared broadly with internal and external audiences, and supported by sustained professional development to ensure meaningful use. The evolution of SPSCC's national peer-selection methodology demonstrates the institution's commitment to data integrity, contextual relevance, and continuous improvement.

Exhibits 1.D.3: Key Evidence

- Dashboards: [Documentation](#) | [Strategic Plan Indicators](#) | [Regional Peer Comparisons](#) | [National Peer Comparisons](#) | Core Theme 1 [Student Achievement Outcomes](#)
- [Institutional Research](#)
- [Internal Dashboard List](#)
- [Peer Institution Overview](#)
- National Peer VFA Example: [Spring 2021](#) | [Spring 2024](#)

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.

Use of Disaggregated Student Achievement Data

Transparency and integration of data for planning and budget allocation are defining features of SPSCC's culture of evidence. The College maintains transparent, well-documented processes and methodologies for collecting, analyzing, and using disaggregated student achievement data to inform strategies and allocate resources to mitigate achievement and equity gaps. Tableau-based dashboards provide self-service access to student achievement indicators and are publicly available through the Institutional Research website, ensuring broad and unrestricted access for students, employees, community members, and policymakers. These dashboards support institution-wide engagement in data-informed planning and decision-making.

Strategic plan [data](#) are presented annually at open [planning forums](#) during each spring operational planning cycle. These sessions are intentionally planned to be inclusive, accessible, and analytically focused, allowing employees across divisions to review multi-year trends, examine disaggregated outcomes, identify equity gaps, and propose evidence-based strategies. All proposed strategies must be explicitly aligned to a specific strategic plan indicator of achievement, reinforcing the direct connection between data analysis and institutional action.

Strategies developed through the open forums are reviewed and prioritized by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and the PAG before being forwarded to the Executive Team. The Executive Team integrates approved strategies into the biennial institutional operational plan, which is formally approved by the Board of Trustees. The operational plan is updated annually as new data becomes available, and a final outcome analysis is conducted at the end of each biennium to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies within the [operational plan](#). This closed-loop planning structure ensures that disaggregated student achievement data consistently guide institutional priorities, decision-making, and allocation of resources.

The [2024-26 operational plan](#) includes 20 strategies directly connected to core theme indicators of achievement. One example of alignment between disaggregated student achievement data and resource investment is a strategy focused on improving first-year persistence by ensuring all students have an approved degree plan and receive targeted advising support when academic challenges arise. To support this strategy, SPSCC invested in hiring additional educational planners and implementing Navigate360, a comprehensive student success platform that supports proactive advising and progress monitoring. A second strategy, designed to reduce retention gaps

between historically underrepresented students and their Caucasian and Asian peers, resulted in targeted investments in faculty professional development and learning communities focused on culturally inclusive pedagogy. A third strategy establishes a college-wide peer mentoring program to provide increased connection and support for students.

Beyond institutional operational planning, disaggregated student achievement data inform instructional improvement, assessment, and student support initiatives. Two large-scale examples include the [DAAP](#), which supports student learning assessment, and the I-BEST and Basic Skills dashboards used by Transition Studies. Student Learning Assessment dashboards provide disaggregated [course success data](#) by student demographics and faculty assignment, enabling faculty and deans to conduct granular analysis and identify opportunities for instructional improvement. Similarly, I-BEST and Basic Skills dashboards support evaluation of outcomes for vulnerable learners and have informed revisions to orientation and support structures within Transition Studies.

One significant insight from disaggregated course-level data revealed that students who are academically successful in their first quarter are more likely to persist. In response, SPSCC established a systematic review of high-enrollment, low-completion courses (defined as pass rates below 70%). Faculty and deans analyze disaggregated outcomes for these courses and implement targeted improvement strategies. Since 2017, this approach has reduced the number of high-enrollment, low-pass courses from twenty to four collegewide, demonstrating measurable improvement resulting from sustained data-informed intervention.

Disaggregated data have also shaped SPSCC's Guided Pathways implementation. The College intentionally prioritized college-level math and English within students' first two quarters and adopted emporium-style math models that allow students to complete one or two levels in a single term. Since implementation in 2018, the percentage of new students earning college-level math credits in their first year increased by twelve percentage points the following year, reaching 41%. Now, at the end of our strategic plan, this metric is 49%, the highest in SPSCC's history. Even more impactful is the progress in equity; the first-year math completion rate for historically underrepresented students of color more than doubled, rising from 22% in 2017 to 47% in 2024. Both math and English outcomes consistently exceed Washington State community college averages. Guided Pathways continues to evolve through annual analysis of disaggregated outcomes, student surveys, and advising feedback, ensuring continuous refinement of program maps and student supports.

Disaggregated student achievement data have also informed broader institutional investments. Evidence highlighting the importance of first-year retention, combined with SPSCC's participation in the Washington State Student Experience Survey (Hope Survey), led to the creation of the [Personal Support Center](#) to address basic needs such as food, housing, transportation, and healthcare. Additionally, equity gap data from Core

Theme 2 informed the development of the [IGNITE program](#) within the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Center, including a peer mentoring initiative developed in partnership with Student Services to support historically underrepresented students. Qualitative data gathered through campus climate and belonging listening sessions during the 2023–24 academic year further informed new professional development programming and enhancements to student support practices ([select slides](#) from Board of Trustees Core Theme 2 Report).

Peer institution benchmarking reinforces SPSCC’s use of data for continuous improvement. Regional and national peer comparisons, selected through a transparent and evidence-based methodology, provide external context for interpreting student achievement trends and evaluating the effectiveness of institutional strategies. While peer data are not always available in fully disaggregated form, SPSCC consistently relies on its internal disaggregated data to identify equity gaps and guide targeted interventions, aligning peer-informed analysis with institutionally meaningful outcomes.

Self-Analysis

The practices described in Standard 1.D.4 demonstrate that SPSCC intentionally and systematically uses transparent, disaggregated student achievement data to inform planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. Data are not used sporadically but are embedded throughout institutional structures, from strategic planning and budgeting to instructional improvement and student support services. The College’s sustained use of both quantitative and qualitative evidence reflects a mature culture of evidence and a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement in student persistence, completion, and belonging.

Exhibits 1.D.4: Key Evidence

- Operational Plan: [Planning Forums](#) | [Presentations](#) | [2024-26 Operational Plan](#) | [2022-24 Operational Plan Final](#)
- Student Learning Assessment Data Collection: [Data Analysis Action Plan](#) | [CWA Dashboard](#) | [Course Success Data](#)
- [Personal Support Center](#)
- [IGNITE Program](#)
- [Student Support Practices](#)



Conclusion

Conclusion

Institutional Effectiveness: Key Takeaways

SPSCC's Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness documents a mission-driven institution with well-developed systems for planning, student learning assessment, student achievement, and continuous improvement. Five key takeaways stand out as defining characteristics of SPSCC's institutional effectiveness over this seven-year cycle.

1. Mission, Vision, and Values Are Actively Operationalized Throughout the Institution

Standard 1.A establishes that SPSCC's mission, to support student success in postsecondary academic transfer and workforce education that responds to the needs of the South Sound region, is not aspirational language confined to a webpage. It is the governing principle behind every campus initiative, the basis for the seven-year strategic plan, and the driver of resource allocation. The mission is reinforced by a vision statement, five institutional values, a diversity statement, and three core themes that together define what mission fulfillment looks like in practice: Student Achievement, Equity, and Learning and Engagement.

The 2019–26 strategic plan translates the mission into twenty measurable indicators of achievement across seven goals, publicly visible on a dashboard, reported annually to the Board, and reviewed every year through open operational planning forums reflecting an institution that treats mission as a commitment to students, not a static statement.

2. A Coherent, Inclusive Planning System Connects Strategy to Action at Every Level

Standard 1.B documents an aligned, multi-tiered planning structure connecting the strategic plan to biennial operational plans to annual unit work plans, with accountability at each level. Faculty, staff, and administrators review disaggregated core theme data at open campus forums, proposing evidence-based strategies, and seeing those strategies prioritized by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and PAG before the Executive Team allocates resources. The Board of Trustees approves the final plan and reviews progress annually.

Continuous monitoring of both its internal environment (student experience surveys, graduation surveys, course success data, and quarterly student-executive meetings) and external environment (labor market studies, employer visioning events, transfer outcome research, and tribal and industry partnerships) keep institutional priorities responsive to student needs and regional conditions. Navigate360, Healthy Minds Survey, expanded Nursing capacity, and Accelerated Transfer Agreements are direct products of this cycle.

3. Faculty-Led Curriculum and Assessment Structures Ensure Academic Quality and Continuous Improvement

Standard 1.C provides extensive evidence that SPSCC's academic quality is maintained through a faculty-centered governance structure operating at multiple levels. The IC and its four subcommittees, Course Review, Policy Review, Student Learning Assessment, and Map Review, conduct five-year course review cycles, perform annual syllabus audits, oversee the three-year DAAP process, and approve all program pathway maps before publication.

The five CWAs, foundational since 2007, apply to all degree programs. Integrated into Canvas in 2020, they allow faculty to examine disaggregated data by course, program, and student demographic group. The DAAP process, implemented college-wide in 2022, structures this assessment culture into a three-year faculty inquiry cycle connecting course-level analysis to program improvement and institutional goals.

4. Student Achievement Data Are Disaggregated, Publicly Available, and Directly Tied to Resource Allocation

Standard 1.D documents a mature and transparent data infrastructure. Public-facing Tableau dashboards covering strategic plan indicators, peer comparisons, and Core Theme outcomes are openly accessible. Internal dashboards disaggregate course success, CWA attainment, and post-college outcomes by race/ethnicity, age, gender, enrollment status, and financial aid need, and are embedded into DAAP analyses, faculty professional development plans, and unit planning.

This data infrastructure directly drives resource allocation. The 2024–26 operational plan's twenty strategies include investments in educational planners, Navigate360, faculty professional development in culturally inclusive pedagogy, and a college-wide peer mentoring program. Since 2017, disaggregated course analysis has reduced high-enrollment, low-success courses from twenty to four across the institution. Since 2018, math interventions have raised the share of students earning college-level math credits in their first year by twelve percentage points, consistently exceeding the state average. The Personal Support Center and IGNITE program trace directly to disaggregated data and student feedback. At SPSCC, data do not sit in dashboards; they are the basis for budgets and student success.

5. Student Support Is Integrated, Holistic, and Driven by Ongoing Student Voice

Across Standards 1.C and 1.D, a consistent picture emerges: SPSCC understands that academic success requires meeting students where they are. Navigators are embedded in K-12 career centers to connect students to SPSCC before they arrive. Orientation is built into the enrollment workflow, and every new student is assigned an educational planner and a financial aid advisor.

Student voice is at the center of many initiatives. The quarterly student experience survey feeds directly into planning; graduating student satisfaction results are incorporated into Core Theme 3 indicators, with approximately three in four graduates reporting satisfaction with support services, and 87% of Student Life survey respondents reporting satisfaction with campus activities over the past seven years.

Quarterly student government-executive meetings create direct accountability; students present findings, leadership responds, and follow-up is reported at the next meeting. The Personal Support Center, food pantry serving more than 3,000 students, and laptop loaner program averaging 460 devices annually, all trace directly to student-reported needs. Together, these practices reflect an institution that has learned to treat student feedback as evidence and to act on it.

Moving Forward

As SPSCC closes out its 2019–26 strategic plan, the College arrives at a natural inflection point: an opportunity to sharpen its focus on what matters most, that students succeed here and leave prepared to achieve their goals beyond. The investments made in people, systems, and practice over this seven-year cycle provide the foundation from which the College moves forward. External pressures are real, but they do not alter the mission, dedication, and focus of SPSCC toward increased student success.

Our mission intentionality is tested by a challenging fiscal environment. Washington State's community and technical colleges face a sustained fiscal challenge: state appropriations are not keeping pace with rising contractual and operational costs. SPSCC is making difficult structural decisions, including the modification or discontinuation of some services, programs, and disciplines. These choices sharpen the College's obligation to ensure every credential opens a door to a future where graduates can financially support themselves and their families and positively contribute to their communities.

Our future will rely on software improvements. Continuing to bring to scale the full features of Navigate360 is central to how SPSCC will continue to deliver student services; connecting students to the right support at the right time and engaging their support network. Used alongside faculty support and wraparound services, Navigate360 keeps students moving deliberately toward a credential that carries value beyond SPSCC.

Delivering on that promise also means measuring the right things. As SPSCC builds its next strategic plan, the College is committed to ensuring its indicators of achievement accurately capture what they are designed to reflect and expanding them to include post-completion outcomes that matter to students' lives after SPSCC. Student learning assessment is grounded in the same culture of continuous inquiry. Faculty-led review, through the DAAP process and ongoing CWA analysis, ensures that assessment remains a continuous cycle of analysis and reflection.

Summary

SPSCC completes this seven-year cycle as an institution that has built coherence across its functions: a mission operationalized through strategic planning; a planning system that distributes participation and accountability; faculty governance structures that ensure academic rigor and continuous improvement; a transparent data infrastructure that connects disaggregated evidence to budgets; and student support

systems that respond to what students actually experience. The College meets the standards of highly developed in this report, and does so through structures and practices that are sustainable, evidence-based, and grounded in a shared commitment to student success that will carry into the next strategic planning cycle.

Appendices

Appendix A. Response to any concerns (findings) raised in the PRFR

Not applicable as SPSCC received no findings in its policies, regulations, and financial resources evaluation report.

Appendix B. Distance Education

The SPSCC Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#)) ensures all students receive quality distance learning for student success. This policy applies to SPSCC instruction, deans, and all faculty.

Policies and procedures for ensuring the student who registers in a Distance Education course or program is the same student who participates in the course and receives credit

Students apply for admission to the College using SBCTC's Online Admissions Application (OAAP). This online statewide admissions application is maintained and secured on SBCTC's website and can only be accessed by authorized staff at the State Board or the College's Enrollment Office. Once the admissions application is completed and submitted by the student, it is used to create a student record that includes their system-assigned identification number, a user account that includes access to the Student Support Network and Canvas, the College's Learning Management System (LMS).

The user account information, passwords, and any other records can only be accessed by the student through the College's secure networks. Students are advised to safeguard their ctcLinkID and password information at the OAAP stage, network account setup, and course enrollment steps. The College's IT department requires an additional level of security for the College's networks by requiring the campus community, faculty, staff, and students to use multi-factor authentication (MFA) software to gain access. If college staff suspect a student or community member is fraudulently attempting to access college systems using information illegally obtained, the account and enrollment information is blocked until they can positively identify themselves either in person or online through conference software such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. If the student or community member fails to positively identify themselves in the time period required, usually two weeks, they are then reported to SBCTC, where there is a system-wide fraud indicator placed on the impacted student account information, preventing enrollment at any other college in the system.

Students are required to show picture ID when coming to the College's Enrollment Services, Start Here, One Stop, Advising and Career Services, Financial Aid, and Placement offices to process enrollment transactions or find out information about their academic status. Online or distance education students are required to log into Zoom or Microsoft Teams to show their picture identification to a staff member to access information about student account transactions or records. Students sending in online transaction forms, i.e., requesting enrollment changes, via email must send the request from their official school email account.

The College offers many tests and exams through its on-campus and online Assessment and Placement Center. Staff administer and supervise exams through Pearson Vue and offer exams such as the GED, CLEP, career and technical certifications such as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), office skills exams, and Teachers Education Assessment (TEAS). Staff also offer in-person and online entry skills assessment testing and the required high school test for dual credit students enrolled at the College. Students are required to provide valid government-issued identification, whether taking an exam in person or online. Online students are required to log into Zoom or Microsoft Teams to show their picture identification to a staff member.

Faculty monitor student identification in fully online courses through their substantial interaction required by federal law and the Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#)), and course assignments and assessments. SPSCC faculty and enrollment staff have taken more precautionary steps since the increase in "fraudulent students" taking online classes. Faculty monitor online chats, assignments, and assessments to ensure the ongoing identity of students throughout the quarter. If there is a suspected case of a fraudulent student or a person completing assignments or assessments that is not the registered student, faculty can immediately request a Zoom meeting to ensure identification and work with the registrar's office to do a formal check on [student identity](#).

Policies and procedures make it clear that these processes protect student privacy

The SPSCC Privacy Policy ([CADM108](#)) addresses collection, use, security of and access to information that may be obtained using the SPSCC website, enrollment services, and instruction portals to protect student privacy. Among this detailed policy, it states that any personal information provided is used only for specified purposes, such as access to online student services or instructional activities, and is subject to applicable federal and state privacy protections. The policy also describes safeguards to protect the integrity of data and to prevent unauthorized access, demonstrating that SPSCC's processes are designed to protect student privacy.

Notification to students at the time of registration of any additional charges associated with verification procedures

SPSCC does not charge fees for verification procedures.

Academic policies and procedures for instructors to implement requirements for regular and substantive interaction in Distance Education courses or programs

The SPSCC Distance Education Policy ([INST736](#)) states in part: The Department of Education defines “regular and substantive interaction” as “engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, that is consistent with the course content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following every week:

- Attending a synchronous class, lecture, recitation, or field or laboratory activity, physically or online, where there is an opportunity for interaction between the instructor and students;
- Submitting an academic assignment;
- Taking an assessment or an exam;
- Participating in an interactive tutorial, webinar, or other interactive computer-assisted instruction;
- Participating in a study group, group project, or an online discussion that is assigned by the institution;
- Interacting with an instructor about academic matters; and
- Required discussion forum activity.

SPSCC monitors [Regular and Substantive Interaction](#) through its [classroom observation form](#) completed by faculty peers, students, and instructional administrators in pre- and post-tenure processes.

The institution’s Distance Education programs are consistent with the mission and educational objectives of the institution

SPSCC’s Distance Education programs are fully aligned with the College’s mission and educational objectives and follow the same standards for content and oversight as all instructional offerings outlined in Standard 1.C.1. Whether delivered in-person, hybrid, or online, courses and programs culminate in clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to recognized degrees, certificates, and credentials in established fields of study. Transfer and professional-technical courses offered through distance education are subject to the same curriculum approval processes, IC review, advisory committee input, and statewide articulation agreements. CWAs, program learning outcomes, and course-level outcomes are embedded across all modalities and assessed through established cyclical review processes to ensure academic quality and continuous improvement.

Institutions that offer courses or programs via multiple delivery modalities ensure learning outcomes and levels of student achievement are comparable across

SPSCC’s assessment of learning outcomes outlined in Standard 1.C.6 demonstrates a well-developed process of evaluating teaching and learning, and this is applicable

across all instructional modalities. CWAs, course learning outcomes, and program learning outcomes are intentionally aligned and assessed using shared rubrics and common evaluation criteria regardless of whether instruction occurs in person, hybrid, or fully online. Through the DAAP process, faculty review disaggregated data by course modality, allowing for direct comparison of student learning attainment and course success patterns across delivery formats.