Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

A Full-Scale

Evaluation Committee Report

Bellevue College

Bellevue, Washington

October 12 – 14, 2009

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Table of Contents

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Introduction

In January of 2006, the Commission reaffirmed the accreditation of Bellevue Community College on the basis of a Fall 2005 Comprehensive Evaluation Report. That report contained ten commendations and four recommendations. Subsequently, Bellevue College responded successfully to the Commission regarding the recommendations.

In 2006, the college notified the Commission of its intent to submit a substantive change proposal regarding the offering of a baccalaureate level program. The college submitted its proposal and the Commission approved a major substantive change on 12/13/06. The Commission also granted candidacy at the baccalaureate level, and Bellevue College launched a Bachelor of Applied Science in Radiation and Imaging Sciences. The Commission accepted a progress report in 2007 and a Full-Scale Evaluation was scheduled for October of 2009. In April of 2009, the Commission approved a name change from Bellevue Community College to Bellevue College. In September of 2009, a proposal to offer a second baccalaureate degree (Bachelor of Applied Arts in Interior Design) was approved as a minor change.

The Full-Scale Evaluation Committee report that follows includes review of the new baccalaureate programs as part of a comprehensive review of Bellevue College.

An evaluation committee of 10 members from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accompanied by Dr. Sandra E. Elman visited Bellevue College on October 12 – 14, 2009. After extensive review of the *Self Study* and the Supporting Documentation presented for each standard, the evaluation committee met with members of the Board of Trustees, the president, senior members of the administration, faculty, division and unit leaders, various multi-constituency committees involved in governance, staff, and students to validate the findings of the *Self Study* and confirm that Bellevue College meets the Commission's *Eligibility Requirements for Candidates for Accreditation and Accredited Institutions.*

Bellevue College's presentation of Required Documents and Required Exhibits was complete and easily accessible. It was especially useful to have those documents available to reviewers electronically on the Web prior to the visit. Assistance in locating materials was provided by the institution and all requested meetings were scheduled effectively— and well attended.

The evaluation team notes with thanks the effective staff work that facilitated this visit. From scheduling, technical assistance, and transportation to a well-organized workroom and gracious hospitality, the campus community was ready and willing to assist with our efforts. The team also notes with appreciation the opportunities for open, thoughtful and spirited dialog we experienced with all the campus constituencies.

SELF STUDY

The *Self Study* is a well-written cohesive document. It has a uniform voice throughout and is well organized. The level of participation and inclusiveness in the self-study process is evident by the number of staff involved and the variety of their respective positions.

The document is very descriptive, however, and it does not always reflect the depth of analysis that is central to the accreditation process and institutional improvement. The frank assessment of strengths and weaknesses and how they will be addressed as a result of the introspective self-study process were not always easy to tease out of the document. The specific recommendations and implementation plans were not always clearly presented in the summary sections.

There were statements made in the *Self Study* that the evaluation committee was not able to verify as part of its examination of the evidence. For example in section 1.A.3 the following statement was made:

Documentation of Mission and Goals (1.A.3)

The college has developed a variety of processes for documenting and publicizing its accomplishments related to mission and goals:

Quarterly progress reports on accomplishing annual goals and objectives are made by each unit and documented in the college's Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) system and reviewed by President's Staff.

The committee found insufficient evidence that *each* unit made progress reports on accomplishing annual goals and objectives.

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

Committee members reviewed the *Self Study* prior to the visit and accessed required documentation and exhibits that were presented on the college website. Meetings with appropriate campus personnel were subsequently scheduled and that schedule was expanded after committee deliberations. Committee executive sessions were devoted to discussion of each day's findings and to determining areas for further investigation. Areas for possible commendation or recommendation were identified and discussed. Ultimately, consensus was achieved on those areas and on confidential recommendations to the Commission.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

Members of the evaluation committee reviewed each of the 20 eligibility requirements at both the beginning and end of the visit. The committee was unanimous in its finding (taken by vote) that Bellevue meets each requirement fully.

Standard One – Institutional Mission and Goals,

Planning and Effectiveness

Standard 1.A – Mission and Goals

Bellevue College is an institution aspiring to gain accreditation at a new degree level. In its immediate past history as a strong and mature community college, its mission and goals defined the institution effectively and it was achieving its mission and goals in a fashion consistent with the Commission's *Eligibility Requirements* for accreditation. In 2006, based on a Comprehensive Evaluation Report, the Commission reaffirmed its accreditation. Later that year, the Commission granted the college candidacy at the baccalaureate level (1.A.7).

In 2003, the campus community had reviewed and reaffirmed the institution's mission and goals. That became the foundation for and part of on-going annual planning. In 2008, annual review of mission and goals by the President's Staff was facilitated by the work of external consultants. That review revealed that a further revision of the mission was needed that would better reflect the purpose and culture of the college, and a revised mission statement with new key elements (increased emphasis on student success, advancement of pluralism, global awareness, and contribution to the region) was developed and approved by the Trustees (1.A.7). The statement appears widely and appropriately in college publications, advertisements, and public communications (1.A.1 & 1.A.2).

The institution's mission and goals inform its activities (1.A.5) and they are well understood by the campus. In admissions, program planning, resource allocation, selection of faculty, provision of student services, and efforts to advance diversity programs that promote pluralism, inclusion and global awareness both mission and goals have informed the process and the Committee notes the college's success in that regard. Progress in accomplishing the mission and goals are generally documented through the office of Institutional Research that publicizes results of such measures as the SBCTC Student Achievement Initiative Report. Progress reports from various units on achieving annual goals and objectives are considered as the President's Staff develops planning priorities for subsequent years. Although the *Self Study* reports that quarterly reports on each unit's progress are documented in college's Strategic Planning Online system (SPOL) for review by the President's Staff, reporting through that system is incomplete. It appears that SPOL will be a powerful tool that is still in the implementation phase (1.A.3).

Standard 1.B – Planning and Effectiveness

Planning at all levels of the institution is robust, broad-based and, as evidenced by the progress made, is effective. The process is highly participative (1.B.3) and efforts are being made to support it adequately (1.B.6). Support is provided through the Office of Institutional Research, a new coordinator of Institutional Effectiveness/Assessment of Student Learning, Planning Retreats for senior administrators, two College Issues Days (one devoted to assessment) for the campus, and direct financial or release time to ensure faculty participation. The institution has developed a format for systematic planning and evaluating its activities (1.B.2) that has begun to influence its resource allocation (1.B.4). That was especially present as planning and implementing budget reduction. A seven-year strategic planning process that established goals includes selected planning priorities established by the President's Staff that now covers two years. Commendably, specific objectives under those priorities have encouraged cross unit collaboration.

Within work units, departments and programs follow a similar process of developing objectives that reflect strategic goals and planning priorities. It is expected that tasks leading to the accomplishment of those objectives be identified along with assessments to measure success. Through program reviews and other studies at the unit level, additional objectives may arise and become part of the planning priorities. Academic departments and professional/technical programs also develop assessment activities and measures for their established learning outcomes. All of these evaluative measures as well as the on-going use of employee surveys are considered in the planning process with a view to identifying priorities for improvement (1.B.5).

All of the above relates generally to Key Performance Indicators that also are tracked by the President's Staff and used to inform the next round of planning. The college has long measured its effectiveness using a system of Key Performance Indicators and measures that capture the outcomes of the process described here – although as discrete rather than related processes. Its current efforts – to unify planning as part of an integrated flow of effort, to use SPOL as the planning record keeper, and press for greater focus on linking activities to strategic goals and planning priorities – will take it beyond rounds of annual planning and assessment to an ongoing process (1.B.8).

The college promotes awareness of institutional effectiveness through wide distribution of the annual report from its foundation, the college website with a section devoted to public feedback, and the president's public presentations and writings (1.B.9).

Findings and Conclusion

College efforts in planning and effectiveness have been a strong, participatory, and transparent process that is adding sophistication through the use of technology and even wider participation within the institution.

Bellevue College provided all Required Documentation and Exhibits, most of it Web based and available to the campus throughout the planning process. Many additional materials were available to the evaluation committee, as well.

Standard Two – Educational Program And Its Effectiveness

Standard 2.A – General Requirements

Bellevue College has long offered collegiate level programs at the certificate and associate level and now delivers two applied programs at the baccalaureate level. Programs have identified student competencies and are offered in recognized fields of study. Nine associate programs are offered as transfer, limited transfer, employment preparation, and non-transfer. Three new associate programs have been added: Associate in Elementary Education – Direct Transfer Agreement/Major Related Programs (AE-DTA/MRP); Associate in Mathematics Education—Direct Transfer Agreement/Major Related Program (AME-DTA/DTA), and Associate in Occupational Life Skills (AOLS). Since the last comprehensive visit, the associate in Science has been divided into two tracks: Track I for life sciences and Track II with two emphases, for physical sciences and for engineering/master related degree preparation in three engineering specialties.

Additionally, 36 new professional/technical certificates have been added and 18 deleted. The two baccalaureate programs are applied—a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in radiation and images sciences (2007) and a Bachelor of Applied Arts (BAA) in interior design (2009). (General Requirements).

There is a clear commitment to high standards of teaching and learning. A new science and technology building provided needed instructional space. Resources have been provided to part-time faculty for involvement in college work and professional development and many additional students are now served through eLearning and in blended offerings. Additional resources for full time faculty development and new equipment to support programs including the baccalaureate programs have been provided. Specific information from divisions and departments is provided in the division reports that follow (2.A.1).

Institutional policies for program development, approval, and evaluation are clear, and the educational programs are completely compatible with Bellevue College's mission (2.A.2). Through its program review and assessment processes, the college is ensuring coherent

design, clear degree objectives, and on-going evaluation (2.A2, 3, & 4). The few courses offered on a concentrated timeframe require the same instructional hours as a regular course and demonstrate mastery of program goals and course objectives (2.A.5).

Clear channels of communication and control exist in the curriculum development and approval process. Briefly described, curriculum proposals originate from collaborative work between program faculty and chairs, advance to the divisional level where division chairs work with program chairs in reviewing proposals for appropriateness, accuracy, and resource availability. Campus level review occurs at the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) whose policies are documented in an official handbook. That multi-constituency but faculty dominated body, chaired by a member of the faculty and supported by an on-line tracking system, continues the review process prior to review/approval by the executive dean of instruction. All professional/technical programs of 20 credits or more have a subsequent review protocol under the auspices of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The curriculum process worked well in the development of the initial baccalaureate program (2.A.7).

The institution has been sensitive to the needs of its students in surveying their preferences and interest in on-line offerings (2.A.9). A well-documented process for program elimination or significant change is followed (2.A.11) and a new electronic enrollment management tool is used in tracking and assessing program viability. The college has appropriate measures in place to make arrangements for students in programs that are changed or eliminated (2.A.12).

Standard 2.B – Educational Program Planning and Assessment

Continuous review and assessment of Bellevue College's educational program informs decisions regarding curriculum development, changes, and elimination. Processes and procedures for assessing educational programs are in place, clearly articulated, and involve a schedule of regular review (2.B.1), published learning outcomes, and review processes have been instituted (2.B.2). A full review of the institution's progress in providing evidence that assessment activities lead to improvements (2.B.3) follows below in the committee's report on Policy 2.2.

Standard 2.C – Undergraduate Program

Bellevue College's general education program is designed to infuse general outcomes in reasoning, communication, cultural competence, responsibility (self assessment/lifelong learning, ethics, group process, global citizenship), and science and environment (2.C.3). These five outcomes groups contain eighteen focused areas and are designed to ensure that students receive instruction in and make connections between the humanities and fine arts, sciences, math, and the social sciences (2.C.1 & 2.C.3). The description and rationale for the program is described in the course catalog (2.C.2), on line, and as part of the advising process. The program has undergone a review that rates the level of exposure each course provides to the established outcomes (2.C.2).   The program was established and receives on-going review from the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC), a joint

faculty/administrative group representing multiple constituencies with interest in and responsibility for student learning. After a survey of course taking patterns, a general education taskforce recommended special attention to ensuring student exposure to the "responsibility" group. A reworking of the curriculum of professional/technical degrees as well as academic programs where many of these life skills have not traditionally been addressed was undertaken by the CAC.

Clear and mature policies for transfer and acceptance of credit are in place. Appropriate articulation agreements with four-year institutions and adherence to transfer agreements established by the Inter-College Relations Commission (ICRC)—a voluntary association of accredited Washington institutions—is complemented by the work of professional evaluators in Bellevue College's evaluation office (2.C.4).

An effective advising process begins with a required advising program—One-Stop Matriculation—involving all first-time, full-time students. One-Stop's services are provided to transfer students and the office is responsible for placement exams. Students who have declared a major are assigned to professional advisors in the academic divisions and ultimately to a faculty advisor. The Educational Planning Advising Center serves undecided students until they have decided on a major and been referred to the appropriate division (2.C.5). As an essentially open door enrollment institution, the college does not require developmental or remedial work for admission, and for the small number of programs with special admissions requirements clear policies are in place (2.C.6).

With the exception of three programs that are managed by teaching administrators, all fields offering majors are staffed by at least one, appropriately credentialed faculty members (2.C.7). Concerns regarding faculty are explored in the report on Standard Four, below. The institution tracks job placement, entry-level salaries, and national certification and licensure rates for it professional/technical programs (2.C.8).

Business Division

The Business Division at Bellevue College (BC) offers a two-year terminal degree, a transfer degree, and certificates of varying lengths in several technical and professional fields. A number of non-credit certificates are also available through the continuing education area. Several courses in the Business Division are required for degrees and certificates in other programs. The faculty shows high commitment to teaching and learning, and the Division goals are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

The business and digital media programs are logically designed with appropriate course curriculum and program depth and breadth to achieve the learning outcomes set by each program. (Standard 2.A.3) Programs are regularly reviewed according to institutional policies and procedures that include input from faculty, advisory groups, and community needs on both a formal and informal basis (Standard 2.A.7).

Learning outcomes are identified for each program and are published in the online catalog; individual course outcomes are identified on syllabi. A college-wide assessment model has

been implemented, but outcomes assessment resides at the program level. One course in each program was identified for evaluation in 2007. These pilot assessment courses are either entry-level or identified as critical to student success for subsequent courses, or they are capstone courses. Once these pilot courses have been assessed, the plan is to assess their other courses in each program.

Although in the beginning stages of the new assessment process, it is evident that faculty in the Business Division have adopted a climate of assessment. Faculty have applied the assessment process to a number of additional courses in their programs and have worked together to improve curriculum, measurement tools, and the teaching/learning process. Learning outcomes are identified for each program and course, the outcomes are measured, data is analyzed, opportunities for improvement are identified, and a course of action to correct deficiencies ensues (Standard 2.B.1 and Policy 2.2).

The Business Division offers a number of one-credit courses to accommodate students in an open-entry/late start format. Dividing a normally three or five credit course into one-credit sections allows students to start at several sequence points during the quarter.

The faculty and the program chairs maintain good and open relationships with the business community through individual networks and advisory boards. Several courses in the division utilize the library and other information resources to enhance student learning (Standard 2.A.8).

The graduation rates are low for the Business Division as it is across the Bellevue College campus. Conversations with faculty and administrators and follow-up surveys point to several reasons for this data. Often students only desire training in particular software and take one or two courses to fulfill that need. Some students go on internships and don't come back because the skills they acquired in BC courses are sufficient for employment. Other students move on to four-year institutions without filling in the paperwork to get the degree from BC. Much of this evidence is anecdotal, and more accurate data is needed to come to solid conclusions about the graduation rate.

The faculty is working hard to serve the college and their students, but they are nearly overwhelmed with the workload. The Committee observed that here is a need for more full-time instructors

Science Division

The Science Division is happy to have been able to move about half of their programs into a brand new building last spring quarter. The building has doubled their lab space and added several new classrooms and offices including space for adjunct faculty offices. They are now housed in 2 main buildings and a few other scattered offices. In general the campus has sufficient resources for the division in terms of classroom, lab, office, storage space, and technology in the form of office computers and smart classrooms, etc. Due to large student population increases they are already at 97% capacity even with the new building. The division is divided into 4 programs: Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, and Engineering. The first three programs have significant numbers of full-time faculty members and the Engineering Program has one. They remain concerned that they

must work with a 40-60 ratio of full-time to part-time faculty. Budgets remain tight, and could drop more, but the programs are clearly dedicated to doing the best for their students and do so with a variety of learning experiences in the form of lectures, labs, field trips, tutoring services, and sufficient office time. The faculty serves the students also in extensive advising services. As stated elsewhere, assessment is sporadic in this division also, but for the most part is being used well for classroom and program improvement for the benefit of the students. The students report their pleasure at the competency and dedication of the faculty and staff and their beautiful and useful campus.

Human Development Program

The Human Development Program offers several courses geared toward student responsibility. Faculties are dedicated to their students and to teaching and learning. Courses are taught in leadership, relationships, learning, study skills, and several other topics to help students navigate the college experience and to be better prepared. Program goals are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Human Development classes are designed with appropriate depth and content for the topic, and are quite innovative in the way they are presented (Standard 2.A.3). Programs are regularly reviewed according to institutional policies and procedures. Input for course implementation comes from program faculty, faculty from other disciplines, and student needs (Standard 2.A.7).

Learning outcomes are identified for each course and are identified on syllabi. Courses are evaluated at the end of the term and data is used to determine changes for the next quarter's offering. These action plans are not formally written, but lie with individual instructors or a team of instructors if more than one teaches the same course. Debriefing sessions are held at the end of each course completion to determine what might need to be changed. If opportunities for improvement are found, changes are made and then evaluated in the next cycle.

Much of the assessment for the courses in the Human Development Program is subjective and difficult to measure quantitatively. A variety of assessment tools are used including class attendance and participation, reflective journaling, self-assessment, end-of-quarter surveys and verbal assessment from students.

Health Sciences, Education, and Wellness Institute

The Health, Education, and Wellness Institute programs are a blend of state-funded and self-supported programs and courses. Program goals are consistent with Bellevue College's mission and goals and reflect a coherent design. Processes are in place and being utilized for educational program planning and assessment. Student learning outcomes clearly are identified at the program level. All programs participate in the Program Effectiveness Process (PEP) but in varying degrees. A review of the PEP website and interviews with program directors show that most programs complete the full loop of using program review to improve instruction, revise curricula, and enhance program effectiveness. Programs use multiple indicators to measure outcomes including but not limited to post-graduate and employer surveys, licensing exam pass rates, employment

rates, portfolios, pre- and post-tests, clinical observation and testing, and capstone projects. Program licensing pass rates are well above national pass rates. All programs that are eligible for discipline-specific accreditation have achieved it. Programs also use Advisory Committees in a continuing assessment process intended to ensure that programs are meeting the employer needs for graduates who are well prepared for the current workplace environment. As the college transitions to SPOL, each Health, Education and Wellness Institute program should strive to be fully participatory in its ongoing, systematic, and full use of planning and assessment for the improvement of teaching and learning at the course and program level.

Bachelor of Applied Science in Radiation and Imaging Sciences

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Radiation and Imaging Sciences (BAS) degree program that is located within the Health, Education, and Wellness Institute, also meets the general requirements of Standard 2.A. Interviews with the program director confirm that human, physical, and financial resources adequately support the educational program and are sustainable. Program goals expand the College's goals of access, student success, teaching and learning excellence, and institutional accountability to the baccalaureate level. The program was developed collaboratively with radiation and imaging professionals who continue to have a role as instructors in the program and advisory committee members whose responsibility is ongoing review and guidance. The program was reviewed extensively and well-planned including the involvement of all constituencies on campus in order to ensure an optimal transition to a baccalaureate-degree granting institution. The program was built on the excellent reputation and academic quality of the associate degree level radiologic and imaging programs. The curriculum incorporates discipline-specific, general education, and elective courses built in a progressively rigorous manner that is designed to develop the broad knowledge and focused coursework of a baccalaureate degree.

 The BAS program has processes in place for systematic and continuous assessment of its educational effectiveness. Student learning outcomes are clearly stated and published in the catalog. Mechanisms for evaluation of student learning outcomes include a senior capstone project in which students are provided the opportunity to create and evaluate a project within the workplace. The first graduates of the program have been very successful with employer adoption of student projects for implementation in the workplace. Results of program and course educational effectiveness assessment are used to improve the teaching/learning experience.

The program has a highly dedicated, experienced director who also teaches in the program. He maintains excellent community relationships that foster the partnerships essential for the optimal functioning of the program. A program manager has non-instructional responsibilities and duties and a full time campus business instructor teaches the program's management courses. Although a cadre of part time faculty employed in the field provides clinically current and expert instruction for the program, the program should consider building a core of full time faculty as one aspect of its future planning efforts.

Arts and Humanities

The Arts and Humanities Division accounts for approximately 1/3 of the classes offered at Bellevue College, and is comprised of a dedicated faculty, staff, and administrative leadership. Because of this, the division is able to offer a sufficient number of courses that meet degree requirements as well as an impressive number of choices for students. The programs and departments are housed in a well-organized primary space, but due to space constraints the faculty is dispersed throughout the campus. This makes department functionality in terms of easy and effective impromptu discussion regarding pedagogy and instructional issues, which are a hallmark of higher education, difficult at best.

The curriculum is managed, reviewed, and maintained by faculty and administrative leadership that are either also instructors or have come from the faculty. Most departments are actively and collaboratively engaged in educational assessment, although some have yet to achieve significant progress in the systematic planning, gathering, and analyzing of data that track student achievement of educational outcomes. While most faculty appear to be conducting course level assessment that leads to curricular decisions for their own classes, there is little evidence in some departments that a common perspective has been reached on what to assess or how to do undertake the process. Other departments, however, have a clear plan in place that is already yielding useable data that is guiding curricular decisions on a department-wide basis. Departments that are struggling with their assessment efforts might consider enlisting the assistance of the other departments in identifying best practices and how they might be adapting to their own needs.

Advising within the division is handled on two levels: A part-time, dedicated advisor works with students for general guidance and serves as a "front line" contact for students to identify a potential emphasis area for the student, and then serves as a bridge to put the student in contact with a faculty member appropriate to that area of study. The staff is clearly dedicated to the students, and despite being taxed by a burgeoning enrollment always put individual student needs ahead of their demanding workload. If high enrollment is sustained, the college will need to address an already overburdened support staff in this division. Implementation of a course-building and class-scheduling software might be considered, as the current method used in the department relies on hand-entry into a spreadsheet, and then conversion of the entered data into a separate system in the Dean of Instruction's office.

Bachelor of Applied Arts in Interior Design

The Interior Design program is well situated to begin offering the Bachelor of Applied Arts in Interior Design. The impetus of moving the program from a "two-year" degree to a bachelor's degree lay in the fact that the program's accreditation with the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) now requires a 4-year bachelor's program as eligibility standard. With the Washington State legislative action to allow community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in applied, technical, and vocational fields, the possibility of meeting the CIDA standard became real.

The program was already positioned for a smooth transition into a bachelor's program. The AAS in Interior Design, a program that enjoys an excellent reputation in the region, was already a three-year program that required 161 credits. The new BAA will require 191 credits. Many of the third-year courses in the AA have been revised to incorporate the rigor and expectations associated with 300- or 400-level courses, and the department has done a superb job both with re-vamping the AAS curriculum into a 2+2 program and in putting plans in place to ensure a smooth transition for both the college and for students. The 2+2 model has the added benefit of clearly protecting the community college mission of Bellevue College, creating a restructured AAS in Interior Studies that allows students to step out of the program with a focused emphasis area of study, while also fully serving as the lower-division curriculum for the BAA.

The program is fortunate in its relationships with industry and established Interior Design programs in the state, which have provided invaluable assistance and guidance in development of the BAA as well as providing materials for the department resource room. The library holdings are sufficient to support the program. The one area that merits future planning is facilities. The program is largely delivered in classrooms in one building, but key components of the program, such as the wood shop, are shared with other departments. While this is sufficient for the present, growth in the program and the specialized application needs of the program will likely result in the need for additional space dedicated to Interior Design.

The department is in the final stages of establishing adequate staffing for the BAA. A fourth full-time faculty was recently hired, and a part-time program manager position is currently in the hiring process. The program manager will handle coordination of the program, frontline advising, and general management of the department, easing the workload of the core faculty. There are 21 part-time faculty members, all of who are established professionals in the field, and the 4 full-time faculty all hold master's degrees in the appropriate fields.

Social Sciences Division

The Social Sciences Division consists of 10 academic departments and offers support instruction for the College and programs/courses for the support of Associate of Arts degrees, predominantly for transfer to four-year institutions.

The division recently has undergone a change in leadership following the sudden resignation of the Division Chair for personal reasons. A department chair has assumed the position on an interim basis resulting in the appointment of an interim chair for another department. It is too soon to tell if this change in leadership will be positive or negative for the division, but signs point to division support for the interim division head.

Students are very complementary about their programs and faculty. They are excited about having attended Bellevue College and about the commitment of the faculty and administration of the College.

The department is actively involved in assessment of their courses and programs. Unfortunately some of the departments are lagging behind others when it comes to "closing

the loop" on course and programmatic assessment. About half of the faculty and department chair reviewed indicated that are at the point of "closing the loop." The rest are still in the process of developing and fully implementing their assessments.

Most of the departments in the division are content with their current offerings of degrees at the AA level and partnerships they have established with transfer institutions. Two departments, however, would like to explore the offering of a baccalaureate degree.

Standard 2. G – Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities

Bellevue College offers a broad selection of continuing education and special learning activities in response to the diverse needs of its service district. Continuing education and special learning faculty, staff, and administrators demonstrate a commitment the campus mission, to program quality, and to serving students. They value collaboration, pluralism and diversity and are an integral part of the institutional mission. Instructional faculty is appropriately qualified to teach in designated community, applied or specialized programs (4.A.8). The result is a dynamic selection of quality credit and non-credit offerings designed to meet the alternative education, professional development, life-long learning and enrichment needs of area residents (2.G.1).

Most of BCs continuing education and special learning activities are organizationally placed in the Workforce Development and Instruction Units. The majority of certificate and non-credit programs are administered and managed in Continuing Education (CE). A few credit programs are administered in the Office of Instruction (OI) and Arts and Humanities Division (A&H) and managed in the Student Services Division.

CE, OI and A&H play distinct roles in the organization and are housed in clearly discernable and appropriate levels within the organization (2.G.4). A dean level administrator reporting to a vice-president in the case of CE and an executive dean of instruction in the case of OI and A&H leads each office.

BC's continuing education and special learning programs are delivered in various formats, at varying times and in numerous locations including the Main Campus, the North Campus, and in various community and workplace locations. The majority of BC's non-credit continuing education programs are offered at the North Campus.

CE's North Campus offerings are comprehensive and designed to meet the professional development, life-long learning and enrichment needs of area residents. Courses are provided in a variety of areas including the arts, business, computers & technology, health & medical, languages, life skills and personal enrichment. CE offerings are responsive to and contribute to the ongoing training needs of area employers.

The majority of programs offered by CE are non-credit; however, several credit programs are offered as well. Examples include the Venture associate degree and the Translation and Interpretation Certificates. The granting of credit for continuing education courses and

special learning activities is based on institutional policy and applied whenever located or however delivered (2.G.7).

The Real Estate and Fast Track (intensive training programs in a variety of information technology specialties) programs have both been eliminated since the last NWCCU comprehensive visit in 2005. These credit programs were eliminated in response to changing community demand. With cancellation of the Real Estate program, CE no longer contracts for credit course offerings from non-regionally accredited organizations. CE programs are currently striving to control and authenticate all course content within the division (2.G2).

All new credit and non-credit certificate offerings utilize the BC course approval process including review and approval by the college's Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) (2.G.3 &2.G.8). CE administrators consult with traditional departments and the CAC in the creation of new non-credit programs (2.H.1). Outcomes appear to be in place for credit courses and non-credit certificate programs, and continuous improvement and student responsiveness are dominant themes throughout the instructional unit (2.G.8).

CE students evaluate all non-credit certificate and credit course offerings and instructors (4.A.5). A standardized CE evaluation is administered, and the resulting data entered into an intranet database that allows for comparisons of all course sections and multiple courses/sections taught by individual instructors. Some program administrators do in-person interviews with program graduates to determine relevancy and effectiveness. A standardized evaluation of non-credit community courses is not uniformly administered.

Special learning activities on the main campus conduct program specific and course specific evaluations. Results of these evaluations appear to be utilized for effective formative assessment of program outcomes and services (2.G.8).

Continuing education and special learning activities at BC are comprehensive in scope and effectively and efficiently managed. Staff and faculty are engaged, mission driven and committed to serving students. The result is a broad selection of diverse course, program and certificate offerings that are responsive to local needs.

The continuing education faculty is qualified to teach in respective technical, professional and personal enrichment programs. The CE faculty is not required to participate in academic planning, curriculum development or institutional governance. There were no identified issues related to academic freedom, working conditions, or governance at the North Campus.

Policy 2.1 *General Education/Related Instruction Requirements*

Policy 2.1 specifies that transfer associate degree programs, as well as applied or specialized associate degree programs, and all certificate programs of an academic year or more in length, include a substantial core of General Education in the major areas of

knowledge, the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, mathematics, and the social sciences. Bellevue College offers nine different degrees including the Associate in Arts & Sciences, Associate of Business, Associate in Elementary Education, Associate in Math Education, Associate in Science Track 1 and 2, Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Arts, Associate in Arts in General Studies, and Associate in Occupational and Life Sciences. Additionally, they offer ninety-six professional technical degrees and certificate programs. Bellevue College requires that degree-seeking students include a minimum of 60 credits of General Education.

The College has a long history with General Education. The eighteen areas have been consolidated into 5 areas consisting of Reasoning, Communication, Responsibility, Cultural Traditions, and Science & Environment. All courses have been examined to see which ones teach significant parts of one or other of the areas. These are then listed for the students in division categories to choose the GE courses they want.

Each of the degrees incorporates a substantial core of general education instruction. The faculty in conjunction with administration and students developed the rationale and plan for the general education requirements. These General Education requirements are published in the course catalog and are also available on-line. The assessment element is not uniformly applied throughout the institution and data gathering is in its second iteration and is used well by some units but not uniformly by all.

The programs that offer a Certificate of Achievement of forty-five plus credits also contain a recognizable body of instruction in communication, computation, and human relations. These courses are offered either as specific courses or are embedded within the program curriculum.

General Education offerings are available in all the major disciplines providing ease of access to the students.

Policy 2.2 *Educational Assessment*

Bellevue College degrees and certificates have learning outcomes that reflect the college mission. (2.A.2) Degree and certificate programs are coherently designed and have appropriate breadth, depth and sequencing. (2.A.3) Effective advising practices are in place and evidence shows that distance education courses are consistent with on-campus courses (2.B.3).

Bellevue College has a relatively new comprehensive educational assessment process based at the program level. The process is in its infancy with only one year of data available. Program outcomes are published online; individual course outcomes are published on syllabi. Most programs provide evidence that assessment activities lead to the improvement of teaching and learning. Faculty meets on the annual assessment day to review assessment data, determine where successes and problems exist, create an action plan to mitigate areas of concern, and to begin working on improvements for their classes and programs.

The Effectiveness/Assessment Coordinator (new position) works with an Assessment Coordinating Team (ACT) of faculty from across the college. This team acts as a resource for faculty and also provides motivation and education on the assessment process. An extensive amount of information is available online regarding the assessment process/plan including terminology, types of assessment, how to determine learning outcomes, how to measure success, the use of rubrics, and principles of good assessment practice. The ACT also conducts workshops to educate faculty on these topics.

Program faculty at Bellevue College determines program outcomes and methods of assessment with oversight from the Assessment Coordinating Team (2.A.7). One course in each program was identified for assessment in 2007. These courses are either entry-level that was determined to be critical for student success in subsequent coursework, or they are capstone courses. Faculty should continue to evaluate the pilot courses and extend assessment to every course in the program.

The programs use a variety of appropriate measurement tools to determine the effectiveness of courses and student success. Program chairs presented assessment data for most of the initial pilot courses. The assessment plan calls for each program to continue with the assessment process for more courses in each program. The College has purchased software that organizes data and produces quantifiable outcomes information, but it is not fully operational.

Along with program assessment, the College also uses data from key performance indicators for student success such as the number of students who achieve grades of "C" or better in credit classes, the number of students completing credit classes, the number of degrees and certificates awarded, and how many students progress from developmental to college-credit courses. Data is also aggregated by race and gender.

The low graduation rate for Bellevue College appears troubling. However, conversations with faculty and administrators give several valid reasons for that data. Some students in the community college setting do not intend to graduate with a degree or certificate; others go on to a university without bothering to complete paperwork for graduation; students may come for a specific skill set, and when the courses they have taken meet those needs, they become employed. There are also a number of lifelong learning students. Data collected via a survey conducted by the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at Washington State University supports the anecdotal information. The most recent survey in the spring of 2008 received a 60% response rate of recent graduates and a 68% completion rate from graduates' employers. 64% of the respondents indicated that the main goal upon entering BC was employment, not graduation.

There is a "climate of assessment" at the College, and evidence shows that the assessment practices are being applied to more courses than those originally identified. However, through conversations with faculty, it was found that not all are participating in the assessment process. The process and integrity of the curriculum could be strengthened by all faculty fully participating in the assessment process, and by all courses being assessed. The assessment plan calls for full assessment of program courses and full participation of faculty in that endeavor. Bellevue College is encouraged to get everyone involved with the

assessment process and to fully assess all courses. It is also recommended that the assessment/effectiveness coordinator add data to the SPOL system as planned.

Policy 2.6 *Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate and Degree Programs*

A review of Bellevue College's (BC) *Self Study* and interviews with the Dean of Information Resources, the Director of Distance Education, and samples of faculty and students indicated that BC meets the Policy 2.6 requirements for distance delivery of courses, certificate and degree programs (DE). The evidence for this is presented below.

Approval and Purpose

Bellevue College currently offers over 260 courses, 10 certificate programs, four associate degrees and one baccalaureate degree and several other baccalaureate degrees in partnership with Washington State University via DE. All courses, certificates and degree programs are reviewed and approved by appropriate reviewing committees of the College and the State of Washington. This program supports BC's Mission, Goal 7, Technology and Leadership. Table 2.16 of the *Self Study* shows enrollment in DE courses has grown steadily since 1998. The DE program currently accounts for 19% of the FTE of the College.

Curriculum and Instruction

Bellevue College employs a variety of modalities for delivery of DE courses depending upon the type of course and/or program being considered. Online courses use Blackboard Vista course management system. Courses taught in hybrid formats may uses Blackboard Vista or SharePoint *My*Class. The baccalaureate program uses several interactive modalities to reach students. All modalities provide adequate opportunities for interaction between faculty and students and between students. In all instances sufficient training is provided to faculty as they prepare to offer courses through DE.

All DE courses receive the scrutiny from the offering department or division as courses offered on campus and are held to the same academic standards. Before courses may be offered the course must be approved by the department chair, division chair and Dean and the faculty member must sign a contract. (See Appendix L of the faculty contract.)

The college uses the Blackboard Vista course management system. In 2006 Blackboard acquired another course management company causing a critical system failures, disrupting the teaching and learning process. Although this problem was eventually corrected, there continues to be occasional problems requiring intervention by college personnel and Blackboard to effect repairs. These have led the college to explore alternative course management systems. A new system, Angel, was considered but Blackboard has since acquired this system as well. At the present time Blackboard Vista is still being used while alternative systems are being investigated.

Courses are evaluated by students on a regular basis using the same course evaluation form used in on campus courses and a few additional questions. This information is shared with the faculty member, division chair and, in the case of part-time faculty members, the department head.

All issues regarding course ownership, compensation, copyright issues, and utilization of revenue are governed by various sections of the faculty contract and/or the Library Media Center.

Library and Information Resources

The library and Library Media Center provides sufficient resources for students' use in taking online courses. Students have access to several online tutorials for the use of online databases and periodicals as well as direct links to appropriate web sites for the completion of their courses.

The student's use of resources is currently being tracked through a web tracking system that monitors the student's use of library resources. Blackboard Vista has the capability to find and verify plagiarism by students. Additionally, the Library Media Center provides online students with tutorials on appropriate citation of published resources. Other processes are also available for use by the faculty member and the student for appropriate completion of their online courses.

Students taking online courses have access to computers with appropriate software provided by the BC Computer Lab. Local students taking courses with laboratory components may use the laboratory on the campus. Students who cannot come to campus complete those laboratories in a facility nearby their homes.

Faculty Support

Faculty support for DE courses is provided through the Faculty Resource Center, Educational Technology Specialist and Curriculum Design Specialist. These groups 1) assist faculty in online course development; 2) provide technical support in appropriate use of technology; and 3) assist faculty in the design of courses to meet teaching and learning needs. These, along with the staff in the Distance Education Department, assure appropriate training and support of faculty for the delivery of online courses.

Student Services

Students are well supported by the College for their online education. The College provides access to online admission, registration, advising, financial aid, ordering and paying for textbooks. Additionally, access to English and math placement exams, tutoring are available. Online students also have access to the same informal and formal complaint procedures as on campus students.

The Distance Education Program website has links to current and upcoming quarter online courses. The department also publishes brochures as well as web advertisements for new courses and the partnership with Washington State University. Advertising and other information regarding Distance Education services are also available through the BC television station.

The Colleges open enrollment policies also apply to distance education students. Students may be assessed for their preparation and readiness for online education. Students experiencing technical problems may receive help from other students, faculty or DEP staff.

Facilities and Finances

The College recently made a major investment in the support of distance education. New equipment and remodeled space was provided for the FRC. Continual research on new applications and equipment occurs with input from a number of entities.

The DEP and vice president of information resources are responsible for long range planning and growth of DE. The program has grown substantially – 58% growth in FTE over the past five years. There is every indication that growth will continue.

Commitment to Support

The institution is committed to the growth of distance education programs. Faculty continually submits new programs. The baccalaureate program was recently placed on the list of options for online offerings. Such actions support the commitment of the institution to online education.

Evaluation and Assessment

All courses offered online are subjected to the same evaluation process as courses offered on campus, using the same form. Results of faculty evaluations are forwarded the division chairs and, when appropriate, the department chair.

Students are frequently surveyed by DEP. Online retention has increased from 71% to 77% between 2001 and 2006, and it continues to increase. Surveys also indicate that 92% or students are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their online experiences.

Integrity and credibility is provided by faculty having access to software to monitor student writing and plagiarism. Efforts at proctoring and monitoring exams are available and some faculty choose to have a mandatory on campus final exam. All courses offered online are held to the same outcome criteria as on campus courses.

STANDARD THREE: STUDENTS

Bellevue College's student and academic support services programs demonstrate a strong and energetic commitment to the success of its students. Their passion for the institutional goals of student access, success, and pluralism is evident through the programs and services provided by a highly professional and dedicated staff.

While the report below addresses the NWCCU Standards for "Students," it is important to note a few of the best practices recognized by accreditation evaluation team:

- The TRiO Program was recognized as a "best practice" program by the U. S. Department of Education for its graduation and retention rates.
- The College was one of the first Washington community colleges to pilot a new statewide student financial aid management system and contract for a robust degree audit system, both of which are a testimony to their willingness to be forward thinking in terms of improving services for students.
- The energy and high levels of involvement by its student leaders, as supported by departments such as MCS and Student Programs surpasses that of many peer institutions.
- The College has a remarkably low student loan default rate achieved by few other institutions, and was recognized by the U. S. Department of Education for their efforts in this area.

While the above list is by no means exhaustive, it is representative of a change in practice by the Student Services Division and something that staff recognized as developing over the previous three to five years. Moreover, individuals across the campus recognized the Division for its willingness to collaborate on a variety of co- and extra-curricular initiatives, all targeted towards student access, success and pluralism.

That said, the Student Services Division is well poised to support the applied baccalaureate programs.

Standard 3.A – Purpose and Organization

Bellevue College's vision, core values and mission statements directly address a commitment to student success and inclusion, tenants sometimes left solely to student services division to promote. The vision, core values, mission, institutional goals and affirmation of inclusion statement are found in prominent locations in the College's catalog and class schedule, as well as on the College's web site. The institution should be applauded for its strategic and intentional commitment to these values, as well as the institutional services which further this mission.

The student services division itself is organized to provide a fairly broad array of services in support of this mission; staff responsibilities, qualifications and professional development opportunities reflect a commitment to these efforts.

Details on specific policies and procedures are addressed throughout the Standard Three report. However, the Division as a whole has the key policies and procedures available through the College catalog, class schedule and website, as required in Standard 3.A.3. The online Student Handbook is an easy-to-use guide providing information on a wide array of programs, services, policies and other student-specific topics. The Handbook could be easily found on the College's web site using the search feature, although it was difficult to locate using navigation links.

During the 2005 accreditation visit, the College received a recommendation regarding the human, physical and financial resources devoted to student services. The College worked

to address this recommendation, as was acknowledged by the 2007 interim visit. Since that time, the College continues to consider student services human, physical and financial needs, as demonstrated by the establishment of the Student Success Initiative, redesign of the student services building to better accommodate customer traffic flow and office needs and assignment of expanded space for student clubs and organizations. While the division has not seen a large increase in staff, it has been able to re-align some of its practices in order to create more efficient processes and better serve students, and acknowledged that division leadership supports innovative strategies.

Across the board, student services staff felt supported by the institution and expressed appreciation that support of the division and its objectives continues.

Standard 3.B – General Responsibilities

While the Student Services Division itself does not have a mission statement, all programs within the Division have articulated department mission statements that tie back to institutional goals. In addition to mission statements, some student services departments have fully developed outcomes, have been actively assessing these outcomes and have made substantive changes to programs based on assessment results; they should be commended for their work in this regard. Other department's outcomes, however, take on a flavor more akin to annual projects lists, rather than long-term sustainable program direction. That aside, all Student Services Departments have begun using the College's Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOL) to track their outcomes or annual goals. With this, all student services departments should be encouraged to take assessment efforts to the next level to have a fully developed mission statement, assess true program/service outcomes, as well as actively work to improve services using assessment data.

To aid in Division (and institutional) assessment efforts, the College will need to continue support of institutional research efforts so that departments have ready access to needed longitudinal data, especially given the limitation of the State student information system. Additionally, department/program directors will need to involve appropriate staff in assessment efforts so that all understand their shared program mission and intended outcomes.

Because the Student Services Division is fairly new to comprehensive assessment efforts, some evidence suggests that not all understand how their individual efforts contribute towards a larger Division objective. Some direction may need to be provided in this regard, noting that a stronger understanding of the larger picture could evolve as individual departments become more skilled with assessment efforts.

Students have significant opportunities to participate in the College's governance process, and student leaders meet regularly with the College president and make presentations to the Board of Trustees. Student government, clubs and programs are actively engaged in supporting the College's mission regarding cultural pluralism, as demonstrated by their involvement with "town hall meetings" and development of the Bias Incident Response

Support Team (BIRST) and LGBTQ Center. Their willingness to connect their efforts to the College's mission demonstrates a high level of maturity, commitment, and leadership.

College faculty members are engaged in student success initiatives and goals. Examples of these efforts include:

- Instructional participation in the Student Services Cabinet meetings and involvement of the vice president for student services and associate dean for student success in the Educational Services Cabinet meeting;
- Faculty serving as advisors for One-Stop Services, as FYE instructors, and as student club advisors; and
- The Science Study Area.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Student Handbook provides a comprehensive listing of policies, including Student Rights and Freedoms; however, references to the Student Rights and Freedoms were not easily found within the catalog or class schedule. After some searching, the evaluation team was able to locate a brief reference to the College's academic honesty policy, although it was listed as "cheating and plagiarism" within the "Student Rights and Freedoms" policy. The College may consider developing this policy more fully and providing it in a more accessible format.

The College's student conduct process and grievance procedure could be easily located on the College's website via the Student Handbook and College catalog.

Bellevue College's comprehensive efforts regarding the safety and security of its students are to be applauded. Efforts include emergency response instructions in all classrooms, a trained community emergency response team, communication system with Bellevue Police Department and emergency response teams, 24/7 staffing, campus vehicular access and egress, campus emergency alert system and related initiatives. The College provides information regarding required campus crime reporting statistics via its website, as well as other emergency information.

The Bellevue College catalog adequately reflects admission requirements, enrollment policies and procedures, degree requirements and other student support services offerings. The catalog is available in both hard copy and electronically on the web and is produced annually. In addition to the catalog, the College publishes a student handbook, available in both hard copy and online. The Handbook contains a significant amount of helpful student information, including programs/services, student club information, student policies, emergency information and a link to the College catalog.

Standard 3.C - Academic Credit and Records

The College publishes its transfer credit policy in the College Catalog as well as on the College's web site. This includes descriptions of how AP test scores, IB scores and military credits are transferable to the College. There is sufficient evidence to support that the transcripting of college-level credit courses, developmental courses, and continuing education units are in keeping with AACRAO guidelines. The College's transcript key describes appropriate policies, such as grading scale, grade definitions, accreditation status and related policies.

The Registrar Services & Assessment department works closely with professional technical division, and now applied baccalaureate programs, to assess technical transfer credits.

Student records are stored in compliance with institutional required and AACRAO recommended guidelines.

The College is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and information related to the release of student directory information is appropriately published in college publications. Employees of the college are provided electronic access to student information in accordance with the scope of their responsibilities and responsibility for educating new employees regarding FERPA responsibilities to individual supervisors across the campus; however, little evidence exists as to what training is provided to those supervisiors. While the College will soon be implementing an online tutorial that employees must complete before gaining access to the student information system, the College may consider a more comprehensive training effort for all campus employees.

Standard 3.D – Student Services

Bellevue College is open to anyone over the age of 18 with a high school diploma, to 16 or 17-year olds with proof of GED completion or to Running Start Program participants. These admission standards are clearly part of the college catalog and available online. The College also has nine selective admission programs in addition to the bachelor of applied science/arts offering; ease of accessing the materials was not clear via the college catalog, but was available via the college's program specific web pages. As the College grows its applied baccalaureate programs, it may need to consider selective admission components in light of institutional open door mission.

The College's commitment to the diversity of its student body is evident through its mission statement, institutional goals regarding access and pluralism, and its "affirmation of inclusion" statement, all of which are prominently listed in the college catalog. The creation of the vice president for equity and pluralism and "ombuds" staff positions, the inclusion of pluralism advocates on many hiring committees, campus-wide trainings on intercultural competency and disability issues and the recent opening of the LGBTQ Center demonstrates a broader institutional commitment to diversity. Students who participated in the student forum and other meetings uniformly agreed that they felt welcomed and

supported, citing several opportunities to share about their own culture, as well as learn about other cultures.

Students have ready access to placement testing and results of their testing are used by college staff to place students into appropriate courses. Special note should be given to the College's One-Stop Matriculation program, which connects all new, first-time-in-college students to faculty advisors. This entry student intake process is critical to placing students into appropriate level courses. On a small note of concern, the College may need to examine its ability-to-benefit testing policy in order to be in compliance with federal financial aid regulations.

The institution's student rights and freedoms policy, as well as its academic probation/dismissal policy, is readily available through the student handbook and college catalog. Without some searching, however, it is more difficult to locate on the College's web site. It is important to note that while having and publishing a policy meets accreditation standards, the policy is not uniformly enforced for all students. In support of its institutional goal on student success, the College is piloting a process by which students on academic probation are required to meet with the associate dean for student success. Assessment results should be able to determine the effectiveness of this new approach and whether institutional energy focused this direction is worthwhile.

All of the required Student Right-to-Know (SRK) elements (including graduation rate and crime/statistics data) are appropriately disclosed in various publications.

Bellevue College administers a financial aid program consistent with its mission and limited institutional scholarship dollars. Recognizing its impact on student success, the program has its own internal processing goals and works actively to meet or exceed those goals. Department staff has access to training to stay current on federal regulations and impending changes and appears to be connected to peers in their state/region. Of note is the College's student loan default rate of 5.5%, a number enviable to many peer institutions.

Information regarding the different categories of financial assistance is available through appropriate publications and the College's website. Support may be needed to keep web materials more up-to-date and connected to an increasingly online process.

The institution provides a wide variety of support services, including specialized orientations for distinct populations; these include Running Start, international students, Trio, MCS and students wishing to apply for a competitive admissions process. Of special note is the College's First Year Experience program, a mandatory one-credit student success course (offered both in person and online) whose primary mission is the getting students on the right track and contribute to their long-term retention. While the program is fairly new to the institution, it has already made adjustments based on assessment data and early data suggests that the program is effective in reaching its retention goals; as such, it may serve as a model for other Student Services Division assessment efforts.

Academic advising is provided for all new, first-time-in-college students via the One-Stop Matriculation program and for all new, transfer in students via EPAC. Continuing students are not permanently assigned an academic advisor, but may connect with faculty advisors directly or via the Division Advising Facilitators. Of special note is EPAC's recent initiative to hire and train faculty to serve as advisors to all new, first-time-in-college students. This program has contributed to a stronger, campus-wide understanding of issues facing new-to-college students and serves as a model for other campuses in terms of cross-unit collaboration. The College will need to consider how this new model will be sustained as the college increases its enrollment and scope.

Bellevue College provides career counseling, job search, internship placement, career interest assessments, career planning courses and related activities through the Center for Career Connections. The department is very active in researching and applying for grants to sustain and expand its services, including a recent NSF grant for career pathways. Its location near EPAC, TRiO, MCS and other student support services provides for strong synergy and student referral between departments.

While mental health care is not required of the College, BC does provide comprehensive services and/or referral for students in need. The Division may wish to consider how to best provide these services during summer terms given its growing population. Food service is provided on the campus, including limited evening hours to accommodate evening students. Informal conversations with students indicate a satisfaction with the variety of items provided.

The institution provides students from a wide variety of backgrounds with significant opportunities to get involved in campus activities. This includes leadership activities such as student government, student fee association, Black Student Union, Gay Straight Alliance, political science club and a myriad of other co- and extra-curricular activities. Campus student programs and clubs include leadership opportunities, business or job-related experiences, connections to campus faculty and staff and other critical lifelong skills. Other programs supporting traditionally underrepresented populations include:

- Multicultural Services: Provides personal support to a variety of students, including advising, financial aid assistance, leadership opportunities and activities. MCS also provides campus wide training to promote the values of cultural competency and inclusivity.

- International Student Programs: Services include home stay placement, cultural adjustment assistance, academic advising and academic achievement financial awards. International Student Programs staff expressed that they had sufficient professional development support to stay abreast of changing regulations and that the recent move to a new facility addressed physical space needs.

- Disability Resources Center: Provides traditional classroom accommodations to students with disabilities. Staff indicates that they have the professional development opportunities needed to stay current with regulations. Of special note

is the training the department coordinates for campus faculty and staff, including training on understanding PTSD and ADHD, a "disability pride" event, Ability Experience Day, and workshops from "It Had to Be" productions.

- TRiO Programs: While TRiO receives its funding from outside sources, its services can serve as a model for any program attempting to affect institutional goals of access, success and persistence.

- CEO: Specialized program and support services for high school drop outs to provide guidance, accountability standards, academic advising, personal success and career exploration training/coursework and related support to students who have dropped out of high school and wish to pursue a professional technical program.

The Campus Bookstore stays abreast of best practices by offering an innovative textbook rental program, thereby increasing access and affordability for students, as well as offering an expansive online textbook ordering system. The Bookstore supplies all needed textbooks and other course supplies, including a specialized retail outlet location for art students.

Bellevue College has a student run newspaper and literary magazine, Arnazella. However, policies regarding the institution's relationship to these student publications were not found on the college's website, in the Student Handbook or college catalog or on media department web pages and should be addressed.

Standard 3.E – Intercollegiate Athletics

Bellevue College participates in intercollegiate athletics and manages these programs effectively in alignment with its institutional mission. The athletic teams include four men's teams and six women's team, with 2008-09 NWAAC reports numbers listing 77 male participants and 76 female participants. The associate director plays an active role in helping students with academic advising and ensuring student athlete compliance with NWAAC and Division regulations.

Policy 3.1 *Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status*

Bellevue College's promotional publications and admissions office practices adhere to appropriate accreditation standards, as well as the "Principles of Good Practice" as described by the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC). Evidence of compliance with the accreditation standard include:

- Official College publications appropriately reflect institutional mission and goals and promote educational programs and services;
- Statements and representations in College publications are reasonably clear, factually accurate and current;

- College catalog accurately depicts information on the academic calendar, courses, programs, degree/certificate completion, eligibility for licensure upon program completion, enrollment procedures and other information required by NWCCU;
- Admissions Officers are well qualified and effectively carry out the work of student recruitment with a team of trained student ambassadors that represent the College well.
- Degrees held by faculty with the conferring institution are appropriately reflected in the College catalog.
- Representation of accreditation status is appropriately depicted in college publications.

Standard Four – Faculty

Standard 4.A – Faculty Selection, Evaluation, Roles, Welfare, and Development

Bellevue College employs professionally qualified faculty with primary commitment to the institution and representative of each field and program in which it offers major work. Only a small percentage (7.1%) of full-time faculty are at the bachelor's or associate's levels, and those faculty teach in professional and technical fields where such credential levels is appropriate. Where this occurs, the appropriate credentials are specified by the Washington Administrative Code standards.

There is evidence that the faculty participate at all levels of academic planning. The core curricular planning is clearly in the hands of the faculty, beginning at the department level and continuing through the Curriculum Advisory Committee, which then makes recommendations to the Executive Dean of Instruction. Each major division has faculty representatives on the Curriculum Advisory Committee, and the committee is comprised primarily of faculty. Faculty is the impetus for curriculum development and review, which occurs at the program level with reports being submitted to the Executive Dean of Instruction every five years. Within departments and programs, assessment activities occur at the classroom levels and are conducted by the faculty. Clearly, faculty are the primary keepers of the curriculum. There is also evidence that faculty are highly involved in institutional governance bodies, including the All College Council, Curriculum Advisory Council, and various task forces.

Faculty workloads are consistent with workloads at similar institutions, with the standard full-time faculty load at three 5-credit courses per quarter. Parameters for exceeding this workload are specified through the collective bargaining unit contract. Concern was expressed among numerous faculty across the college that increased enrollment over recent years without an increase in the percentage of full-time faculty has resulted in an increase in faculty responsibilities for shared governance, committee work, and other institutional activities that is not sustainable. While it is understood that significant budgetary challenges face the college, part-time faculty workloads are typically at or below the 50% mark. Faculty are encouraged to take advantage of professional development

opportunities appropriate to one's discipline, including regional and national conferences and workshops, and financial resources are sufficient and are equitably available to all faculty members, including part-time faculty.

Policies on salaries and benefits are clearly stated and equitably administered in keeping with Bellevue College's commitment to pluralism. As stated in the Self-Study, "faculty salaries, benefits, and personnel issues are governed by the faculty contract." Salaries are consistent with similar positions at institutions of higher education in the region.

Processes have been developed and implemented by the college for regular and systematic evaluation of faculty performance, including tenure review and promotion, post-tenure review, and the evaluation of part-time faculty. Especially noteworthy are the efforts to improve and more widely implement evaluation of part-time faculty, which has been pursued with the primary goal of faculty development and improvement. The evaluation process and forms are uniform and encourage equitable and helpful evaluation of part-time faculty. See discussion under "Policy 4.1, "Faculty Evaluation," below.

The institution has established an orderly process for the recruitment and appointment of full-time faculty, and the policies and procedures are published in Article 11 of the collective bargaining agreement. The process includes faculty and administration, and is assisted by the Office of Human Resources. The Self-Study indicates that "the process for recruiting and appointing new full-time faculty begins with a review of program growth and decline, particularly full-time to part-time ratios college-wide and in individual programs." It is hard to substantiate this given the flat-growth of full-time faculty in ratio to part-time faculty, despite the stated commitment of "the college's intention and commitment to improve the number of full-time faculty to 60 percent."

The college's policy on Academic Freedom is clearly articulated in the collective bargaining agreement, Article Eight, Section VI. The policy is robust in its support of and commitment to academic freedom, and meets Commission Eligibility Requirement 11. While faculty in some divisions clearly feel academic freedom is pro-actively supported, those in other divisions expressed reservations about how widely embraced the policy is among other factions of the college, including some administrators, and don't feel as supported in this area. The college might consider initiating a college-wide dialog in which definitions and policies on academic freedom are more widely disseminated in order to help clarify for all faculty as well as staff.

The hiring of part-time faculty is the responsibility of the Organizational Unit Administrators (dean level Division leaders) and program and department chairs. It is the norm to hire part-time faculty who meet the same credentialing requirements used for full-time faculty, and faculty are orientated in most cases either directly by the hiring program chair or a volunteer mentor. Circle of Colleagues: Instructor's Manual for Bellevue Community College is provided to new faculty and includes information regarding the institution, the work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and conditions of employment.

The college assesses institutional policies concerning the use of part-time and adjunct faculty, as demonstrated by a stated concern in the Self-Study is that the "shift away from tenured and tenure-track faculty cuts across colleges and universities and is a consistent trend at the national and state level as well as at [Bellevue College]." The evaluation team shares this concern, as alluded to at points in the discussion above. As this concern demonstrates an inconsistency between college vision and actual practice, as well as having the potential for severely affecting faculty effectiveness in both instruction and shared governance, the college should engage in robust exploration of means for alleviating the problem.

Standard 4.B – Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation

While the college, as a community college, emphasizes teaching and service as the primary aspects of a faculty appointment, it holds scholarship as a key goal in that it "stresses the importance of faculty engagement in scholarship and artistic creation." There is significant evidence of this in the form of faculty publications in creative as well as scholarly venues, as well as participation in regional and national conferences, including the presentation of papers at such academic gatherings.

The college has policies in place that provide for faculty development funds and sabbaticals. Professional development funds are available in the average amount of $1080 per academic year, and are distributed to divisions for disbursement. Disbursements are made in the form of faculty-juried proposals, and part-time faculty is eligible for these funds. Faculty are eligible for sabbaticals after three years of service to the college, although limited sabbaticals were granted in the 2008-09 academic year due to budget constraints.

Standard 4 Concerns

- A robust review of faculty workloads should be undertaken; in particular, the number of full-time faculty, in the face of increased enrollment and more than 70 governance and student life committees and organizations, is being stretched thin. The college may be at risk of losing either faculty involvement outside of the classroom or adversely affecting the ability of the faculty to provide exemplary delivery of the curriculum (4.A.3).

- The college should consider bringing into alignment its stated goal of increasing the full-time to part-time faculty ratio. According to the Self-Study, the current full-time / part-time faculty ratio is 4.3:5.7 while the college's stated goal is 6:4 (4.A.10).

Policy 4.1 *Faculty Evaluation*

Bellevue College evaluates the performance of its faculty members and provides for their development on a continuing basis. Evaluation of both part time and full time faculty is comprehensive and systematic. Multiple indices are used and include peer, student, self, and administrative evaluations. Evaluation of full and part time faculty is governed by the collective bargaining agreement between the faculty association and the College Board of Trustees.

In its evaluation of the College in 2005, the NWCCU visiting team made four recommendations, one of which concerned Standard 4.A.5 and Policy 4.1.c. After evaluation of the 2007 progress report, the Commission determined that the college had remedied the conditions. The College continues to improve its faculty evaluation processes. For example, a review of Human Resources office documents indicates that post-tenured faculty evaluation completion rates increased from 77% in 2007-2008 to 100% in 2008-2009. In faculty interviews, faculty perceptions that post-tenured evaluations now are being consistently completed reiterate this finding.

Although the College continues to improve its faculty evaluation processes, one area needing improvement is consistent use of evaluative criteria for post-tenured faculty evaluation. Appendix A of the 2007-2009 faculty contract states five areas to be used as evaluative criteria for tenured faculty evaluation: teaching, advising, service to the college, professional development, and service to the community. A review of a sample of post-tenure evaluations in faculty files held in the Human Resources office reveals variation in the application of these criteria. Fifty percent of the post-tenure evaluations reviewed contain reference to all of the criteria while another 50% partially or do not address the required criteria. The evaluative criteria were modified in contract negotiations in summer 2008 and became effective fall of that year. It is important for the College to ensure the revised criteria are consistently being applied in all post-tenured faculty evaluations.

The self-study indicates that the post-tenure evaluation process is not widely understood nor appreciated by faculty. In interviews, however, faculty perceive the post-tenure evaluation process as comprehensible, beneficial to continuing professional development, and contributive to improvement in instruction.

The College provides for the annual evaluation of new faculty as part of a tenure process extending over three years. The evaluation process also provides for regular and systematic opportunities for new faculty to improve and develop as effective instructors.

Standard Five – Library and Information Resources

Library Media Center

Standard 5.A – Purpose and Scope
The purpose and scope of the Library Media Center (LMC) is to support the curriculum at an associate level in most areas and at a baccalaureate level in Interior Design (BAA) and Radiation and Imaging Science (BAS). In the 2005 self-study found the core collection to be insufficient for the college mission.   The Visiting team subsequently recommended, "…that the core collections and related information resources be sufficient to support the curriculum" (5.A.2). In the Executive Summary of the 2009 self-study, Bellevue reports that, "Based on the (interim) report, the Commission determined that BC… was in compliance on… the library core collection" (p 7).   The library has sufficient funding, staff and electronic access to continue in support of the college mission.

Standard 5.B – Information Resources and Services

The LMC has adequate library resources and services to support the associate degrees and certificates offered by Bellevue College (5.A & 5.B). The collection development plan involves division faculty and library resources to acquire the best books in the many disciplines. Collections are readily available to students at the library or through electronic access from off-campus (5.C) and the library has developed on-line and compact disk instruction to aid faculty and students. LMC faculty have much to show for their efforts in library instruction (5.B.2). Library Instruction classes increased 38% between 97-98 and 07-08. The Library Media Center enjoys an excellent reputation across campus and is involved in curriculum development through the Curriculum Advisory Committee (5.D.5).

The addition of the Bachelors of Applied Science (BAS) in Radiation and Imaging Science (R&IS) has increased the demands placed on LMC resources and staff. Bellevue College prepared for the increased demands of the BAS by adding funds to the LMC subscription budget and in 2007 a one-time allocation of $25,000 for materials. With attention to collection development and building on the success of the library instruction program, the collections for ID and R&IS can be sustained at baccalaureate level.

Standard 5.C – Facilities and Access

The library is large and the shelves spacious. 10 group study rooms and 2 electronic classrooms is a remarkable student-centered utilization of space. The library staff showed much forethought in the redesign of the library.

Standard 5.C.2 states "… Cooperative relationships and externally provided information sources complement rather than substitute for the institution's own adequate and accessible core collection and services." The LMC has an informal, complementary relationship with the University of Washington health sciences library (*Self Study,* p. 147) to help support the Radiation and Imaging Science BAS. Bellevue is also an active member

of the Library Media Directors Council (LMDC). LMDC is composed of 33 Washington technical and community colleges and there are reciprocal borrowing agreements.

Standard 5.D – Personnel and Management

Page 152 of the *Self Study* describes the collection development process as collaborative between library faculty and program faculty. "(L)ibrarian division liaisons work with discipline faculty in selecting materials that are unique to a particular program or discipline."

Leadership in the library is apparent from the statement in the February 2008, self-study minutes: "We are going through accreditation because we are becoming a baccalaureate institution. We have to address what the ramifications of the BAS degree will be as our institution expands (so the library resources will have to be expanded to accommodate the needs of the more developed 4 year programs of study we now offer). We need to know what has been discussed in previous accreditation meetings (particularly those that have occurred between the other schools going through the same community college to baccalaureate process)."

The Library Advisory committee provides subject expertise and faculty on the committee have made an effort to educate other faculty in how to build a library collection. The Advisory committee meets twice a year.

Standard 5.E – Planning and Evaluation

Librarian involvement with Instructional Resources, Distance Education, Instructional Pluralism Committee and the Teaching Institute create linkages that ultimately benefit student learning. Important linkages exist between the LMC and other Washington community colleges and Bellevue was the leader in establishing a purchasing relationship with the Orbis Cascade Alliance (5.E.2).

Evaluation is an important part of the work done by LMC staff. The LMC conducts regular surveys of faculty and students and these surveys extend to distance programs also. Most notable, in evaluation of the Radiation and Imaging Science class RAIM 301, Essentials of Imaging and Therapy, is an on-line quiz crafted by the librarians. 9 of 11 students correctly answered 20 or more questions (out of 30 questions) correctly. The library staff members are currently assessing how to improve instruction so students will learn more and their scores will improve.

Information Resources

Standard 5.A – Purpose and Scope

The governance system:

The primary goals of Information Resources (IR), as stated in the IR strategic plan, are: 1. Technology Leadership, 2. Provide access to Self-Directed Services, 3. Deliver Accessible Information Technology, 3. Provide Quality, 4. Reliable Infrastructure, 5. Support Teaching and Learning Excellence, 6. Participate Collaboratively and Maintain Accountability. These goals are aligned with the goals of Bellevue College (5.A.1) which are: 1. Access, 2. Student Success, 3. Teaching and Learning Excellence, 4. Institutional Accountability, 5. Professional and Organizational Excellence, 6. Financial Sustainability, 7. Technology Leadership, 8. Pluralism and 9. Community Leadership and Partnership (2009 self-study p. 19).

The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) is the capstone of the committees assisting IR and policies and standards are decided by the committee.   It is chaired by the Dean of IR and has required membership of two or three Faculty – appointed by the Faculty Association, two or three Classified Staff – appointed by the CEABCC, two or three Administrators – appointed by the President, and one Student – appointed by ASBCC. Ex officio Members are the Director of Computing Services, Director of Technology Development and Support and IT Security Administrator. Examples of topics tackled by TAC are: Emergency Procedures, Electronic Data Retention, BCC URL change, Blackboard Vista, Acceptable Use Policy, and Classroom Clickers. (TAC minutes 5-30-07)

Standard 5.B – Information Resources and Services

IR policies and procedures are well documented and easily accessible through the myBC portal.

There are opportunities for staff, faculty and students to serve on all IR-related committees (5.B.4). A student leader chairs the Technology Fee Oversight Committee. All meetings are open to anyone interested in agenda items and minutes are posted on the Portal for all staff, faculty and students to read.

Through committees IR discovers the needs of the students, faculty and staff (5.A.3). An example of this is the i-BC committee. Any student, staff or faculty person may submit a project proposal to the i-BC committee. The 30-member committee represents all aspects of the BC community and the committee creates a prioritized list of all proposals. The proposals are evaluated on their relationship to the BC strategic plan and available funding. Proposals that are not funded may resubmit to i-BC the next year. Proposals are then advanced to President's Staff for final approval.

Standard 5.C – Facilities and Access

Security is a strategic goal for IR (5.D.6) (5.B.3) and comments made during the visiting team's meeting with the faculty indicate IR is in a balancing act between rigorous security and fluid access. When asked about shareware, or CDs that accompany textbooks, members of the Technology Advisory Committee agreed that they start from the assumption that the College "can't use the software unless the vendor licenses it to us." IR will load any software after they have vetted the licensing and technical compatibility of the software. There is a form associated with this process and the process does take time.

Standard 5.D – Personnel and Management

When the visiting team met with staff the general consensus was, "Because IR staff are so efficient, they make everyone else more efficient." In meetings with library staff and baccalaureate staff there was agreement that IR staff are adequate in number and expertise (5.D) to quickly provide assistance. For the most part this rapid response is attributable to the cross-training staff receive in Computing Services. The help desk is an important function of Computing Services and the telephones are programmed to ring at all desks so that potentially frustrated staff always reach a competent troubleshooter.

IR also develops software that helps the College run more effectively such as the Time and Leave Reporting program. This form allows staff to record their work hours from any location. The money to continue software development is the most critical challenge facing IR. Programmers earn more at entry level in the private sector than the college salary structure provides. Because technology pervades all aspects of Bellevue College, including the College mission, the challenge is being met by internal training programs (5.D.3).

Standard 5.E – Planning and Evaluation

IR also utilizes focus groups, brown bags and surveys to gauge the needs of staff, faculty and students (5.E). One common need is training. IR is working with Human Resources on definitions of computer literacy for staff and faculty (5.B.2). IR also provides guidance concerning policies, regulations and procedures for use of information resources. For example the webpublishing web page offers advice on, "Build a Website," "Style Your Website," "Standards," and "Logo Guide." All security guidelines are available through the portal at go.mybcc.net/ir/Pages/default.aspx.

IR may have offices all over campus but it is obvious the work is central to the future success of Bellevue College. Whether in the classroom, or through Distance Learning, the focus of the Information Resources staff on teaching and learning is apparent. This is best exemplified by a goal from the IR strategic plan.

Goal # 5 - Support Teaching and Learning Excellence
5.3.4 – Expand technologies of engagement on campus. Examples may include:
      1) Use of video, audio, whiteboard, etc.,

2) Voiceover IP, Increased use of WIKI type interfaces,
3) Increased use of collaborative development spaces ,
4) Increased ability of groups of students, faculty, staff, etc to come together
    spontaneously online,
5) Increase use of BLOG software and BLOG communities,
6) Use of classroom electronic wireless polling technologies,
7) Expanded use of handheld and portable technologies.

Standard Six – Governance and Administration

Standard 6.A – Governance System

The governance system at Bellevue College is stable, mature, and capably facilitating the accomplishment of the institution's mission and goals. Lines of authority flowing from the State Board of Community and Technology Colleges (SBCTC) through the Board of Trustees are clear. The Community College Act of 1967 defined that relationship and other rules and bylaws are codified in the Washington Administrative Code, Title 132.

Roles, policies, and expectations for all employee groups are delineated in administrator and employee handbooks, collective bargaining agreements, and student charters. The system of governance is well understood on campus and the level of shared governance is commendable (2.A.3).

While the committee structure on campus is complex (over 40 committees are involved), it is working well. With an eye to simplifying of streamlining various processes, the campus – through collaborative efforts by members of the president's staff and bargaining association representatives – is reviewing its committee structures.

Standard B – Governing Board

The governor appoints the five members of the Board of Trustees for five-year terms. It is a diverse and active board that represents the public interest (2.B.1) and acts as a committee of the whole (2.B.2). While generally defined by statute, operating policy and manual exist at the campus level, further defining rights and responsibilities, academic freedom, a code of ethics, and a listing of personal responsibilities (6.B.3). Members of the evaluation committee met with all members of the Board, save one who is retiring. Board members were engaged with the institution, aware of its challenges, and fully cognizant of their role. Board members were aware of and involved in the accreditation process (6.B.9). The Board played an appropriate role in the review and approval process as the institution revised its mission, and it reviews and approves programmatic changes including the two baccalaureate offerings. Board functions include an annual evaluation of the president (6.B.4). The Board also evaluates itself regularly.

While providing appropriate oversight and approval of the institution's staffing and administrative structure (6.B.7), the Board approves short-term issues such as annual budget and audits and plays a significant role in long-term planning (6.B.8).

Standard 6.C – Leadership and Management

A long-serving president has provided leadership and inspiration to a campus that has undergone significant change – enrollment growth, increasing complexity in operations, administrative changes, budget rescissions, and a revision of mission (6.C.1). An administrative manual outlines clearly the responsibilities and expectations for the well-qualified administrators who follow those policies closely (6.C.2 & 6.C.3). Regular evaluation of administrators has been implemented (6.C.3).

Shared governance of the institution is a strength and collaboration between administrative units is manifest in campus efforts to attain goals and fulfill its mission (6.C.6). Wide use of institutional data for evaluation and decision-making characterizes the management of Bellevue College and new supportive data systems should strengthen those efforts (6.C.7).

The institutional advancement office has provided assistance in advancing mission and goals. In providing support with accurate external communication, with fundraising and grants supporting broad areas of need, and with maintenance of legislative good will, the unit appears to be highly effective (6.C.4).

Standard 6.D – Faculty Role in Governance

The faculty role in governance and the level of participation is noteworthy, extensive, and useful. Building on a tradition of shared governance, Bellevue College has provided multiple opportunities for faculty engagement in most aspects of recommendation and decision-making. Provisions such as financial support for part-time faculty's participation, a Wednesday afternoon set aside for governance activities, and establishment of key multi-constituency committees is commendable.

Standard 6.E – Student Role in Governance

The student role in governance at Bellevue College is extensive and significant. Service on and leadership for key governance entities has been encouraged and supported by the Office of Student Programs. The institution has recognized the value of hearing the student voice. Student participation includes the Tenure Review Committee.

Policy 6.1 *Affirmative action and Nondiscrimination*

The culture at Bellevue College resonates with concern for pluralism, inclusion, and cultural diversity. A formal campus "affirmation of inclusion" (1992), an array of policies, and offices providing administrative support for its efforts all underline the seriousness with which the campus approaches these matters. Updated policies, a new policy

regarding Prevention of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (2009), creation of an "ombuds" office, and a vice presidential level office of equity and pluralism (VPEP) leave little doubt regarding institutional concern and action under this policy.

Policy 6.2 *Collective Bargaining*

Three units – Bellevue Community College Association of Higher Education (BCCAHE) representing faculty; Washington Public Employees Association (WPEA) representing administrative and professional/technical classified staff; and the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) representing custodial, maintenance and mailroom staff – have contracts negotiated locally (faculty) or state-wide (classified staff). Units seem well designed and appropriately represented. All appropriate documents relating to collective bargaining were available for review.

Faculty through BCCAHE representation are engaged with the institution, demonstrate concern for its issues, and seem thoughtful participants in their role.

Standard Seven – Finance

Bellevue College (BC) is one of 34 public community and technical colleges in the State of Washington and part of the Washington State Community and Technical College System. As part of a state system, it receives significant oversight from the state through a series of policies and procedures and utilizes a centralized administrative system for financial and information reporting. The College is audited by the Washington State Auditors office on an annual basis.

7.A - Financial Planning

Financial planning is relatively centralized at BC, while budgeting is a more distributed process. The Board of Trustees reviews and approves a summary operating budget; however, the initial budget details are crafted through a process in which departments propose new initiatives linked to the strategic plan and divisions prioritize the requests. The requests are considered for funding within budget priorities that have been approved by the President's staff and Planning Council. The next stage of the process occurs when requests are reprioritized at the college level by both the President's staff and the Planning Council. The two groups then reconcile their prioritizations through a joint meeting. Final funding decisions utilize the prioritized lists together with decisions on balancing revenues and expenditures with available resources. The college has made informing staff about the impacts of reductions in state appropriations and their impacts on college operations a greater priority, with both frequent email updates as well as budget "road shows" explaining budget information.

The College utilizes a simple three-year projection of revenues and expenditures that is based on limited changes from current year operations rather than linked to the plans for expected changes in FTE levels or other operational changes.

The College is encouraged to incorporate a more dynamic three-year projection into the budgeting process. Doing so will maximize the projections utility and allow for earlier recognition of budget shortfalls or enhancement opportunities (Standard 7.A.2.).

Standard 7.B – Adequacy of Financial Resources

The College demonstrates a strong commitment to seek and utilizes different sources of revenue to augment its primary sources of funds that are state appropriations, and tuition and fees. In particular the local dedicated funds (Continuing Education, class/lab fees) and grants and contracts continue to garner additional support for the College budget (7.B - Adequacy of Financial Resources).

While State appropriations have undergone significant losses in the last two years and uncertainty clouds future recovery, the College has continued on a growth trajectory in serving students, with a greater portion unfunded by state resources. This has been accomplished through a conservative use of financial resources, shared participation in the allocation process, and cooperation of constituent groups. While currently there appears to be adequate resources, the sustainability of programs and services at the current level is something that will require close monitoring.

BC has adequate resources to meet debt service requirements. Bellevue College has adequate reserve funds for operations as well as a strategy to fund reserve for lease obligations or capital acquisitions.

Standard 7.C– Financial Management

The Vice President of Administrative Services serves as the chief financial officer of the College and reports directly to the President. The Financial Services and Budget, Grants and Contracts Departments are adequately staffed and the personnel are qualified for the positions they hold.

While the College does not prepare unaudited financial statements since they are not required as part of the Washington State Community and Technical College System, it does have a regular system of reporting the financial condition of the institution to the Board of Trustees which provides information on the financial stability of the institution. The college is encouraged to complement its accounting system and external audit with a well organized program of controls and/or internal audit to increase reliance on these internal financial statements (7.C.11).

As the college has grown over the last decade in both physical size and complexity, the business organization has been relatively stable. The College is encouraged to match the complexity of its business organization with the complexity and size of its institution as this growth occurs (7.C.2).

7.D - Fundraising and Development

Fundraising activities are governed by institutional policies and are conducted in a professional and ethical manner. Foundation and College endowments and their investments are administered by a foundation finance committee and College administrators respectively. The organization maintains complete records concerning these funds.

The Foundation has aligned its fundraising to the college strategic initiatives, particularly with its new capital campaign. The economic downturn has impacted the ability of the foundation to provide the same level of resources to the student and programs of Bellevue College, but the early stages of the capital campaign are beginning to provide growth in donations.

The institution has a clearly defined relationship with the foundation that is periodically reviewed.

Findings and Conclusions

The College has a budget development process that solicits new initiatives from across the institution that is linked to the strategic plan. Financial projections of revenues and expenditures are limited in scope but are appropriate under the standard established in **Standard 7.A.2**. Unrestricted Financial reserves are adequate to meet fluctuations in operating revenue and expenses. The Foundation has an organized development program aligned to the college's strategic initiatives.

Standard Eight - Physical Resources

The campus of Bellevue College is located in Bellevue, Washington. It is situated on 100 acres and comprised of 15 major buildings, and nine residential properties. The three largest buildings were constructed between 1980 and 2004.

Standard 8.A - Instructional and Support Facilities

The College has successfully addressed a number of facility needs through capital appropriations for new buildings and remodeling in the last 10 years. The assessment by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges by independent engineering firms ranks college facilities from adequate to superior in condition. The ranking determines funding for remodeling or major maintenance funds for the colleges. The capital construction requests are ranked according to criteria defined by the state. Most recently the College has been successful in completing a new 64,238 square foot science and technology building and securing state design funds for a 70,000 square-foot health science building. Construction could begin in the 2011-2013 biennium.

As a part the construction and renovation projects completed in the last 7 years, furnishings have been added as components of the projects. This has significantly improved

the overall condition and use of the furnishings in these areas. Overall the College's campuses are adequately furnished and equipped to meet student and staff needs.

While new and remodeled construction is built to current accessibility codes, not all facilities are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. The College has been able to make reasonable accommodations.

Standard 8.B – Equipment and Materials

Overall the College's campuses are adequately equipped to meet both educational and administrative requirements. With a practice of spending a portion of carryover on one-time expenditures rather than ongoing expenses, a portion of the of instructional equipment and furnishings are able to be replaced annually, thereby keeping equipment more current.

Standard 8.C – Physical Resources Planning

The College has a master facilities plan that is consistent with the mission and the long-range educational plan of the institution and is periodically updated as needs or circumstances change. The plan is excellent, has been implemented well over the past 10 years, and continues to provide a roadmap for future growth. Planned development indicates this is a living document and an effective tool for both garnering construction funds and executing the development of future programs or expanding service areas. Governing board members and affected constituent groups involvement is evident in the plan document.

Findings and Conclusions

There have been continued improvements to functionality, capacity, and condition of the Bellevue campus and its equipment as well as the creation of new facilities since the last full accreditation. The Master Facilities Plan has been well crafted, updated and implemented throughout this period, and continues to set the stage for improvements to the facilities of the College. The improvements to the facilities have been well executed, with significant benefits to the services delivered to students.

Standard Nine – Institutional Integrity

Standard Nine – Institutional Integrity

Evidence of adherence to high ethical standards is found in the policies, procedures, and general management of Bellevue College. The review of current policies related to academic freedom, conflict of interest, fair treatment of all constituencies, accuracy of

institutional representation, codes of conduct and ethical behavior is on-going (9A1–5) and accomplished in the context of shared governance. For example, the Publications Approval Policy was revised in 2007 to ensure the continuing integrity of official published information. The college's policies and procedures are available in a searchable database and updates or changes are noted by email communication to the entire campus. While ethical issues are noted prominently in an array of campus publications, annual reminders regarding ethical conduct are sent to the entire staff each fall. Mandatory anti-discrimination training is provided to all full-time employees complementing a new anti-discrimination, harassment and retaliation policy.

Historical strength in this area flows from the Bellevue College mission and 2004 – 2011 Goals. The college devotes considerable resources and energy to the maintenance of high ethical standards and succeeds admirably.

Policy 9.1 *Institutional Integrity*

The openness of Bellevue College's shared governance system, the relative transparency of its administrative operations, the policies that govern internal and external relationships, and the institutional commitment to the thoughtful exchange of ideas and civility all contribute to a culture that supports institutional integrity. Academic freedom is a given as is a determination to conduct its various operations and decision making with the support of widely available and useful data. The campus demonstrates a high level of institutional integrity.

General Commendations and Recommendation

Commendations:

1. The evaluation committee commends Bellevue College Trustees and administration for the exceptional leadership they have provided in facing the challenges of declining resources and rapidly growing enrollment, while simultaneously planning for the next phase of institutional development.

2. The evaluation committee commends the Bellevue College community—administration, faculty, staff, and students—for the many instances of creative and collaborative effort shown in continuing excellent services in the face of declining resources.

3. The evaluation committee commends the Bellevue College faculty—full- and part-time—for their commitment to student success, their excitement and attention to student learning.

4. The evaluation committee commends Bellevue College for the significant inclusion of students in the shared governance processes providing leadership experiences while enriching the decision-making process with student perspectives.

5. The evaluation committee commends Bellevue College for the quality and scope of its continuing education and special learning programs. The extensive selection of programs and offerings is responsive to the diverse and dynamic needs of the community.

Recommendation:

1. The evaluation committee recommends that the academic assessment plan be fully implemented with all courses being assessed (2.B.1). It is further recommended that all faculty engage fully in the assessment process (2.B.1 and Policy 2.2).