

# MID-CYCLE EVALUATION

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Dr. Rachel Solemsaas  
Neal Parker

*President*  
*Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation Liaison Officer*

## CONTRIBUTORS

Alissa Agnello	<i>Dean of Math &amp; Science</i>
Tina Akinyi	<i>Director of LSAMP</i>
Jessica Albavera	<i>Pathways Navigator for ACO</i>
Elinor Appel	<i>Faculty, Basic &amp; Transitional Studies</i>
Aimee Brown	<i>Title III &amp; Guided Pathways Director</i>
Molly Brown	<i>Director of Advising &amp; Career Services</i>
Mel Corning	<i>Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction</i>
Paul Cortez	<i>TRIO Program Specialist</i>
Andre Davis	<i>Dean of Student Success</i>
Shireen Debo	<i>Faculty Librarian</i>
Samantha Dolan	<i>Associate Dean, Workforce Instruction</i>
Marle Ethelbah	<i>Recreation &amp; Athletics Specialist 3</i>
Katy Foster	<i>Manager, Running Start</i>
Michael Gianetto	<i>Senior Research Analyst</i>
Eric Jaccard	<i>Faculty, English</i>
Byungcheon Kou	<i>Faculty, Workforce Instruction</i>
Scott Ku	<i>Faculty, Communications</i>
Timothy Lorentz	<i>Fiscal Analyst 4</i>
Peter Lortz	<i>Vice President of Instruction</i>
Jill Lane	<i>Executive Director for Division of Access, Community, and Opportunity</i>
Kelda Martensen	<i>Faculty, Arts</i>
Caleb Martin	<i>Student Success Specialist</i>
Jenny Mao	<i>Faculty, Counselling</i>
Andrew McCaffrey	<i>Campus Security Officer</i>
Alice Melling	<i>Vice President of Student Services</i>
Jeanette Miller	<i>Dean of Student Leadership</i>
Kate Montgomery	<i>Director of Grants &amp; Strategic Initiatives</i>
Heather Neikirk	<i>Associate Director, Workforce Instruction</i>
April Nicolls	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>
Poul Nichols	<i>Faculty, Workforce Instruction</i>
John Ojo	<i>Manager of Facilities &amp; Operations</i>
Brian Palmer	<i>Dean of Arts, Humanities &amp; Social Science</i>
Arnulfo Ramirez	<i>Director of Safety &amp; Security</i>
Daniel Raub	<i>Program Manager A, Campus Security</i>
Scott Rausch	<i>Faculty, History</i>
Jesse Rodrigues	<i>Locksmith Supervisor</i>
Justina Rompogren	<i>Faculty, English</i>
Kara Schwartz	<i>Assistant Director, Advising &amp; Student Services</i>
Carlos Serrano	<i>ACO Navigator</i>
Toni Stankovic	<i>Executive Assistant to the President</i>
Dan Tarker	<i>Dean of the Library &amp; TLC</i>

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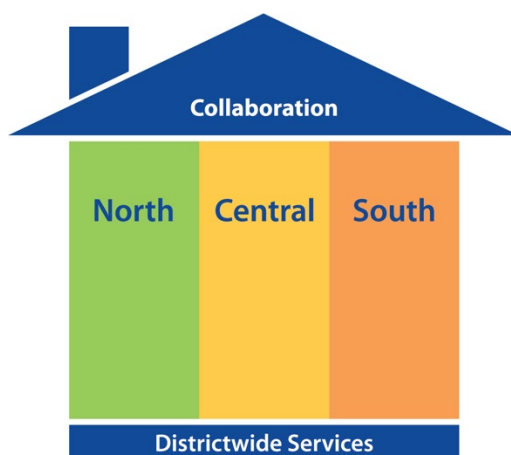
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## Institutional Overview

Established in 1970, North Seattle College (NSC) provides learning opportunities for more than 12,000 students each year. Many students start at NSC and transfer to local or out of state universities. NSC also offers a variety of educational programs aligned to local community needs, including Adult Basic Education programs like GED completion and [High School 21+](#), and vocational certificate, associate, and baccalaureate degrees. Strong academics, comprehensive advising services, small classes, an innovative integrated studies program, and diverse eLearning options further contribute to student success.

NSC benefits from state and city support for higher education. State appropriation supports affordable tuition for all in-state residents. The city of Seattle's levy-funded [Seattle Promise](#) program provides free tuition and individualized support for up to two years to graduates from Seattle Public Schools. NSC also offers two types of dual credit enrollment programs. [Running Start](#) is a concurrent enrollment program that allows high school juniors and seniors to enroll in tuition-free college level courses at NSC. [College in the High School](#) offers all students the opportunity to take college level courses at their high school using an approved NSC curriculum.

NSC is part of the [Seattle Colleges District](#). North, Seattle Central, and South Seattle College operate common functions through centralized district functions to [achieve administrative efficiency](#). Such functions include information technology services, financial aid, human resources, finance and other common business processes. The Seattle Colleges District also provides leadership through the [Seattle Colleges District Strategic Plan](#) and the [Division for Access, Community, and Opportunity](#).



The Seattle Colleges District Board of Trustees approves the mission, values, and shared commitment to supporting historically underrepresented students for all three colleges. NSC thereafter adopts objectives with measurable outcomes to fulfill the mission and



goals stated above. NSC's Core Themes focus the college's planning and resource allocation on a commitment to our students, the community, and one another.

## Rich Student Life

NSC fosters a rich campus life for students, including concerts, lectures, fitness programs, an award-winning literary magazine, and a diverse student population from countries around the world. Students find community by participating in a number of [student clubs](#) from rocketry to film to affinity groups reflecting the college's diverse range of communities served. Learning extends outside the classroom through offerings like exhibits in our campus Art Gallery and our community Jazz Ensemble, while cultural and educational events, sponsored by Student Leadership & Engagement and other departments, regularly bring the community and campus together.

## Student Profile

### Student Academic Program

Academic Program	Percent of 2023-24 Headcount
Academic Transfer	25%
Professional Technical	15%
Bachelor's Programs	4%
Adult Basic Education	14%
Non-Award Seeking Undergraduate	19%
Corporate and Continuing Education	23%

NSC maintains a robust offering of [corporate and continuing education](#) courses that provide personal enrichment and professional development opportunities in North Seattle. In addition, NSC's proximity to public and private comprehensive colleges and universities and reduced tuition rates<sup>1</sup> contributes to large numbers of non-degree seeking students completing NSC coursework for undergraduate degrees obtained elsewhere. Academic Transfer associate degree seeking students constitute the largest share of NSC's degree seeking population, followed by students pursuing [workforce degrees and certificates](#), (Professional Technical), Adult Basic Education Students<sup>2</sup>, and students enrolled in [Bachelor's degree programs](#).

### Full and Part Time Enrollment Mix

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<sup>1</sup> For example, a 5-credit course at NSC's [resident tuition rate costs \\$638](#). At the University of Washington, the rate for [matriculated in-state students is \\$2195](#).

<sup>2</sup> Due to changes in federal financial aid policy, ABE students may have ability to benefit: <https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/student-services/ability-to-benefit>. Consequently NSC classifies them as degree seeking.

2023-24	Full Time Enrollment Only	Part Time Enrollment Only	Full & Part Time Enrollment within same year
% of Headcount	17%	68%	15%

The share of part-time only enrollments at NSC significantly exceeds the [overall state average](#), and impacts college operations in many facets. Many instructional programs at NSC disaggregate program length by full- and part-time, respectively. [Information Technology](#) provides this level of detail for their bachelor, associate, and certificate programs. Student Services offices offer a variety of virtual services and forms for part-time students who may not be able to access services during normal business hours. For example, several offices provide options to meet with students virtually, including Disability Services and Advising, with some options available after regular hours. Students can also request many services digitally including Counseling appointments, sign language interpreters and graduation applications.

#### Race/Ethnicity

2023-24	White (Only)	Student of Color	International	Not Reported
% of Headcount	31%	36%	3%	30%

Excluding students who do not report their race or ethnicity, NSC is a majority-minority institution. The table above reflects the percentage of annual headcount by the following mutually exclusive categories: White (only) self-identifying, Student of Color (any non-international student self-identifying as Asian/Black/Hispanic/Native American & Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander. Of our minority students, the largest populations are Asian, Black/African/African American, and Hispanic.

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of total headcount
Asian	13%
Black/African/African American	12%
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	11%
Native American/Alaska Native	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%

### Community Connected

NSC capitalizes on its proximity to the city of Seattle Metro area, a vibrant business and technology hub, to provide career training programs that equip our community to enter and succeed in the workforce. Programs prepare students for in-demand careers in fields such

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<sup>3</sup> Hispanic remains the preferred term by adults who trace their ancestry to Spain/Latin American per the most recent available data from the [Pew Research Center](#). While there is growing awareness of Latine, less than 1% prefer to be called Latine for the purposes self-identifying race/ethnicity.

as business, electronics, cybersecurity, pharmacy tech, and early childhood education. NSC also supports students beginning their higher education and career journeys with comprehensive basic skills programs like GED and high school completion, ESL, pre-college English and math, and innovative, [team-taught I-BEST courses](#).

The college values sustainability and a strong connection to our community both past and present. The campus benefits from the co-location of several state agency offices and community nonprofit partners in our Opportunity Center building. Offices such as WorkSource, and the Department of Social and Health Services support both community members and our students. Examples of community partnerships include our recently formed Tribal Advisory Council, as well as an Anthropology Field Experience class taught during the summers of 2022 and 2023. This class allowed students to explore archeology skills and helped the community learn about the Japanese American Kumasaka family, former owners of the land who were interned during World War II. NSC symbols, projects and connections show how NSC strives to put our values into action.

## Updates since the 2023 Year Seven EIE Report

In May 2023, NSC successfully reaffirmed its accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) following a comprehensive onsite peer evaluation. To strategically align with the planning cycle of Seattle South & Central Colleges, NSC is undertaking its mid-cycle evaluation in the Spring of 2025. This abbreviated timeline narrows the time available to respond to NWCCU recommendations, however the common accreditation schedule across the Seattle College District will create substantial efficiencies as all colleges in the district will write their Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review and the Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness during the same academic years.

Since the completion of the Year Seven visit, NSC has experienced notable developments:

### Leadership Transition

NSC has experienced leadership changes, most notably the addition of a new college president, Dr. Rachel Solemsaas, who permanently succeeded Dr. Chemene Crawford after serving as interim president. Dr. Solemsaas brings extensive experience as a former college CEO, finance leader, and commissioner/peer evaluator for NWCCU and ACCJC, along with a steadfast commitment to addressing poverty and supporting communities of color. This continuity in leadership ensures stability for NSC moving forward.

### Strengthening Institutional Effectiveness

Under Dr. Solemsaas's leadership NSC continues to improve overall institutional effectiveness. This includes: 1) strengthening shared governance by clarifying decision-making processes of the Cabinet, College Council, and committees/taskforces; 2) improving evaluation and assessment process and redefining the processes for our Analytics and Intelligence; and 3) establishing resource allocation process or RAP that aligns to our mission, goals, and priorities.



In support of the above, Dr Solemsaas strengthened the college's leadership team by appointing an interim Vice President of Student Services and hiring a new Vice President of Administration and a new Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

NSC also strengthened shared governance by reforming [College Council](#). College Council previously was tasked with a vague role as an advisory body to the president. The new charter established the College Council where different constituencies contribute to major institutional planning, resource allocation, and mission fulfillment. The College Council and a fully staffed executive team strengthen NSC's ability to manage current budgetary challenges. NSC is committed to sustaining its operations with appropriate resources. It adopts three main fiscal goals of: 1) living within its means; 2) maintaining a prudent level of reserves; and 3) investing in the future through grants and partnership.

NSC faces two significant near-term financial challenges. First, NSC overestimated [tuition revenue collection in 2023-24, and overspent in personnel costs](#), resulting in a deficit of \$1.4M or 3% of its budget in FY 23-24. Secondly, NSC anticipates a reduction in its allocation as the State of Washington faces a budget deficit. NSC will explore additional revenue sources and personnel savings to update the current year budget assumptions while planning for the coming fiscal year. The Cabinet and a Budget Allocation Taskforce (approved by the College Council) will be reviewing and prioritizing budget proposals to achieve these goals. These budget proposals are then presented to College Council and campuswide through a College Town Hall hosted by the President before submitting it to the SCD Board of Trustees.

### Expanding Access, Community, and Opportunity Initiatives

The [Seattle Colleges District Division of Access, Community, and Opportunity](#) provides support and best practices to NSC initiatives to improve equity, diversity, and inclusion for students, staff, and community members.

The ACO office regularly partners with other departments such as [TRIO](#) and [AANAPISI](#) to serve underrepresented populations of students. Each area has opened a space for students to gather and build community, as well as initiating projects, like providing training to tutors in the Student Learning Center on culturally sensitive pedagogy.

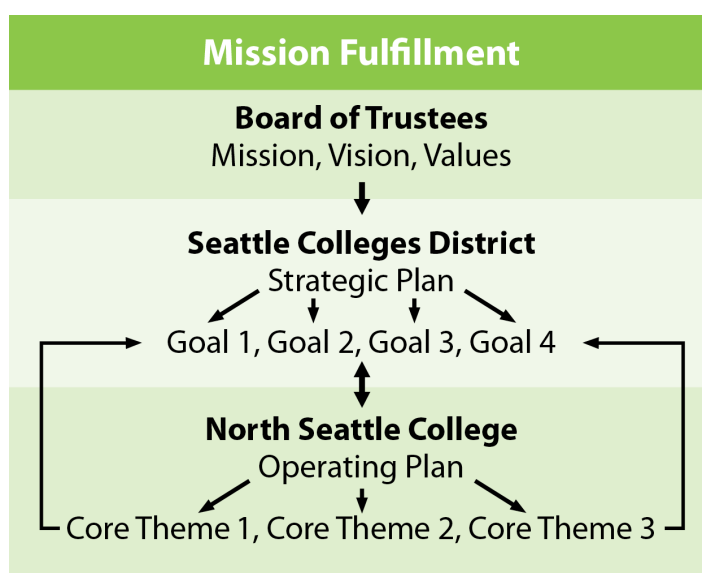
ACO also facilitated, often through partnerships with college instructional programs, a variety of initiatives and projects aimed at empowering students of color. Two such projects—a mural in the college's newly renovated library, and a panel discussion—celebrated the legacy of writer and activist James Baldwin. Additionally, programs such as English, math, and Early Childhood Education undertook new initiatives supporting transparency and inclusivity for historically underserved students.

Through a distributed effort to support historically under-represented students, North Seattle College seeks to eliminate equity gaps for our students and support the success of our historically under-represented communities at the college.

## Section 1: Mission Fulfillment

### Definition of Mission Fulfillment

The [Seattle College District Mission, Vision and Values](#) communicates the purpose of North, South, and Central Seattle College. Each college operationalizes our mission, vision, and values through a shared strategic plan. The [2024-2034 Strategic Plan](#) defines goals and provides a [scorecard](#) to hold us accountable for fulfilling our mission. In the 2024-2034 plan the goals are Culturally and Socially Responsive Teaching and Learning, Holistic and Inclusive Student Experience, Empowering Employee Experience, and Effective and Sustainable Organizational Structures and Practices. Each college in the district is responsible for determining college specific [Core Themes, Essential Learning Outcomes, and an operating plan](#) to carry out the Strategic Plan Goals in alignment with the unique population and character of their students and communities.



Mission fulfillment requires NSC to achieve the quantitative targets set by the Strategic Plan Scorecard, and set and articulate meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators organized around Core Themes and Essential Learning Outcomes that carry out the four goals of the district strategic plan.

The Seattle College Board of Trustees completed its final review of the 2024-2034 Strategic Plan at the [2025 January 16th Board Meeting](#), and received the final report on the [Interim Bridge Plan](#) that the colleges and district are using for the 2024-25 academic year. With the new plan approved, NSC will re-affirm and review its Essential Learning Outcomes, Core Themes, determine a new definition of mission fulfillment, and establish an operating plan for accountability, ongoing assessment, and resource allocation. NSC will engage a wide range of shared governance bodies in this work, ultimately the operating plan will be formally ratified by [College Council](#).

North Seattle College (NSC) understands its mission as a series of commitments to our students, the diverse communities we serve, and to NSC's employees who carry out this vital work. These commitments are buttressed by our values, particularly diversity, equity, and inclusion for all. In practice, our values drive us to create a transformative space for learning in which students, faculty, staff, and community members—especially those historically marginalized from higher education—can thrive. To this end, we tie curricula to our Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and Core Themes to ensure students are learning, foster inclusive collaboration with our community, and ensure faculty and staff receive ample opportunities for professional development. Doing so ensures that everyone who engages with the college has the opportunity to achieve their goals.

## Guiding Framework

The guiding framework for achieving mission fulfillment at NSC is institutional effectiveness. NSC defines institutional effectiveness through Terry Borton's seminal model on learning cycles: What, So What, Now What.

- What requires us to know our college by tapping into NSC's robust quantitative data and the collective wisdom of our students, employees, and community members.
- So-What reflects NSC commitment to inquiry. We collect information for the sake of developing new ideas and interventions to fulfill our institutional commitments.
- Now-what demonstrates NSC resolve to make change. This framework guides how NSC approaches Equity, Diversity and Inclusion as well as institutional planning and Guided Pathways.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work is grounded through two foundational realities about NSC. First, we are a majority-minority serving institution that is recognized by the United States Department of Education as an [Asian American and Native Pacific Islander serving institution](#). Secondly, [racial inequity is a critical, if not the defining facet of poverty and overall income inequality in Seattle](#). In response to this what, the Seattle College District collectively defines our Community Equity Statement as:

*Seattle Colleges is committed to promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and community and to ensuring just and equitable policies and practices. It is a moral and social justice imperative.*

This equity statement is infused into every facet of NSC initiatives, operations, and institutional planning. For example, NSC's [Guided Pathways Office](#) funded a collaborative team of Graphic Arts and Application Development students to produce the [Belinda's Closet App](#). [Belinda's Closet](#) provides professional clothing to help NSC students be successful in interviews, at jobs, and when participating in graduation. Clothing is an example of an invisible cost. It is not captured in formal financial aid calculations like cost of attendance but constitutes a significant barrier in the living reality of NSC students.

Many students on the team were also part time and understood the challenges communicating information to that population given their limited access to campus. The student team received funding from Guided Pathways to build a mobile application to make Belinda's closet more accessible for students. These bottom-up, participatory initiatives illustrate the participatory culture of equity work.

Equity work also informs institutional planning. NSC frequently pursues grant funding to improve access for marginalized students and strategically pursues aligned grants to magnify their impact. For example, NSC's \$1.5 million Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation ([LSAMP](#)) grant provides underrepresented students of color with access to mentoring, travel opportunities to conferences, and opportunities to present original research. LSAMP reflects not only NSC's commitment to student success in STEM, but also NSC's commitment to provide our community with [access to high paying jobs](#) [page 3]. LSAMP is paired with a \$297k National Science Foundation Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering (iRISE) grant. The iRISE grant supports interdisciplinary research to enhance STEM curriculum and better prepare students for upper division courses at their transfer destination. These two grants synergize by providing support both in the classroom and wrap around support services, critically achieving their objectives in tandem. NSC pursues a similar model in Student Services. Student Services organizes its Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPISI), TRIO, and new Basic and Essential Grants into a shared group under the supervision of the Director of College Access Programs. This fused structure provides more wraparound support services to students using a single point of contact.

## Institutional Context

As noted in the [Year Seven Evaluation Report](#), NSC intended to revise its Institutional Effectiveness Plan during the 2023-24 academic year in response to the anticipated new strategic plan and NWCCU feedback received in the previous Year Seven site visit. The departures of former college President Dr. Chemene Crawford and the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness delayed these efforts. When Dr. Solemsaas was hired in the interim role, she prioritized focusing on activities from the [Strategic Bridge Plan](#) and improving North Seattle College's Resource Allocation Plan (RAP). RAP addressed an important recommendation NSC had received during the previous Year Seven site visit, specifically that the college "develop and implement an ongoing, and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform decision making, allocate resources, and improve student learning and student achievement". The RAP rubric improved upon the previous planning process by requiring programs to align resource requests to Core Themes and Essential Learning Outcomes, and to connect requests to program review and assessment. The [initial feedback](#) celebrated the transparency of the new process, and made some helpful suggestions that will inform the 2025-26 RAP process. The RAP process highlighted the effectiveness of this new approach over the previous Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Lessons learned from the RAP process will guide the new Operating Plan.

In 2024-25 NSC plans to undertake the following next steps:

1. Establish a NSC specific operating plan that builds on the lessons learned from the RAP pilot.
2. Review and reaffirm NSC's Core Themes and ELOs to align with the 2024-2034 Seattle College District Strategic Plan.
3. Develop NSC Indicators of Mission Fulfillment that align with the indicators determined by the Seattle College District.

In the next two sections, NSC will demonstrate the extent to which we are fulfilling our mission relative to programmatic assessment of learning outcomes and our indicators of student achievement.



## Section 2: Student Achievement

NSC's goal of improving completion or transfer rates speaks to our commitment to our students. Finishing is the primary goal for undergraduates that enroll at NSC, whether this means completing a workforce credential or transferring to a four-year university. Completion or transfer demonstrates student proficiency with NSC's Essential Learning Outcomes. NSC's [Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee](#) approves modifications and additions to programs and degrees. Alignment of Essential Learning Outcomes with Program and Course Outcomes is an essential part of CAS' scope. The act of transferring to a four-year institution is also evidence of effectiveness in teaching and learning as a successful transfer demonstrates attainment of the receiving college/university's admission standards. Consequently, Completion or Transfer constitutes the primary quantitative metric for student success.

NSC uses a series of leading indicators to measure early progress towards completion or transfer. These are Fall to Winter Retention, Completion of College-Level English/Math within the first year, and Fall to Fall retention. Positive or negative trends in these indicators serve as proxies for future trends in four-year completion and transfer. Targets and baselines for some of these measures are formulated using the [Seattle College District Scorecard](#). This scorecard establishes targets for the upcoming year for all students and disaggregates outcomes between historically underrepresented students of color (HUSOC, which includes any non-international student that identifies as Black/African, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Native American/Alaska Native), and not historically underrepresented students of color (Non HU, which includes non-international students that identify only as White or Asian). Each indicator has the same target. For example, the target Fall to Winter retention rate for students in AY 23-24 is 85% for both HUSOC and Non-HU. However, different baselines have been established for each student population. For example, the Fall to Winter retention rate baseline is 72% for HUSOC students, but 77% for non-HU students. In addition to the HUSOC and Non-HU disaggregation, NSC also disaggregates each indicator by age, full/part time enrollment status, gender, access to need based financial aid, first generation status, and race/ethnicity.

NSC fulfills its Student Success mission by achieving targets set by the Seattle College District Scorecard, or by demonstrating progress towards each respective target. Progress is defined as either a positive trend towards the target, or by evidence of continuous improvement relative to specific outcomes.

## Data Sources and Availability

Washington State Community and Technical Colleges' [First-Time Entering Student Outcomes \(FTEC\)](#) serves as the authoritative source for undergraduate student outcome data. Some measures are updated quarterly (retention, completion of math and English), while others are updated annually (completion and transfer). However, because the FTEC data excludes students in NSC's Baccalaureate and ABE programs, NSC is in the process of developing an array of college specific indicators that will address these gaps.

## Peer Institutions

To better understand successes and challenges regarding Student Achievement, North Seattle College contextualizes student success data relative to appropriate peer institutions, which are chosen based on the following criteria:

- Serves as a high performing example of student achievement to which NSC should aspire
- Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI)
- Situated in Major Metropolitan Statistical Area
- Equivalent undergraduate student population
- Comparable program mix between academic transfer and vocational programs.

Per the most [recent list of MSI institutions](#) from the United States Department of Education, there are no AANAPISI institutions in Idaho or Montana and no community colleges in Oregon that qualify. This leaves only Washington State community colleges. NSC selected Green River College, Edmonds College, and Bellevue College as regional peers. Regional peer data is available for all indicators excluding four-year completion and transfer. In the absence of regional peer data, NSC uses four-year completion and transfer rates from Seattle's South and Central College as peer data. National peer data is used to benchmark the college's completion within 150% of normal time assuming full time enrollment (IPEDS 3-year completion rates). National peer institutions include Saint Paul College in Minnesota, College of Alameda in California, and Kapiolani Community College in Hawaii. NSC uses benchmarking data to engage in environmental scans to investigate and adapt promising practices from other institutions. Benchmarked data below comes from the most recent year, with each peer institution aggregated together through an average.

## Successes

NSC maintains a tradition of student success. Most recently, the Department of Education recognized North Seattle College as one of the top 100 community colleges in promoting degree attainment and economic mobility for underserved populations. The [Raise the Bar data](#) cites an impressive eight-year success rate of 67% for completion or transfer. Moreover, Pell eligible students outperform the overall population, with an eight-year

completion or transfer rate of 71%. Wage outcomes also demonstrate the value of an education at NSC. Eight years after enrolling, NSC students earn 1.4% times the statewide average for workers with only a high school diploma.

Raising the Bar data raises some important questions that NSC must reflect on when setting college goals for the new district strategic plan. First, NSC needs to conduct more research to determine whether four years should continue to be the sole time measure for reporting on completion or transfer outcomes. The Department of Education's [Outcome Measures Survey](#) provides award rates at 4, 6, and 8 years respectively. These three time measures come from the [IPEDS Technical Review Panel for Outcome Measures \(pg. 5\)](#), which could not achieve consensus on a single time measure to evaluate completion or transfer. A similar model that uses multiple time intervals might be more appropriate for NSC than using only four years. Second, NSC will also begin to gather data on student success post-transfer in order to gain a better understanding of culminating student success. This work began on [President's Day](#), when the college held an activity where data on North students that went on to earn bachelor's and post-baccalaureate degrees after they enrolled at North was presented.

Seattle Promise has also achieved notable success since Seattle voters approved the levy in [November 2018](#). As outlined in the [September 2024 presentation](#) to the Seattle College District Board of Trustees, success includes growing enrollment and student success metric. In 2024 74% of seniors enrolled in the Seattle Public Schools applied to Seattle Promise. Seattle Promise scholars retention and two/three-year completions rates are higher than their non-promise peers across the Seattle College District and exceed the overall system average for community and technical colleges in Washington State. Seattle Promise uses a condensed timeline for completion as this reflects student eligibility for promise funding.

## Challenges

Data access was a persistent challenge at North throughout the 2016-23 Strategic Plan. Per NWCCU's recommendation from the 2023 Year Seven Site visit:

*It is...worth noting that the scorecard includes data that is aggregated across all three institutions in the district and cannot be disaggregated to determine performance at each individual institution.*

[The 2016 Strategic Plan set a district target for completion or transfer within four years at 55%](#), which NSC achieved in the first year. Absent a college specific scorecard, NSC was not aware that the equity gaps between HUSOC and Non-HU students exceeded those across the district and thus required more intentional focus. Unfortunately, poor situational awareness of college specific data denied NSC the opportunity to intentionally direct efforts to achieve the strategic plan.

Poor data access has also been a barrier to building a participatory culture of evidence. Per NWCCU's recommendation from the 2023 Year Seven Site visit:

*The evaluation team did find pockets where data is being collected and used in meaningful ways (Title III work) and found excitement from faculty about the ways that this data is being used and can potentially be used moving forward. The faculty also expressed frustration that more data is not available, and that access has diminished over the past several years.*

Poor data access complicates efforts to assess instructional programs and detracts from North's ability to assign college specific indicators for mission fulfillment. For example, a key pillar of North's commitment to our community is our Adult Basic Education program (ABE). To demonstrate mission fulfillment, NSC needs to assign a comparable completion/transfer equivalent indicator that reflects what success means for ABE students. However, data on the division which houses ABE, Basic and Transitional Studies (BTS), has historically been limited to enrollment and student/faculty ratios, neither of which speaks to a definition of success that reflects the goals of BTS students or the department's role in achieving the ELOs or Core Themes.

NSC will address this challenge by [cultivating a culture of evidence](#). NSC's culture of evidence will improve access to data and facilitate more opportunities to make meaning from data through the collective wisdom of our staff, students, and community. This collective wisdom is also important because NSC will confront some challenging problems that require more than quantitative data. For example, the US Government Office of Accountability (GAO) released a report highlighting the scale of [pandemic related learning losses in K-12 education](#). Per the [most recent paper by the Calder Center](#), federal pandemic-relief funding (ESSER III) for K-12 has been insufficient to restore student achievement to pre-COVID baseline levels. As these students transition from high school to post-secondary education (particularly through programs like Seattle Promise), NSC will need to refine pedagogy, advising, and services in order to ensure it continues to meet students where they are. To achieve this, NSC will need to draw on the collective experiences of students, staff, faculty, and our community to mount an effective response.

## Culture of Evidence

NSC has already begun taking concrete steps to build a culture of evidence. NSC developed a formal definition of evidence through [a draft white paper](#):

*First, we advocate for a definition of evidence that includes both administrative data (both quantitative and qualitative), as well as the collective wisdom of the students, employees, and community who are directly impacted by our work. Second, we gather evidence to*

*further inquiry, action, and analytics. These refine our understanding of North Seattle College and deliver meaningful improvements to instruction and the services we provide. Finally, evidence must be transparent and verifiable. If we cannot build trust in the credibility of evidence, we cannot deliver the benefits that a culture of evidence and caring can provide.*

NSC is in the process of formally adopting the definition proposed by this white paper, however the white paper's definition captures the spirit of many different college initiatives. Two initiatives supporting this culture are continuing support for Guided Pathways 100-day projects and improving faculty access to data.

100-Day Projects at NSC are faculty and student led innovative efforts directly related to scaling up Guided Pathways reforms and closing equity gaps. The 100-Day Project model includes a robust funding framework that aligns with state Guided Pathways goals and principles and NSC's culture of evidence. Faculty and student teams leverage their lived experiences and collective wisdom to identify opportunities and challenges data shows need to be explored or resolved. By examining credible institutional data, groups help refine our understanding of the college and deliver meaningful improvements to instruction and services. These projects emphasize the tie to measurable outcomes, such as increased retention and completion rates, while centering equity and accessibility. Upon completion of these projects, faculty and students report on their results and share lessons learned through all campus presentations, a post-funding report, and/or a campus-wide Guided Pathways newsletter.

Since Winter 2019, faculty and students have conducted more than 65 100-day projects. For example, the creation of the "NSC Events" app was a 100-day project led by BAS in Application Development students. The app promotes campus engagement by allowing users to explore events through web and mobile platforms while integrating accessibility features for students of all backgrounds. This project allowed students to get work-based learning experience in their field and led to the department securing additional work-based learning projects from companies. Additionally, students participating in this work leveraged their hands-on experience to later work for companies such as Microsoft. As another example, an NSC French instructor collaborating with NSC librarians leveraged a 100-day project to transition French language education to Open Educational Resources (OER), addressing textbook affordability challenges while enhancing cultural representation and accessibility for all learners. Prior to creating this OER resource, the teacher found that up to a third of her students relied on the free trial period offered by the publishing company for the first couple of weeks while others elected to drop the course. NSC is now one of the top users of Open Educational Resources in the state, decreasing financial barriers for students. By institutionalizing 100-Day Projects, NSC has created a sustainable culture of creativity, inquiry, and collaboration, enabling faculty and students to contribute meaningfully to the college's mission of advancing student success.

Another area where NSC is developing a participatory culture of evidence is within data collection and analysis for English 101, a core entry-level course that most students at NSC take at some point in their academic progress.

Collaboration between English and Institutional Effectiveness (IE) has helped establish a culture of evidence in which faculty and administration can begin identifying interventions that will be meaningful for specific student populations, again allowing faculty and staff alike to contribute meaningfully to the college's mission of advancing student success. For instance, in Summer and Fall 2024, IE developed a correlation model for data analysis using English 101 as a case study and found that, when controlling for student attributes (e.g., cumulative GPA, age, gender, etc.), significant indicators appeared for student success (or student risk of failure). For example, students who have a low cumulative prior GPA (below 1.3) before taking English 101 are less likely to succeed in that class than students who enter the class with a high cumulative prior GPA.

In addition, according to correlated data, co-requisite offerings for English 101 are an example of where department interventions have worked to foster student success. Moving forward, IE will be categorizing more student attributes for data layering in English 101 and is next hoping to examine the impact of developmental English courses on student success in English 101.

## Student Success Indicators

Completion or transfer serves as a primary indicator of student achievement. While NSC made some progress relative to improving completion and transfer rates for Historically Underserved Students of Color (HUSOC), increasing from a baseline of 36% to a peak of 47.1% in 2018, we have not achieved the strategic plan target of 55%, indicating that NSC can still do more to meaningfully close equity gaps (see chart below). Each respective column included below reflects cohorts defined by their year of entry (for example 2016 indicates first-time students beginning in Fall 2016).

## Completion or Transfer Within Four Years

Cohort	Baseline	2016 Cohort	2017 Cohort	2018 Cohort	2019 Cohort	Target
All Students	47	55	52.5	52.9	50.7	55
HUSOC [Student of Color]	36	41.1	41.6	47.1	42.3	55
Not HU	49	60.5	55.8	55.6	54.4	55

At a more disaggregated level, indicated in the chart below, we note that there has been progress toward closing equity gaps for some minoritized students, specifically Black/African American and Hispanic students, and older students (40+). For the remaining categories, the completion and transfer rates declined, which is consistent with



the overall trend data. However, despite the declining rates of completion and transfer overall, the 2019 student cohort still mostly exceeded outcomes compared to our district peers (with the only exceptions being Black/African American students and students who Did not Receive Need Based Aid).

Disaggregated Level:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	District Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian/Alaska Native	47.7	28.1	38.6	35.3	34.3
Asian	62.4	54.3	56.5	59.5	57.3
Black or African American	33.1	40.4	42.6	36.6	39.9
Hispanic	43.2	43.6	51.6	47.2	39.4
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	44.4	42.9	40	41.7	37.9
White	59.3	56.1	55.2	52.4	45.1
Age					
19-	65.8	60.5	61.7	58.1	51.5
20-24	54.5	57.4	58	51.1	44.9
25-29	47.3	53.8	44.7	42.9	36.7
30-39	54.2	41.5	44.7	44.1	43.5
40+	37.2	39.6	37.9	43.6	29.7
Full/Part Time Status					
Full Time	60.6	57.4	56.4	55.4	50.4
Part Time	50.7	50.4	51	48.2	40
Sex					
Male	56.8	53.1	52.3	51.3	50.7
Female	53	51.8	53.7	49.9	40
Socio-Economic Status					
Received Need Based Aid	58	53.6	54.9	52.6	46.5
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	45.1	44.3	40.9	38.8	40.2
First Generation Status					
First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*
Not a First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*

## Completion of College Credential Within Four Years

We note from the chart below that the rate of completion of a college credential within four years has declined for students overall, but especially for non-Historically Underserved (Non-HU) students. NSC is also behind our regional peers in overall completion of a college credential within four years. While an increase in Historically Underserved Students of Color (HUSOC) completing their college credentials within four years occurred in 2019, NSC is still a few percentage points behind regional peers in this category. Greater

effort must be made if we are to see those numbers increase for non-Historically Underserved students and close the 12% gap between us and our regional peers.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Regional Peer Data
All Students	27.8	22.5	20.5	22	31.3
HUSOC [Student of Color]	22.2	19	21	21.3	25.7
Not HU	29.1	22.5	20.1	21.6	33.5

The disaggregated data below also illustrates that we have seen a decrease in student completion of college credentials within four years for most students disaggregated by race and ethnicity, with the most substantial decrease seen in White, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Asian students, respectively. In addition, while we have seen a decrease in completion for both Male and Female students, a more substantial decrease in completion is apparent for Male students.

Disaggregated Level:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Regional Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian/Alaska Native	22.7	9.4	20.5	20.6	26.6
Asian	30.4	21.3	17.3	25.1	37.5
Black or African American	15.3	16.6	19.1	15.5	22.7
Hispanic	28	22.3	21.6	25.6	26.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	22.2	14.3	20	16.7	30.3
White	28.5	22.8	20.8	20.5	31.9
Age					
19-	18.2	17.8	13.7	18.4	31.8
20-24	30.6	23.6	21.8	23.2	28.7
25-29	30.9	23.8	20.5	17.2	27.6
30-39	37.9	21.8	27.5	25.5	30.2
40+	32.8	29.5	30.4	35.5	36.8
Full/Part Time Status					
Full Time	43.4	39.4	36	39.8	39.8
Part Time	15.7	15.3	12.1	12.7	20.3
Sex					
Male	27.9	21.1	18	21.3	27.5
Female	27.6	24.1	23.5	23.1	34.5
Socio-Economic Status					
Received Need Based Aid	27.2	21.3	19.4	20.7	32.7
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	29.7	30.8	27	30.2	31.1

First Generation Status					
First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*
Not a First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*

## Three Year Completion Rates

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) classifies NSC as a four-year institution because NSC awards bachelor's degrees. Consequently, NSC now reports four-year completion rates in its IPEDS Graduation Rate (GR) surveys. To provide three-year completion rates for national peer comparison, NSC retrieves full-time, first time FTEC cohorts that match IPEDS criteria for GR survey reporting. Records are suppressed in categories where the number of records is less than the minimum threshold set by SBCTC for public facing data visualizations (10). While FTEC is comprehensive of first-time students, [only 20% of NSC students met](#) the federal criteria of full-time, first-time in the 2023-24 IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey. Consequently, completion outcomes differ from overall FTEC cohorts, and the availability of disaggregated race/ethnicity data is more limited due to the small number of students who meet the criteria of full-time, first-time.

	2018	2019	2020	National Peer Data
All Students	29.4	35	24.9	31.4
HUSOC [Student of Color]	21.7	21.7	11	18
Not HU	34.3	40.2	29.4	31.4

The trend in three-year completion indicates a gap between NSC and identified national peers, as well as persistent equity gaps. At a more disaggregated level equity gaps are persistent for Black/African American, Hispanic, and Female students.

	2018	2019	2020	Regional Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	*	*	*	*
Asian	40.0	41.7	27.3	31.4
Black or African American	13.8	15.8	3.7	17.3
Hispanic	27.8	16.0	10	18
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	*	*	*	22.7
White	35.5	40.0	31.0	48
Sex				
Male	32.2	32.7	18.2	29
Female	25.6	38.0	33.1	29.7

## Transfer to a Four-Year College or University Within Four Years

The data below indicates that NSC is equivalent to regional peers in the percentage of students who transfer to a four-year college or university within four years. While this number decreased slightly for White/Asian (Not HU) students, there was a slight increase for Historically Underserved Students of Color (HUSOC).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Regional Peer Data
All Students	37.5	36.6	38.9	36.6	36.6
HUSOC [Student of Color]	27.6	29.5	33.2	29	28.0
Not HU	42.4	39.8	41.5	40.6	40.2

At a disaggregated level (below), data shows that a substantially higher percentage of Black/African American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students transferred to a four-year college or university in four years (in 2019) than had in previous years (from 2016). Other race and ethnicity groups stayed mostly the same, though transfer decreased slightly for White students. North has a higher percentage of Hispanic students transferring to a four-year institution than regional peers (with a difference of approximately +8%). In addition, while North's part-time students transfer at higher rates than part-time students at peer institutions (by a difference of approximately +8%), our full-time students do not (by a difference of approximately -9%).

### Disaggregated Level:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Regional Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian/Alaska Native	27.3	21.9	31.8	26.5	31.2
Asian	44.2	40.4	45	45.7	45.3
Black or African American	23.7	29.8	29.8	28	29.9
Hispanic	28	29.8	36.8	29.5	21.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	33.3	28.6	20	41.7	25.8
White	41.5	39.5	40.3	38.9	38.1
Age					
19-	59.8	51.9	55.3	51.8	43.6
20-24	34.5	42.6	46.4	36	28.4
25-29	29	36.3	28.5	29.1	19.0
30-39	24.9	23.1	22.9	24.7	19.6
40+	6.6	11.1	8.1	9.9	11.4
Full/Part Time Status					
Full Time	34.7	30.9	33.4	31.2	40.4
Part Time	39.6	39	41.9	39.4	31.5

Sex					
Male	39.6	38.6	40.4	37.3	35.1
Female	35	34.2	37.3	35.6	37.8
Socio-Economic Status					
Received Need Based Aid	39.8	38.5	41.8	38.5	18.2
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	29.7	21.9	21.1	24.6	39.9
First Generation Status					
First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*
Not a First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*	*

## Indicator Uncertainty

The purpose of leading indicators below (Fall to Winter Retention, Fall to Fall Retention, Attainment of College Level math and English within the first year) is to provide NSC with a notion of future trends for four-year completion or transfer. In that context, the COVID-19 pandemic constitutes a significant externality with an unknown impact on the effectiveness of our leading indicators. The table below provides four-year completion and transfer rates and the data for each leading indicator in a given cohort.

Outcome	2016	2017	2018	2019
Four Year Completion or Transfer	55	52.5	52.9	50.7
Fall to Fall Retention	51	42	42	46.5
Completion of College Level English in First Year	37	24	29	31.9
Completion of College Level Math in First Year	24	22	21	24
Fall to Winter Retention	80	69	72	73

While our leading indicators anticipate the decline in four-year completion and transfer rates between the 2016 and 2017 cohorts, for each subsequent cohort NSC's leading indicators appear to possess less explanatory power to anticipate the eventual trend in completion and transfer. Fall 2019 is a particular point of concern given that four-year completion or transfer rates declined relative to Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 cohort but the leading indicators for the Fall 2019 cohort exceed both previous fall cohorts. In response to these findings, NSC's leadership team (cabinet) authorized the formation of a taskforce to investigate the disconnect between the leading and lagging indicators, and to explore whether the COVID pandemic warrants new leading indicators or modifications to the current leading indicators.

## Retention

Fall to Fall and Fall to Winter retention steadily improved from the 2019 cohort onwards. Despite these overall improvements the current retention rates do not achieve the district target, are below peer institutions, and gaps by race & ethnicity continue to persist.

Fall to Winter	Baseline	2021	2022	2023	Target	Regional Peers
All Students	74	63.9	71.9	78.7	85	83.1
HUSOC [Student of Color]	72	61.7	73.9	73.9	85	78.5
Not HU	77	64.9	71.4	81.3	85	85

Fall to Fall	2019	2020	2021	2022	Regional Peer Data
All Students	46.5	49.5	52.1	53.3	60.8
HUSOC [Student of Color]	44.2	40	43.3	50.9	55.1
Not HU	45.6	41.9	43.7	49.9	64.2

At a disaggregated level (below), data shows decrease in retention for Native American/Alaska Native and Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students. Retention for other non-white race and ethnicities increased over this period, with increasing rates for Asian, Black/African American and Hispanic students.

Disaggregated Level:

Fall to Winter	2021	2022	2023	Regional Peers
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	68	80	65.8	73.1
Asian	64.9	73.5	82.6	87.6
Black or African American	60.5	71.7	71.4	75.3
Hispanic	60.9	76.5	77.9	77.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	58.3	68	58.3	77.1
White	63.7	70.9	80.5	83.7
Age				
19-	59.7	82.2	84.3	86.8
20-24	63.9	67.3	68.6	74.4
25-29	69.9	59.9	75.8	75.9
30-39	69.7	59.3	76.8	74.1
40+	73.9	61	70.7	69.1
Full/Part Time Status				
Full Time	76.1	73.6	84.1	91.1
Part Time	56.5	70.4	74.7	83
Sex				
Female	66.6	76.1	80.8	83.9



Male	62.9	72.1	75.3	82.2
Socio-Economic Status				
Received Need Based Aid	61	70.8	78.3	83.6
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	74	75.4	79.9	80.9
First Generation Status				
First-Generation Student	66.9	65.7	73.9	80
Not a First-Generation Student	62.8	78.8	82.3	86.7

Fall to Fall	2019	2020	2021	2022	Regional Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian/Alaska Native	47.1	45.2	36	40	42.3
Asian	47.8	40.8	53.7	53.5	69.7
Black or African American	44.7	38.5	43.6	51	55.7
Hispanic	42	42.9	43.2	54.3	52.4
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	41.7	38.9	33.3	28	50
White	44.3	42.2	40.1	48.2	59.7
Age					
19-	52.4	49.8	43	55.3	65.1
20-24	39.1	26.7	39.9	42	48.7
25-29	39.5	35	35	46	54.9
30-39	41.7	40.1	46.1	40.7	49.7
40+	47.1	54.7	55.5	52.9	49.3
Full/Part Time Status					
Full Time	59.7	54.7	53.3	54.2	68.9
Part Time	37.9	35.5	37.6	46.5	50.3
Sex					
Male	44.9	41.9	47.2	53.9	61.6
Female	46.3	43.4	40.9	50.2	60.8
Socio-Economic Status					
Received Need Based Aid	44.7	40.9	41.7	49.9	61.7
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	50	52	50.2	50.5	57.1
First Generation Status					
First-Generation Student	*	*	66.9	65.7	56.9
Not a First-Generation Student	*	*	62.8	78.8	64.2

## Completion of College Level English & Math in the First Year

Completion of College Level English and Math increased from the Fall 2020 cohort, with English seeing a greater increase. However, completion of college level English and Math for HU students of color declined. These trends highlight progress but also emphasize persistent equity gaps for HU students of color, requiring targeted efforts to achieve parity and meet regional benchmarks. Please note that completion of English in the First Year was not a metric of the 2016-23 Strategic Plan, which is why no target or baseline is provided.

English in First Year	2020	2021	2022	Regional Peer Data
All Students	33.1	42.1	39.6	55.4
HUSOC [Student of Color]	34.8	33.1	33.7	51.2
Not HU	35.2	47.4	43.9	57.0

Math in First Year	Baseline	2020	2021	2022	Target	Regional Peers
All Students	25	24.4	22.3	26.6	31	30.8
HUSOC [Student of Color]	18	19.2	14.7	16.7	31	22.5
Not HU	29	28	26.3	33.3	31	34.2

The disaggregated data below highlights varying success trends across different demographics. While there are some areas of improvement, most notably improvements for Black/African American and First-Generation students, it is evident that NSC needs to do more to improve student success. However, more work is required in order to close equity gaps. To that end NSC's Strategic Course Committee [drafted a mixed methods research project](#) to address the following questions in English Composition and Pre-Calculus (Math 141).

1. What interventions do students most at-risk of not completing a strategic course need to succeed in the course and when should they be deployed?
2. What support do faculty teaching strategic courses with a high number of students at risk of not completing need to increase retention and completion rates in these courses?
3. What support or resources do student support services need to serve at-risk students taking strategic courses?

The committee recruited 4 English and 2 math faculty to participate in an initial pilot in the Spring 2025. The committee will review the findings in Summer 2025, and look to scale a larger study in the Fall of 2025.

## Disaggregated Level:

English in First Year	2020	2021	2022	Regional Peer Data
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	35.7	40	22.9	27.0
Asian	33.9	50.5	45.6	64.0
Black or African American	32	30.8	36.9	51.5
Hispanic	35	33.3	30.3	50.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	50	58.3	40	46.6
White	35.9	46	43.5	53.0
Age				
19-	62.6	64.9	62.8	68.5
20-24	14.9	24.1	23.5	26.1
25-29	12.5	13.6	19.7	19.2
30-39	10.6	12.7	15.6	21.0
40+	8.7	5.9	9.6	18.3
Full/Part Time Status				
Full Time	46.6	48.5	49.8	65.9
Part Time	25	38.1	30.7	41.7
Sex				
Male	30.4	37.2	37.8	55.6
Female	37.2	44.9	43.6	54.8
Socio-Economic Status				
Received Need Based Aid	31.9	44.5	39.3	42.5
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	39.4	33.8	40.6	58.3
First Generation Status				
First-Generation Student	*	26.2	28	49.3
Not a First-Generation Student	*	51.2	51	61.2

Math in First Year	2020	2021	2022	Regional Peers
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	11.9	28	11.4	21.6
Asian	31.4	33.5	34.9	43.7
Black or African American	15.5	13.8	18.2	20.4
Hispanic	24.3	13	14	51.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	16.7	33.3	24	20.7
White	26.6	23.7	32.3	29.0

Age				
19-	35.7	28.9	36.4	36.8
20-24	19.6	20.9	30.9	18.7
25-29	20	16.5	19	18.9
30-39	15.1	10.9	13.2	13.5
40+	8.1	8.4	3.7	9.5
Full/Part Time Status				
Full Time	34.6	36.4	35.6	40.1
Part Time	18.3	13.6	18.7	18.8
Sex				
Female	19.3	16.9	23.4	28.5
Male	31.5	29.1	32	33.7
Socio-Economic Status				
Received Need Based Aid	24.5	21.2	26.5	24.4
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	23.8	26	26.6	32.3
First Generation Status				
First-Generation Student	*	14.3	18	22.7
Not a First-Generation Student	*	27.9	35.8	37.3

## Employment Placement Six Years after Enrolling

NSC tracks employment placement using data from the Washington State Board of Community Technical Colleges (SBCTC). SBCTC submits student records to the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD), which returns wage outcomes per quarter and whether the former student was enrolled in an unemployment insurance covered position (employed as W-2 employee).

The problem with this data is that SBCTC is not able to control for those students who are still enrolled in post-secondary at the four-year level. In other words, NSC doesn't know if a student not placed in employment is not placed because they're unemployed or because they're still pursuing their bachelor's degree. NSC suspects this accounts for why the opportunity gaps are less pronounced for this indicator compared to the previous indicators.

Population	2014	2015	2016	2017
All Students	67	61	65	65
HUSOC [Student of Color]	68	63	65	66
Not HU	68	62	67	65

Disaggregated Level:

	2014	2015	2016	2017
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Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	70	76	56	59
Asian	73	68	71	70
Black or African American	67	60	65	66
Hispanic	67	62	67	67
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	88	80	53	73
White	67	62	65	64
Age				
19-	66	62	64	62
20-24	65	60	72	65
25-29	69	65	61	63
30-39	70	64	66	71
40+	64	52	59	61
Full/Part Time Status				
Full Time	67	61	62	66
Part Time	67	61	68	65
Sex				
Female	69	61	67	66
Male	66	61	64	64
Socio-Economic Status				
Received Need Based Aid	66	64	62	69
Did not Receive Need Based Aid	68	60	67	64
First Generation Status				
First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*
Not a First-Generation Student	*	*	*	*

As part of the Seattle College District's new strategic plan, the district plans to pursue partnerships with external companies or the ESD to improve the quality of this data. The district also plans to revise its wage progression metric. Wage progression was developed using guidance from SBCTC. SBCTC revoked this guidance midway through the strategic plan, which is why the measure was not updated from the 2020-21 reporting year onwards.

## Moving Forward: Student Achievement

NSC's quantitative indicators of student achievement demonstrate evidence of partial progress toward mission fulfillment. At an aggregate level, NSC made progress, improving student attainment of early momentum metrics such as retention and completion of college level math and English. NSC also made limited progress closing equity gaps for some leading indicators, particularly in Fall-to-Fall retention. Across most indicators significant racial equity gaps persist; four-year completion or transfer is a particular point

of concern given this measure's importance in mission fulfillment. While completion or transfer rates improved compared to the baseline at the beginning of the previous strategic plan, recent NSC completion or transfer rates declined relative to the previous target. Reversing this decline is a paramount concern.

Over the same period, NSC's leading indicators became less indicative of future trends for completion and transfer, which calls into question whether the gains in English/Math will translate into long term improvements in completion or transfer. NSC will also need to broaden its quantitative indicators to be more representative of the different populations served by the college. These include developing specific indicators for our adult basic education programs and baccalaureate programs. In addition, NSC will need to build more robust programmatic datasets. Building off work from English 101, NSC's office of Institutional Effectiveness will endeavor to provide faculty not just with more data access, but also opportunities to engage in making meaning from data.

To demonstrate mission fulfillment in the upcoming Year Seven Site Visit, NSC will undertake the following steps:

1. Per the indicator uncertainty section above, NSC will investigate whether our leading indicators align with completion and transfer.
2. Scale NSC's culture of evidence by providing more access and opportunities to make meaning from data.

## Section 3: Programmatic Assessment

Faculty and staff at NSC assess their program's contribution to Core Themes and Essential Learning Outcomes through an instructional program review and an annual review of student services departments. These faculty and staff led peer review processes contribute to a culture of self-assessment.

### Instructional Programmatic Assessment

Programmatic Assessment for instruction is part of a three-committee model comprised of the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee (CAS), Assessment Committee, and Instructional Program Review Committee (PR). CAS members are responsible for the Master Course Outline (MCO) template that faculty use to create and revise courses, describe course outcomes, and link course outcomes to program outcomes and Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO). The Assessment Committee supports faculty in the process of assessing learning in their classroom, primarily by creating and maintaining rubrics associated with the ELO, and through the annual Teaching Improvement Practice (TIP). TIP forms ask faculty to reflect on a learning activity in one of their classes, connect that activity to outcomes at each level (course, program, ELO), and describe how they approach or revise the practice based on the success of the activity. TIP forms and a holistic review of the process are completed annually<sup>1</sup>.

Programmatic Assessment occurs over a three-year cycle and is overseen by the faculty-led Program Review Committee. The Program Review Committee provides general guidance on topics for review but also encourages faculty to prioritize meaningful topics in depth. Consequently, no two program reviews are alike. For example, placement is a major focus for English program review, and less relevant for NSC career training programs like Early Childhood Education because most students enroll in the same courses during their first quarter. While English and Early Childhood Education focus on different topics in their program reviews, racial equity was a shared area of focus. Both programs focused on incorporating anti-bias, anti-racist practices into student learning outcome assessment.

Programmatic Assessment utilizes a variety of indirect and direct measures. Virtually all programs align course, program, and essential learning outcomes as a key feature of their program review process. However, learning outcome data is only one of many measures considered by NSC programs. At the beginning of the review process, programs select areas of focus, goals, and objectives. The assessment of these goals is then informed by a range of institutional measures. Institutional measures share common definitions; for example, there are common definitions for course success, enrollment, etc. However, NSC does not require programs to use specific measures. Measures include but are not limited to the analysis of institutional data such as course enrollments, course pass rates, and progression through programmatic coursework. Programs also analyze their own data,

such as TIPs, course assessment, student and faculty surveys, and industry/internship placement. Programs use the review process to achieve a variety of different objectives. These include reflections on course offerings and curriculum changes, improving community partnerships, furthering enrollment, and promoting racial, gender, age, and socio-economic diversity.

This section summarizes two recently completed program reviews—English and Early Childhood Education—that demonstrate the college’s ability to infuse Essential Learning Outcomes and Core Themes into programmatic assessment. Both program reviews are strong examples of programs that use data to make meaningful changes to their programs and reflect NSC best practice.

## English

The English Department recently completed program review, a process which is required every 3 years, in 2024 ([English Department Program Review Report 2024](#)). The English Program Review report describes the department’s mission and values and includes an overview of placement into English courses and an action plan, among other standard criteria (such as number of faculty, courses offered, and needs and resources of the department). Following standard Program Review practice, the English Department report also evaluates the extent to which the department reached the goals laid out in the previous review (3 years prior) and conducts a comprehensive analysis of what the program does and hopes to do.

For example, the English department laid out the following action plan in their 2020 program review:

1. Revise English Directed Self-Placement (DSP) tool based on data collection and analysis.
2. Review and reimagining of ENGL& 101 and ENGL& 102.
3. Establish clearer, more equitable process for faculty onboarding.
4. Continue to diversify support for developmental English students.

As the 2024 report states: from the goals of the last action plan, English revised the Directed Self Placement (DSP) tool and began the process of data collection to assess student success in their English composition classes based on their placement using the DSP tool. English faculty reviewed the outcomes of ENGL& 101 and discussed assessments through anti-racist and anti-oppressive lenses, resulting in the departmental creation of an Anti-racist Writing Manifesto. Faculty also revised the English Department Faculty Handbook and updated the department Canvas course shell as part of efforts to create a clearer process for faculty onboarding.

According to the 2024 report, strong efforts were also made by English faculty to diversify support for developmental English students, including outreach to Seattle Promise, new student orientations, meetings with advisors, and creation of fliers to advertise the



Developmental English program. However, the report also notes that while these efforts succeeded somewhat in increasing enrollment in the Developmental English classes, enrollment has been far from robust in the last three years, indicating a need for institutional investment in the Developmental English program.

In addition to the English program review, a significant research-based deep-dive into English placement pathways and methods was conducted in Spring 2024 by two faculty from English and Basic & Transitional Studies (BTS), funded through Guided Pathways. The project met three goals:

1. To examine the placement pathways for I-BEST, ESL, and ABE into English by looking closely at how we connect I-BEST, ESL, and English through placement pathways that ensure student success.
2. To analyze data on the English DSP, as well as student success in their first English class by examining student placement data and passing rates to determine the efficacy and equitability of the English DSP tool compared to alternative placement methods. Research for this part of the project focused on both pre-pandemic and post-pandemic student success data and placement into English course level by placement method and disaggregated by race & ethnicity.
3. To refine North's [English DSP](#) tool itself, including reviewing the English DSP from a BTS perspective and revising for clarity, adding an introduction video, adding a writing samples video, and adding graphics and visuals to the tool that are vetted for visual accessibility.

Important insights were gained through analyzing English placement data, including that:

1. 79% of students who placed into ENGL&101 using the DSP succeeded in ENGL&101 with a 2.0 or above. However, only 58% of students using their high school GPA (HSGPA) to place into ENGL&101 passed the class with a 2.0 or higher. Thus, HSGPA appears to be an ineffective placement measure.
2. 69% of students taking ENGL&101 do so in their first quarter at North, and 67% of students taking ENGL 99/&101 do so in their first quarter. However, most students taking ENGL 98 do so in their 2nd quarter or after their 6th quarter. Thus, placement measures such as DSP are not effective for capturing students for ENGL 98 enrollment.
3. The Wonderlic exam (a pre-DSP English placement measure) placed students of color into much lower English course levels on average than white students. The DSP had more substantial numbers of students of color placing into ENGL&101; however, White and Asian students overall place into ENGL&101 at higher numbers than students of color, even when using the DSP.

Moving forward after the 2024 English Program Review and English placement pathways deep-dive, the department hopes to develop a sustainable and consistent institutional

plan that ensures that student demographic data and feedback is consistently considered in the English placement process.

## Early Childhood Education

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Applied Associate of Science (AAS) and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees completed separate program reviews on a staggered cycle. While there are slight differences in student demographics and student outcomes, the programs are very similar overall. The most recent review cycles, completed in 2024 for the [Bachelor of Applied Science](#) and 2023 for the [Associate of Applied Science](#), defined the following overarching goals:

1. Provide students with culturally diverse, relevant, and responsive curriculum centered on anti-bias and anti-racist practices.
2. Provide equitable supports and accommodations that supports each student.
3. Be responsive to the needs of our ECE community. The department explored how pedagogy, pathways, and projects aligned with the above goals, connected these goals to the college's and ECE workforce's stated goals, and documented the team's continued efforts for improvement.

The recent review illustrates significant program growth. During the three-year cycle, combined enrollment growth for both programs grew from 422 students to 788 students. Non-White identifying (BIPOC) students constituted 75% of enrollment in the associate program and 67% in the BAS. Quarter-to-quarter retention averages were 20% higher than the college overall, approximately 85% for AAS and 90% for BAS. Shrinking opportunity gaps in both pass rates and GPA have led to virtually no difference between BIPOC students and White students. This data demonstrates progress towards the department's equity goals.

The review process also provides opportunities for departments to examine the elements of the program that contribute to this progress. The ECE program attributes their gains in enrollment, completion, and equity in part to the following factors:

- In 2023 the ECE team revised program outcomes with an anti-racist, anti-bias focus. The program outcomes align with the guidelines and goals set forth by state level organizations like DCYF (Department of Child, Youth, and Family Services) as well as the ELOs of the college, including the focus on critical thinking, collaboration with others, intercultural competence, and ethical reasoning and conduct. [Click for link to revised outcomes](#)
- Intentional hiring, onboarding and ongoing support of exceptional faculty from the communities that are served. The program invests in staff and faculty with relationship-based professional development, mentoring and leadership opportunities. They have doubled their full and part-time faculty numbers since the

last review and have 100% retention of full and part-time faculty. Demographically, ECE faculty and staff remain over-representative of student diversity.

- The department offers courses in the modality and languages most needed by the workforce. Currently, this includes certificates and, in some cases, degrees in Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Mandarin and English. Student services and community events are provided in these languages at the times that work for these students.

The review process also asks the ECE team to identify barriers and challenges to meeting their goals. The department had conversations with staff and faculty, reviewed student surveys, and looked at enrollment and completion data during the most recent review cycle to identify the following:

- Lack of student services accessible in our students' languages and at times accessible to working adult students
- Need for more full-time faculty to support unique cohorts
- Need for general education courses in multiple languages
- Over-reliance on grants to support unique student need

The review showed progress made toward goals from the previous cycle, including addressing barrier classes like college level math and English, reorganization of the department's administrative structure, and building supports and pathways for students taking courses in other languages.

The ECE program identified the following goals for the current review cycle:

1. Develop Gen Ed courses in Spanish for the AAS and BAS pathways
2. Increase student support for Spanish BAS and AAS pathway to BAS
3. Research the impact of the BAS program on child outcomes and teacher competency (skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy).
4. Create and distribute a Targeted Alumni Survey
5. Complete a needs assessment for BAS degrees in additional languages

Program review remains a supportive structure for assessing the Early Childhood Education department's student outcomes, growth, strengths, and needs as they align with our institutional and industry goals.

## Instructional Support Programmatic Assessment

Assessment of Instructional Support Programs includes those in Student Services. Units in this division establish goals and objectives that align to NSC Core Themes and assess them annually. Student Services departments collect data from a variety of sources, including college administrative data like retention and completion rates, as well as surveys intended to respond to needs in specific service areas such as Advising, Childcare, and Running Start. Some surveys serve as direct measures of learning. For example,

Advising and Transfer Program surveys collect evidence of established learning outcomes for those programs. Programs close the loop by making changes in response to assessed needs. One examples that demonstrate NSC's capacity to close the loop in instructional support assessment is NSC Counseling team's *Let's Talk* program

## Let's Talk

NSC's faculty counselors serve students in multiple ways: by providing mental health services, assisting students adjusting to college and strengthening academic skills, and helping students explore career and major pathways. Their work, including individual student meetings, workshops, and teaching Human Development courses, supports the college's core theme of Advancing Student Success. However, while the college has been fortunate to double the number of full-time counseling positions from two to four in the past two years, the counselor to annual student ratio remains at 1:3000. Such a high caseload prohibits counselors from providing individual service to many students, and national studies indeed show that large percentages of college, and particularly community college, students do not access mental health services when needed<sup>2 3</sup>. NSC faculty counselors implemented a nationally recognized program--Let's Talk--from Cornell University to destigmatize and decrease barriers to mental health access. Student traffic subsequently increased. In the academic year 2023-2024 visits increased 157% since its inception in 2021.

## Moving Forward in Instructional Assessment

To prepare for a successful Year Seven Site Visit, NSC will evolve the scope and responsibilities of the three faculty committees referenced above (CAS, Program Review, and Assessment). The Program Review and Assessment Committees will make changes to their scope of work in response to NWCCU recommendations. CAS will make in response to this work in order to ensure alignment between the three committees. The previous Year Seven feedback from NWCCU celebrated enthusiastic faculty leadership and participation in assessment at the program, course, and college level. However, NWCCU also provided helpful recommendations which NSC will use to improve assessment. In this section, NSC outlines anticipated next steps for CAS, Program Review, and the Assessment Committee.

NSC's Curriculum Committee (CAS) will undertake a review and possible revision of the college's ELOs. This review will ensure continued alignment between instructional curriculum and the new Seattle College District Strategic Plan. This work would begin in the current academic year and may extend into the Fall of 2025, depending on the extent of revision suggested by CAS and broader faculty input. CAS will also make recommendations on the appropriate number of ELOs per course. Previous reflection by CAS showed that, if more than one ELO was linked to a course, the institutional assessment efforts become diluted. When a new or revised course is presented to CAS, members ask the faculty presenter(s) why they chose the ELO they did and how the ELO is relevant to the course. Additionally, the faculty presenter(s) discuss how the selected ELO is assessed within the course itself.

The Assessment Committee [outlined its accomplishments in 2023-24, and proposed workplan for 24-25](#). This plan was disrupted when the committee lost both its lead faculty chair and administrative co-chair in Spring 2024. The administrative co-chair left for another dean position, and the faculty co-chair accepted the interim position of the departing dean. The Assessment Committee did not meet in Fall 2024 and will need to be reconstituted. After reconstituting the committee, the focus will be multi-fold: learn promising practices from peer institutions, reflect on the internal processes considering the NWCCU feedback, and provide professional development to the larger faculty base towards a better understanding of instructional outcomes assessment. In the meantime, faculty (individually or collectively) will still be encouraged to complete and submit TIPs this academic year if relevant to their programs.

The Program Review Committee will also be reviewing potential changes to the current process. As part of NSC's preparatory work for this report, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness commissioned a [report by Erik Jaccard](#), a full-time English faculty member at NSC and a member of the Program Review Committee, to explore the following topics:

- The degree to which meaningful and measurable insights and data are generated by NSC programs during the Program Review process, as well as specific types of insights and data most often produced.
- Potential equity concerns regarding the process, specifically the amount of labor required to generate meaningful results relative to program size and capability.

The report highlights issues that NSC will need to navigate in order to change the current program review process. The absence of standardization contributes to a culture where programs create meaning by selecting specific topics relevant to their programs. But this also makes gathering reliable hard data on lessons learned difficult, which consequently makes it difficult to scale successes and lessons learned in one review cycle elsewhere. Better documentation or software might address this challenge, but workload is also an important consideration. As noted in the report (page 12), small programs with 1-2 full-time faculty produce reports of comparable length to departments with 8 full-time faculty, but other small departments produce shorter reports that are more targeted in scope. It will be important to ensure any changes to Program Review are responsive to the time constraints faced by smaller academic departments.

Program Review will also consider the NWCCU recommendation language about more intentional assessment of ELOs and stronger connections between instructional assessment and institutional budget and resource allocation decisions. The PR instrument is being revised in those directions. Several productive conversations have already occurred, and the continuous improvement efforts are proceeding through the academic year.

NSC instructional administrators and faculty are broadly working with the Seattle College District to define measurable indicators and objectives in the 2024-34 Strategic Plan. NSC

will align instructional assessment as part of broader student progress and success as defined by District Strategic Plan. Additionally, NSC is strengthening its use of assessment evidence laid out in the instruments described above to inform institutional budget and resource allocation decisions. The revision of those processes has already begun with the introduction of Resource Allocation Proposals (RAPs) to budget planning processes. To better inform the RAPs, the Assessment Committee and Program Review are looking to make the requests and suggestions highlighted in TIPs and PR reports more obvious to the administrators in instruction and at the executive level.

## Moving Forward in Student Services Assessment

Student Services has a strong culture of annual assessment targeted to specific initiatives, programs, and departments as evidenced by Let's Talk. In 2019 Student Services adopted a formal assessment cycle through the Instructional Program Review Committee (ISPR). The structure of ISPR in combination with the staff turnover during several reorganizations resulted in the dissolution of ISPR in Spring 2022. In this section, we discuss some of the challenges Student Services historically confronted and anticipated next steps.

Like other community colleges, Student Services has experienced substantial staff turnover over the past few years. A 2021 reorganization eliminated the position of Vice President of Student Services (VPSS) and relocated the Enrollment Services department to the Instruction Division while creating a new entry services department titled Launch Pad/One Stop reporting to the Financial Aid Director. When President Dr. Rachel Solemsaas joined the college as Interim President in Fall 2023, she undertook a listening tour of Student Services to assess the needs of the division and ultimately decided to reverse some of the changes from 2021, reinstating the position of VPSS and moving Enrollment Services back to this division. This second reorganization became final in July 2024, although some positions are not yet filled permanently. Student Services is led by an acting VPSS, with NSC planning to hire a permanent VPSS in Summer of 2025. The initial reorganization contributed to high levels of staff turnover, and a loss of institutional knowledge around existing assessment processes.

The above turnover complicated efforts to formalize an assessment cycle. In 2019 the Instructional Support Program Review (ISPR) committee sought to create an assessment cycle within student services that was equivalent to instructional program review. Active membership of the ISPR committee declined due to staff turnover and ineffective focus. The 2019 kickoff of ISPR established a focus that was overly narrow. The ISPR process asked departments to focus on one goal and how to improve that area, which was too narrow for some Student Services departments and thus did not drive substantive assessment or change. Student Services decided to review other models of assessment in order to find an effective option for the division.

Under the direction of the Acting VPSS, Student Services leadership took steps to build capacity for assessment by conducting professional development activities in Spring and Fall of 2024. These activities are described below and put NSC in position to successfully

address our recommendation in the upcoming Year Seven Site Visit. Utilizing regular quarterly Professional Development Days in Spring and Fall 2024, Student Services staff participated in trainings about assessment utilizing a framework authored by Dr. Kellie Dixon (Dr. K) and shared statewide by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). These trainings covered the following:

Spring 2024:

[Agenda](#), [Slide Deck](#), [Attendee Feedback.docx](#)

- Introduced assessment cycle concepts: 1) asking questions 2) collecting data 3) analyzing data 4) using the results for improvement, then repeating the cycle. 94% of event survey respondents stated they learned something new about assessment they can apply to their work.
- Discussed how assessment ties to Guided Pathways work to address equity gaps
- Showed how an assessment cycle grows out of guiding documents such as the institution mission and vision
- Departments identified at least one core function, setting the stage for assessment of that function. Examples of core functions include:
  - Student Leadership: Student Engagement
  - Enrollment Services: Create and maintain essential student records
  - Financial Aid: Awarding funds to eliminate financial barriers
  - Launch Pad: Guide new and continuing students through the intake process and connect them to resources needed

Fall 2024:

[Agenda](#), [Slide Deck](#)

- Shared the Counseling department's framework for evaluating HDC courses using Dr. K's [assessment template](#)
- Highlighted how Counseling tied their items to the college ELO of Responsibility
- Explained how to draft learning outcomes. 75% of event survey respondents stated they learned something new about learning outcomes or assessment they can apply to their work.
- Departments began drafting learning outcomes and discussed which college ELO they would fall under. Examples of outcomes identified are below.

### Department Learning Outcomes and relation to College Essential Learning Outcomes

Department Name	Department Learning Outcome	Related College Essential Learning Outcome
Advising	Students can identify their program of study.	Responsibility
Counseling	Provide individual counseling to help students learn skills in	Responsibility



	identifying career interests and majors, strengthening learning strategies/study skills, managing crises, and building educational/emotional/social resilience.	
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The structured training during these professional development sessions strengthens the foundation for productive assessment within Student Services moving forward. The Acting VPSS is also re-establishing the division Assessment Committee, which will aid efforts to coordinate activities.

As the college explores the best structure for learning-support assessment, we have an opportunity to reexamine our current committee structure and department involvement. The assessment cycle suggested by Dr. K is annual, matching the annual report structure long employed by Student Services departments. A new VPSS, along with support from college Institutional Effectiveness staff, may choose to modify the ISPR structure to better engage Student Services staff and make progress toward goals that support department development and student success.



## Section 4: Moving Forward

North Seattle College has made progress towards achieving the goals of the Seattle College District Strategic Plan. The section below describes steps NSC will take over the next two years to fulfill our mission.

### Institutional Planning

In 2025 North Seattle College will likely need to transition from investing in growth to managing reductions. Such reductions will be guided by transparency and respect for shared governance. NSC's administration briefed [College Council in October of 2024](#) about deficits in 2024-25 and the 2025-26 academic year. College Council approved [Budget Guiding Principles](#) and [Priority Criteria](#) at the [November meeting](#). These published documents provides transparency to budget managers at the program, department, and division level in terms of how NSC will allocate limited resources and makes decisions around reductions. Long term NSC envisions that these processes will guide future investments and growth to support mission fulfillment. Mission fulfillment will be informed by NSC's institutional priorities.

### Institutional Priorities

NSC anticipates changing our Core Themes to align with the SCD Mission and 4 goals in the 2024-34 Strategic Plan. NSC will organize the new Core Themes around the following three institutional priorities:

- Commitment to Our students
- Commitment to Our Community
- Commitment to Each Other

These priorities reflect our mission, vision, and values as a college. As such much of this work focuses less on starting new initiatives than scaling work through this framework. In the next section of the report, we discuss each commitment's ongoing work and anticipated future direction.

### Commitment to Our Students

NSC's commitment to students will continue to be informed by Guided Pathways. Guided Pathways is a research-based framework that creates a clear academic pathway for students to meet their goals, combats barriers, increases completion and retention rates, and closes equity gaps. The framework divides the work into four pillars to clarify the path for students and help them choose, enter, and stay on their pathway.

NSC has made substantial progress clarifying each pathway, helping students enter a pathway, and helping students stay on their pathway. NSC organized all programs into umbrella categories called "Areas of Study," which are used across orientation and our assigned advising model. Within these areas, NSC created program maps that show career opportunities, transfer pathways, and quarter-by-quarter course sequences. NSC uses an Area of Study assigned advising model, ensuring each student has a dedicated advisor skilled in their program's requirements and is connected to area-specific faculty. These area of study advisors create education plans in Starfish based on program maps, providing clear pathways for students to follow. Subsequent work will focus more on improving racial diversity within each respective pathway, and by focusing on strategic courses that are common barriers for students trying to complete their degrees (such as college level English and math).

Inquiry and assessment will guide future work on helping students choose their pathway and ensuring learning. NSC revamped our new student orientation, established the *Launch Pad: One Stop Student Center* that offers comprehensive support for both new and returning students, and identified a First Year Experience course, *HDC 101: Orientation to College Success*. In the next two years NSC will begin to assess these initiatives to evaluate their effectiveness, with the goal of scaling HDC 101 to other populations of first-time students. Inquiry and assessment also inform Guided Pathways to ensure students are learning. NSC implemented 100-Day Projects are a central component of scaling our culture of evidence. While 100-Day Projects will continue, NSC will review how this work can be more visible with the goal of achieving scale.

### Commitment to Our Community

NSC will continue to partner with a wide range of community organizations to broadly support access and opportunity.

#### Opportunity Center

The Opportunity Center, located on NSC's campus, provides integrated educational, vocational, employment, and supportive services through a partnership of multiple community-based agencies and community colleges. These organizations work together to provide seamless employment and educational services and public assistance benefits to the unemployed, the underemployed, students, and their families.

#### Food Resources

In addition, NSC began offering a pop-up drive-through food pantry in 2020, in partnership with nearby University District Food Bank. Held each Tuesday evening in a campus parking garage, this weekly service has since expanded to include Door Dash delivery for up to 50 registered students. Demand continues to grow for food resources and the pantry served between 200 and 250 households per week in Fall 2024.

## Affordable Housing

In May 2024 the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges Board of Trustees passed a [resolution](#) allowing NSC to sell surplus property for affordable housing. NSC sold the property to a joint venture between the [Chief Seattle Club](#) and [Bellwether Housing](#). This new development [will provide 192 studio and 1–3-bedroom homes](#), and is committed to supporting urban Native Americans regardless of tribal affiliation, but it is not exclusive and is open to anyone.

## Tribal Advisory Board

NSC established a [Tribal Advisory Board](#) to help guide our actions as an Indigenous-serving College. Council members include students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members with Native American and Indigenous descent. With their guidance, NSC has begun to engage meaningfully with Native American and Indigenous elders and students to improve our programs and services for these original members of our community. In the next two years this board will help NSC authentically represent indigenous students, provide space to discuss how NSC should support indigenous students, and explore more opportunities for community partnerships, particular with Seattle’s urban Native American community.

## Commitment to Each Other

Cultivating a [Culture of Caring](#) is essential for the success and well-being of NSC community members. A culture of care encompasses a supportive and nurturing environment where students, faculty, and staff feel respected, valued, and empowered. By prioritizing compassion, kindness, and empathy while bolstering support and collaboration, NSC can create a positive environment that enhances student retention, employee morale, and community relationships. Embracing a culture of caring reflects our core values as an inclusive and nurturing institution dedicated to student success and a thriving community.

Strategies for achieving a culture of caring include professional development opportunities to build skills around empathy, active listening, and effective communication; comprehensive assistance to students through the expansion and enhancement of student support services such as counseling, mentoring programs, and academic advising; collaboration with local organizations and businesses to create opportunities for students to engage in service-learning projects and gain real-world experience; and implementation of recognition programs to acknowledge and celebrate acts of kindness, compassion, and dedication with the college community.

## Professional Development Activities

In Fall 2024, NSC launched our inaugural Passion & Purpose Leadership Academy (PAPLA) through our Teaching and Learning Center. Exempt staff and faculty from across the

campus engaged in a nine-week series of workshops aimed at strengthening leadership abilities, applying an equity, diversity and inclusion lens to their work, and building collaborative teams. NSC is currently assessing the initial cohort, absorbing lessons learned, and preparing for a new PAPLA cohort in 2025.

### *Clifton Strengths*

The PAPLA series builds on work using the well-known Clifton Strengths Assessment. Team leaders from across NSC were invited to undertake this strengths assessment in February 2024. Since then, discussion of identified strengths has continued in President's Cabinet meetings and wider Leadership Team meetings. Four employees have been trained as coaches and have started conducting one-on-one coaching sessions with the leadership team and PAPLA.

### *New Faculty Cohorts*

NSC supports new tenure-track faculty through cohort-based professional development. Each cohort meets regularly throughout the first year of the tenure process to build community across campus. Central themes include connections to campus resources, centering equity in teaching and learning, peer-to-peer resourcing, professional development, and pedagogical support. As tenure candidates move through the process, they are met with opportunities for reflection, discussion and learning that go beyond the tenure handbook.

## Section 5: Addendum

### Recommendation 1: Standard 1.B.1

*The peer evaluation team recommends that North Seattle College develop and implement an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform decision making, allocate resources, and improve student learning and student achievement. (1.B.1)*

NSC's adoption of the Resource Allocation Plan (RAP) and the reconstitution of the College Council demonstrate substantial progress towards addressing this recommendation. The RAP [rubric](#) formalizes NSC's process to allocate resources to fulfill its core themes and contribute to student essential learning outcomes. RAP is comprehensive, covering additions and reductions to all operating budgets, as well as one-time fund requests using NSC's foundation funding. The RAP process is annual and continuously assessed by NSC's Cabinet and Business Office to ensure effectiveness.

The RAP rubric also improves institutional planning by aligning resource allocation and program review. This intentional alignment improves student achievement and learning by empowering units, programs, and departments to request resources to address barriers they've rigorously identified. The rubric also provides examples of how requests are assessed, which gives programs and departments clear guidance on how to structure their proposals.

While the [initial rollout of the RAP](#) was favorably received, the 2024-25 academic year planning process assumed sufficient growth in revenues to support more expenditures in staffing. [As noted in the February 2025 Board Meeting \(slide 6\)](#), this assumption proved incorrect. NSC is now approaching the 2025-26 academic year by asking departments to devise scenarios for 5 and 10% cuts to their budgets. Any planning process is likely to receive favorable feedback in a context that presumes more availability of resources. The current environment of reductions will test whether the RAP process facilitates difficult conversations about reductions, and ensures that planned reductions do not compromise NSC's mission fulfillment. Feedback from the 2025-26 RAP process will provide an opportunity for NSC to assess the efficacy of the RAP process and propose further improvements.

The College Council will also be an important part of institutional planning. As part of its charter, College Council [approved](#) NSC's Guiding Principles and Priority Criteria for the 2025-26 budget. College Council has also appointed a taskforce to ensure that the proposed budget achieves the following goals:

- 1) Living with our means
- 2) Maintaining prudent level of reserves
- 3) Investing in the future through partnerships

## Recommendation 2: Standard 1.C.7.

*The peer evaluation team recommends that North Seattle College make use of assessment of student learning outcomes at the program and institutional levels to generate measurable and meaningful data that informs academic planning and continuous improvement processes. (1.C.7)*

The Assessment section of this report highlights the strength of NSC's culture. Both instructional and non-instructional programs review their mission, goals, and assess ongoing work to improve effectiveness. However, more work is required to fully address this recommendation. NSC needs to continue delivering improvements to make administrative data readily accessible. This includes relaunching a new course success rate dashboard, providing dedicated datasets for bachelor's and adult basic education programs. In addition, instruction and student services are also pursuing changes to improve the culture of assessment, particularly around the direct assessment of student learning.

The Assessment Committee's [2023-24 North Seattle College Assessment Plan](#) drafted a series of recommendations for 2024-25 in response to this recommendation (pg.7). This planning document provides a framework to shift NSC's assessment practices in order to improve the analysis and dissemination of key findings (page 5). The goal of these changes is to scale best practices in assessment across the institution, which will require more robust processes and procedures. In the 2024-25 academic year committee members and instructional leadership met with regional peer institutions to consider best practices, and will send a team of faculty, staff, and administrators to the [Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Conference](#). These activities will culminate in the upcoming summer assessment institute. NSC will convene a faculty led institute over the summer of 2025 to devise a new process for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of learning outcome assessment. Changes in the Assessment Committee will also inform the future of program review.

As noted in [Erik Jaccard's report](#), while all program reviews are required to include assessment of student learning, direct assessment of student learning is an optional, but not required area of focus for program reviews. Historically, program reviews tend to select goals related to course pass rates, enrollments, diversity of representation (both for students and program faculty/staff), and improve program culture for full and part time faculty. Any changes to program review requires formal approval and vetting through faculty shared governance, but NSC anticipates that changes to the TIP process will make direct learning outcome assessment data a more visible part of program review.

The *Continuous Improvement for Student Services* highlights the strong capacity of student services to devise interventions and assess their effectiveness. While the hiring of the new VPSS will determine the future of assessment for that area, the department is undertaking initiatives now to improve their capacity. This includes workshops around Dr Kelly Dixon's work on assessment in student services, and efforts to reconstitute the instructional support program review committee.

### Recommendation 3: Standard 1.D.2-3

*The peer evaluation team recommends that North Seattle College establish and share widely, including on the institution's public facing website, a set of institutionally identified indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. These indicators should be appropriately disaggregated and benchmarked against indicators for regional and national peer institutions. (1.D.2; 1.D.3)*

In the Student Achievement section, NSC identified a series of institutional indicators aligned to NWCCU standards, disaggregated indicators by relevant demographic variables, and benchmarked indicators against appropriate regional and national peer institutions. These indicators will be published on the NSC website that will use better Searching Engine Optimization (SEO) to make these metrics more accessible for prospective students and external stakeholders wanting to learn more about NSC.

Internally NSC will share indicator data through two mechanisms. First, NSC created a [student achievement task force](#) to explore why NSC's leading indicators appear to be diverging from our lagging indicator (refer to Indicator Uncertainty section in Student Achievement). This taskforce builds internal awareness of our indicator data, and gives students, staff, and faculty an opportunity to make meaning from our quantitative data. Secondly, NSC will engage the College Council to formalize institutional targets for specific indicators. This brings institutional data to NSC's primary shared governance body for deliberation and decision-making.

NSC will continue to improve access to data from national peer institutions. Given the importance of reducing achievement gaps, it is critical that all benchmarking efforts provide robust disaggregation of race, age, gender, socio-economic status, and first-generation status. NSC currently uses IPEDS for national benchmarking, however IPEDS does not support sophisticated disaggregation. For example, NSC's is committed to being a [Native American and Indigenous Serving Institution](#). IPEDS follows the [race/ethnicity taxonomy](#) from by the US Census Bureau. The Census Bureau classifies an individual as Native American or Alaska Native only if that is the only racial/ethnic identity they select. As noted at the [January 2025 presentation to NSC Tribal Adversary Board](#), the majority of Native American & Alaska Native students enrolled at NSC in Fall 2024 also identified with another race/ethnicity (slide 9). Usage of IPEDS leads to significant undercounting, which detracts from robust benchmarking. Consequently, NSC will conduct a needs analysis in 2025-26 to explore alternative options for national student achievement data.

NSC will consider two options. First, the [National Community College Benchmarking Project](#) provides necessary student achievement indicator data and benchmarks for student services, administrative services, and workforce programs. Second, the [Voluntary Framework for Accountability](#) provides similar access to student achievement metrics, but data is limited to participating institutions. To date none of NSC's current national peers are



participating in VFA. Adopting VFA would necessitate selecting different national peer institutions.

## Recommendation 4: Standard 2. A.4

*The peer evaluation team recommends that North Seattle College establish clear decision making structures and processes, both at the college and between the college and district, which are documented and publicly available, and include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest. (2.A.4)*

The Seattle College District and each constituent college continues to invest time and resources clarifying the division of roles and responsibilities between the college and the district. The [Seattle College District Administrative Units website](#) provides clarity around which administrative units fall under the scope of district leadership. The [Chancellor's Office website](#) clarifies the leadership role of the chancellor compared to college presidents. In addition, more detailed functional maps provide clarity at the division level in terms of which roles fall under the jurisdiction of a college versus the district. NSC also drafted a [preliminary functional map](#) for Student Services. This map documents which accreditation standards pertaining to Student Services are the responsibility of North Seattle College and the Seattle College District respectively.

The Seattle College District is responsible for establishing [Policies and Procedures](#), publishing [Financial Information](#) that [improves transparency](#), and managing core administrative services that perform similar functions at each respective college. College leadership provide input at the district level through the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet (CEC), which includes the presidents of North, South, and Central. Staff and Faculty are represented at the district through their respective unions such as the American Federation of Teachers and Washington Federation of State Employees, and through the District Council which serves as a consultative and advisory body to CEC.

Employees of the Seattle Colleges are also employees of the Seattle College District. All leadership positions at each college include responsibilities to the overall district. For example, each president of Seattle Colleges is also a Vice-Chancellor (VC) of a functional area (Academic Affairs/Institutional Effectiveness, Student Affairs and Business Affairs). In this VC role, the designated President convenes subject matter experts and leaders in these functional areas. For example, Dr. Solemsaas convenes District Finance and Operations team with each College's Vice President of Administrative Services and their Budget Director to support finance, budgeting, capital planning and operations. In addition, employees at all levels are expected to collaborate with their peers across the district. For example, the [Strategic Plan Steering Committee](#) included broad representation from district employees and peers from each college. The Seattle College Districts also organizes taskforces to review major projects. For example, the re-organization of Financial Aid from a college to district process was supervised by a taskforce of subject matter experts from each college.



NSC has also taken steps to strengthen shared governance. NSC website includes a dedicated webpage documenting college [leadership and organizational structure](#). There are many shared [governance committees](#) that provide shared governance in specific functional areas such as First Year Experience Committee, and Basic Needs. Excluding areas subject to collective bargaining, institutional shared governance is the responsibility of [College Council](#). The College Council ensures that all members of the campus community are given a voice in the decision-making process through representation. The website includes minutes, an archive, bylaws, and a dedicated page for planning, evaluation and resource allocation.

Many of these shared governance mechanisms to facilitate decision-making are relatively new (for example the College Council was reconstituted in the 2024-25 academic year). Consequently, NSC and the Seattle College District have not had an opportunity to meaningfully assess the effectiveness of these decision-making structures and processes relative to providing faculty, staff, students and administrators with an opportunity to provide their views and feedback on matters where they have a direct and reasonable interest. Conducting a meaningful and substantive assessment of these shared governance mechanisms, both at NSC and at the district relative to this standard, will be an important part of the upcoming Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review that NSC will complete in the subsequent academic year.