

# **Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (Year 7)**

## **Peer-Evaluation Report**

**Peninsula College**

**Port Angeles, Washington**

**April 14-16, 2025**

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A confidential report of findings prepared for the  
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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## **I. Introduction**

A four-person peer evaluation team conducted a Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) visit to Peninsula College from April 14-16, 2025, in response to the *Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report* submitted by Peninsula College to the NWCCU on February 18, 2025. The comprehensive visit covered Standards One and Two with special attention paid to 2.C.4 and 2.C.7, which had Type 1 findings identified as needing follow-ups from the Year-Six Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR) report.

## **II. Assessment of Self-Evaluation and Support Materials**

Peninsula College's (PC) year seven *Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report* was a comprehensive report focused on the areas of Standard One, specific to institutional mission (Standards 1.A), institutional effectiveness and improvement (Standards 1.B), student learning (Standards 1.C), and student achievement (Standards 1.D.). Additionally, this report provided an update on recent institutional changes and updates to a finding from the college's year six *Standard Two Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Report* (PRFR). A copy of PC's PRFR and PRFR summary report was provided to the Evaluation Team. PC's EIE report was well-written, provided valuable insights, and sourced materials about the history and status of the college. The information provided evidence of the college's clear and cohesive strategic plan focused on measured success, collective improvement, and mission fulfillment. Links and evidence supported the report, and little additional information was required or requested as a result.

## **III. Visit Summary**

The Evaluation Team conducted visits with various members of the Peninsula College community. These visits included members of the Board of Trustees, Executive leadership, College Council, Institutional Research, the Budget Advisory Committee, the Equity Committee, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CETL), the Assessment Committee, Academic Deans, the Guided Pathways Committee, Union leadership, and personnel from student support service offices.

Meetings with faculty, staff, and students included a site visit to the Fork campus (an additional location). The Evaluation Team also attended open forums for faculty, staff, and students. General discussion topics focused on college challenges and achievements, student support services, college communication and strategic planning, and general opportunities for PC to achieve mission fulfillment. All campus meetings were hospitable, honest, and transparent conversations were had throughout the visit.

#### IV. Topics Addressed as an Addendum to the Self-Evaluation Report

Peninsula College was asked to address a Finding Type 1 from the year six *Standard Two Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Report* (PRFR) regarding records retention (2.C.4) and a Distance Education verification report (2.C.7) as part of the year seven evaluation of institutional effectiveness.

**PRFR Finding Type 1:** The PRFR finding cited two 2020 standards sufficiently distinct to be addressed as two separate issues substantially in compliance but where improvement is needed: Standard 2.C.4 and Standard 2.G.7. These standards will be addressed in the Standard Two: Governance, Resources, and Capacity section of this report.

##### **Distance Education Verification:**

Peninsula College has the appropriate policies, procedures, and expectations for Distance Education, which were addressed in standards 1.C.1, 1.C.6, and 2.G.7.

#### V. Standard 1: Student Success and Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

##### a. Standard 1.A: Institutional Mission

###### i. 1.A.1

*1.A.1 The institution's mission statement defines its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement.*

Peninsula College's mission statement defines its role as an institution of higher education committed to serving the diverse learning populations within its service area through community-engaged programs and best practices that focus on the success of all students. This mission statement is accompanied by a vision statement that positions Peninsula College as a transformative learning destination where cultural and environmental diversity are embraced, and academic excellence is celebrated. Peninsula's broad mission statement defines its commitment to student learning and achievement.

##### b. Standard 1.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

###### i. 1.B.1

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

The institution has established a continuous process to assess its effectiveness, grounded in the 2019-2025 Strategic Plan and its associated goals. During a recent meeting, faculty and staff described this system as a functional feedback loop. Administrative departments and divisions develop an Annual Administrative Plan (AAP), while instructional departments contribute to the Instructional AAP through annual program reviews. These reviews incorporate data on student learning outcomes, faculty reflections, as well as course and enrollment statistics to ensure that student learning remains a focal point.

AAPs require that plan objectives be clearly mapped to the strategic plan goals. A shared budget rubric is employed to prioritize these objectives. These plans are reviewed quarterly and annually. AAPs are then analyzed by senior leadership and distilled into annual college Operational Plan Priorities, using the same shared budget rubric to determine what objectives will be the college's focus for the upcoming year.

Progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan Priorities is reported monthly to the Board of Trustees. Additionally, updates are shared with the college community during the monthly President's Meetings. Planning processes are utilized to guide resource allocation. Faculty and staff have confirmed that the work done at the committee, department, and division levels is clearly linked to strategic goals, enhancing institutional effectiveness and improving student learning and achievement.

ii. 1.B.2

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

Peninsula College is guided by six key principles, four core themes, and four strategic goals. Established more than twenty years ago and rooted in concepts such as teaching and learning, mutual respect, open communication, proactive work relationships, community engagement, and collaborative decision-making, the guiding principles form the foundation of Peninsula College's culture and daily operations. The core themes and strategic objectives are interconnected, providing the goals, objectives, and measures that drive the fulfillment of the college's mission. PC's strategic plan guides all college-wide decision-making, continuous improvement, and mission fulfillment. A dynamic scorecard of key measures compares institutional progress with that of comparable and aspirational peer institutions in the areas of retention, academic progress, completion, and placement. A static scorecard provides more detailed measures for each strategic objective.

Annual operational planning allows the college to strategically focus on areas that require the most attention and resources. The operational plan consolidates departmental and divisional objectives in a prioritized manner, all aimed at implementing the college's Strategic Plan. The development of this operational plan incorporates data-driven information gathered from the college's Annual Administrative Plans, which reflect the academic, student support, and service areas of the college and are created by personnel in those respective areas.

**Compliment:** Peninsula College's Guiding Principles have established a culture of exceptional collegiality, which has enabled the college to effectively communicate its strategic objectives and collaborate in a manner dedicated to teaching, learning, and building community for students, faculty, and staff.

**Concern:** The scorecard provides data-driven insights for various measures within each strategic goal; however, it does not effectively illustrate the overall progress or necessary improvements related to the strategic objectives or core themes. For instance, the scorecard clearly indicates how measures for meeting state Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) requirements, class success rates, and student learning outcomes (Goal 1.1), as well as the student-to-full-time faculty ratio and fall-to-fall retention rates (Goal 1.2), have improved, worsened, or remained unchanged in relation to established targets. However, these individual measures do not collectively reflect how the college's overall performance has changed in relation to its strategic goal of increasing enrollments to meet state FTE targets.

### iii.1.B.3

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

Peninsula College Board Policy 159 supports a shared governance model that encourages faculty and staff participation in various campus committees. The college's budget planning cycle allows for input from constituents in the development of its annual operational plan.

Peninsula College's planning process involves active participation from various committees and stakeholder groups. Faculty, staff, and students are kept informed and their contributions are valued during the President's monthly meetings, which are well-attended and recorded for future reference. Additionally, data and information are shared through internal dashboards that faculty and staff use to complete their Annual Administrative Plans (AAPs). Faculty and staff are fully aware of the AAP process, which communicates the college's critical needs to cabinet members and helps in setting the annual strategic initiatives and objectives.

This process enhances institutional effectiveness by incorporating information gathered from all levels of planning.

The budget allocation process is transparent, allowing stakeholders to request funds using a budget form and a rubric tool. This tool prioritizes requests at various levels, including departments, divisions, and ultimately the Cabinet, which makes the final decisions. The budget rubric tool also serves as an effective communication tool, providing clear explanations for the prioritization of budget decisions.

This approach has been highly successful in enabling stakeholders to submit funding requests while ensuring they understand the reasons behind approvals or denials. Most importantly, stakeholders recognize how the budget development process contributes to institutional effectiveness and informs the Cabinet's decision-making framework.

Several examples highlight this process, including decisions on leadership hiring, the allocation of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for groundskeeping, investment in new programs, and areas where budgets can be reduced.

Professional development is a well-established and integral part of the faculty evaluation process. Significant funds are allocated for employees and their supervisors to access professional development opportunities, either independently or through the Center for Equity, Teaching, and Learning (CETL). Topics for professional development are identified based on Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) reports and student performance data. This data drives decision-making and helps determine areas that require improvement, after which professional development funds are allocated as necessary.

**Compliment:** The level of transparency, communication, and involvement that all stakeholders have in planning, resource allocation, and institutional effectiveness is impressive. Various stakeholder groups praised the president and leadership for being attentive to their concerns, incorporating their input into decision-making, and maintaining transparency by providing feedback and updates. This sentiment was expressed on both the main campus and the Forks campus.

**Compliment:** A strong emphasis on institutional improvement guides professional development opportunities, supporting the core theme of enhancing student success and leading to progress within the strategic plan.

**Compliment:** The budget development tool effectively facilitates budget requests and communicates decisions and reasoning to stakeholders, ensuring everyone



understands the decision-making framework aimed at improving institutional effectiveness.

iiii.1.B.4

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

Peninsula College employs various tools to monitor both internal and external environments. This includes actively engaging with campus and community stakeholders to identify emerging trends, expectations, and the needs of the greater Port Angeles community and the Peninsula as a whole. Career Education programs, along with those offered at extension campuses, utilize feedback from local employers and advisory committees to determine how students should be prepared to meet workforce demands.

Faculty and staff have a strong understanding of student needs, particularly for those from underrepresented or economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The college intentionally designs programs and services to support these students, helping them find a sense of belonging and achieve their educational goals.

The college's governance system is inclusive for all stakeholders and provides opportunities to engage with relevant campus data and strategic plan metrics. Campus committees provide opportunities for faculty and staff members as well as students to provide input into college decisions in which they have an interest. All staff, faculty, and administrators have access to professional development funds to learn about statewide and national higher education trends or to participate in professional development opportunities provided by the SBCTC or other entities within their profession.

The President actively engages with the community and is visibly present on campus. The President shares updates at all-college meetings, which are well-attended and positively received by the campus community. The Board of Trustees also plays an active role in the college community. During each meeting, its members receive detailed reports on campus progress, and a thorough review of key performance indicators (KPIs) is conducted once a year.

The college's Guiding Principles have been an essential part of the campus values for over two decades. Recent discussions with faculty, staff,

administration, and students indicate that there has been a renewed focus on these principles. This reinvigoration is helping to foster a culture of belonging and mutual respect, and it contributes to collaborative communication and decision-making.

c. Standard 1.C: Student Learning

i. 1.C.1

*1.C.1 The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.*

Under the oversight of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) in Washington State, Peninsula College offers programs including Running Start, completion of a high school credential, career technical certificates/degrees, transfer associate degrees, and baccalaureate degrees. Programming aligns with its mission to “educate diverse populations of learners through community-engaged programs and services that advance student equity and success.”

Academic program materials outline student learning outcomes that reflect the culmination of studies within each area of certification or degree. The development of these programs is subject to state oversight and approval. For career and technical programs, procedures are in place to maintain and ensure the quality and rigor of the content. This is achieved through feedback from external advisory committees, the campus Curriculum Review Committee, and ongoing assessment processes. Transfer programs adhere to the policies set by the SBCTC, while the State of Washington Council for High School-College Relations emphasizes intercollege collaboration. Continuous campus procedures help maintain the integrity and rigor of the curriculum.

Peninsula College offers programs in Port Townsend, Forks, and two correctional facilities (Clallam Bay and Olympic Corrections Centers). Staff and faculty have reported that students across all sites are highly motivated to acquire skills that will support their families and enhance their future employability.

Peninsula College aligns academic program content with the community's needs, as evidenced by feedback from numerous advisory committees and community partnership agreements. For instance, the Forks campus introduced a Natural Resources program as a standalone offering, driven by a desire to meet the community's needs as identified by eight different local partners.

The college has also established an innovative support structure, which includes multiple community partnerships designed to support the whole student, an essential objective of the college. Furthermore, distance education programs' content and rigor are consistent with face-to-face courses, emphasizing continuity and uniformity in all instructional modalities.

**Compliment:** The evaluation team compliments Peninsula College on its partnership with external stakeholders and the community in selecting relevant programs, ongoing advisory support, and wrap-around services to support students.

ii.1.C.2

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

Peninsula College offers degrees and certificates with clearly outlined course outcomes, which can be found in course descriptions, syllabi, and on the college website. While program learning outcomes are available on publicly accessible websites, they can be difficult to locate for certain programs, like Studio Art Emphasis and Creative Writing AA-DTAs. Annual Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) reports contribute to the Academic Unit Program Review, which is part of a larger Program Review process. Faculty noted that this process ensures that assessment data from both course-level and program-level outcomes are used to evaluate course content, rigor, and sequencing. The evaluation team also observed faculty engaging in weekly discussions that focus on aligning the curriculum with these outcomes as part of a continuous improvement strategy. Students confirmed that course expectations and requirements are clear, appropriately challenging, and sequenced effectively to promote learning and application.

**Concern:** The college should work to ensure that all program learning outcomes are easily accessible on its public-facing web pages.

iii.1.C.3

*1.C.3 The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.*

Program and degree learning outcomes are available for all certificate and degree programs in the Peninsula College catalog and on the college website. Each Career Education and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree includes specific program outcomes. Additionally, transfer degrees—such as the Associate of Arts Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA), Associate of Business Direct Transfer Agreement (AB-DTA), Associate of

Computer Science Direct Transfer Agreement (ACS-DTA), and Associate of Science Transfer Track—also outline program outcomes aligned with general education objectives.

The course requirements for each degree are clearly outlined, along with suggested courses for each emphasis in the AA-DTA degrees. Course descriptions, which include learning outcomes, can be easily found on the website and are also linked from the program and degree pages and the college catalog. Student learning outcomes for all courses are provided to enrolled students through individual course syllabi, course information available in Canvas, and the schedule of classes on the website, which also lists outcomes for each course.

iv.1.C.4

*1.C.4 The institution's admission and completion or graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public.*

Requirements for admission are defined in Board Policy and published in the college catalog. The Peninsula College admissions process is easily accessed on the college website with a link from the homepage directing prospective students to an enrollment page with defined steps for admission, new student orientation, and course registration/enrollment. The admissions webpage directs students to the Washington State Community and Technical Colleges Online Admissions Application Portal (OAAP).

Peninsula College has an open enrollment policy; however, certain admissions categories, such as for international students or transitional studies, may have additional or different requirements. These specific requirements, along with admission and registration deadlines, are clearly detailed in the college's official catalog and website.

Graduation requirements for each certificate and degree type, including processes for applying for graduation, are published in the college catalog and on the college website. Though still in progress, program maps for transfer pathway programs inform students of the suggested courses for degrees, further improving credit transfer efficiency with four-year college and university partners.

v.1.C.5

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

Peninsula College is in the early stages of developing a comprehensive assessment system to evaluate the quality of learning across its programs. The college has established student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels. It also offers valuable professional development opportunities through the Center for Equity in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Additionally, the faculty Curriculum Committee collaborates with instructional areas to ensure the quality of course learning outcomes. While some programs do measure learning outcomes at the program level (e.g., English), this practice is not yet consistent across the college.

Faculty provide narrative reflections on the outcomes of their courses through a quarterly student learning outcomes reporting process. This process resonated with faculty during interviews with the evaluation team and has occasionally led to meaningful changes in individual courses. However, not all programs consistently use shared elements such as scoring rubrics or norming processes for program assessment, which affects the assessment of program outcomes. To ensure reliable measures of quality over time for all of the institution's instructional programs, new methods need to be developed. The current process, where individual faculty offer narrative reflections on outcomes at the course level, will be challenging to use as a means to measure the quality and improvement of learning across the college's programs.

The College demonstrates, in its policies, procedures, and committee structures, that it recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs. Faculty testified in interviews that they have long played a central role in these areas, and there are concrete plans to increase faculty oversight in the assessment of programs.

**Concern:** The college does not have a consistent process for evaluating the quality of learning in all of its programs.

vi.1.C.6

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

The institution meets the basic requirements for assessing general education learning outcomes as outlined in Washington's statewide direct transfer agreement. However, the standard mandates that the college must evaluate its defined learning outcomes or core competencies for all students. The college has identified these core competencies as effective communication, personal and interpersonal relationships, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and information literacy. All of these competencies align with the student learning outcomes and curriculum maps of the existing programs and departments. However, the evaluation team did not find evidence of a pervasive system or consistent evaluation mechanism by which meaningful assessment could inform student progress or achievement in the institution's learning outcomes (ILOs).

The Vice President of Instruction and the Assessment Committee have stated that Student Learning Outcome (SLO) reports from required courses are currently analyzed by focusing on a primary Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) and comparing student success rates based on their pass rates. Faculty members utilize the SLO assessment process within their classes, ensuring that every program encompasses all five ILOs. The current measurement of success is based on student performance in the program, which the college loosely translates into success in achieving ILOs.

Currently, there is no specific metric in place to assess student learning at the Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) level. There is also no mechanism for determining how effectively students are mastering each ILO, identifying problem areas, or understanding how to enhance and improve ILO learning. The assessment committee has reported that they are now focusing on establishing benchmarks at the campus level, rather than just at the individual course level. As part of this focus, the assessment committee is developing a systematic process for outcome assessment, but the primary emphasis has been on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). As a result, the institution cannot definitively determine the extent to which students are graduating with the ILOs learned, or whether this learning is a direct result of the college programming.

**Concern:** The college must evaluate and address institutional learning outcomes as essential competencies that all students achieve, not just transfer students, and not merely as a result of other student assessment activities.

vii.1.C.7

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

The evaluation team found emerging evidence that Peninsula College uses learning assessments to continuously improve student learning outcomes. While the college has established a solid foundation for course-level learning assessments, there is a need to extend this focus to program and institutional-level learning outcome assessments (refer to Standards 1.C.5 and 1.C.6).

For instance, the assessment committee has recently developed a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) report form that faculty use each quarter to enhance and track changes in course-level data. The Faculty Assessment and Instructional Design Coordinator compiles the SLO reports, which are accessible to all faculty through the internal communication system. The Center for Equity, Teaching, and Learning (CETL) analyzes these reports to identify themes and provide relevant professional development, resources, and individualized support aimed at improving teaching and student learning.

The SLO reports are also utilized in Program Review and supply data that informs program-level decisions made by the administration at the institutional level. Faculty have reported that they can conduct thorough evaluations of their courses to continuously improve practices and student learning outcomes. However, a systematic, institution-wide process is needed to facilitate these improvements.

The absence of program and institutional-level learning assessments makes it challenging for Peninsula College to fully leverage the results for academic planning and to enhance student learning outcomes comprehensively.

**Concern:** It is important for the college to improve its efforts in systematically assessing program and institutional learning outcomes, documenting improvements in student learning achievements, and identifying areas needing further support.

viii.1.C.8

*1.C.8 Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality.*

Peninsula College accepts transfer credits from regionally accredited post-secondary institutions. The policies and procedures for submitting and accepting transfer coursework are detailed on the college website and in the catalog, in accordance with the standards established by the Washington State Articulation and Transfer Council.

Students must submit official transcripts to have their coursework evaluated for transfer credit. However, unofficial transcripts can be used for placement purposes during advising sessions. The college also has a well-established process for granting Academic Credit for Prior Learning (ACPL), which is available on the college's website.

When there is uncertainty about whether a transferred course is equivalent to a Peninsula College course, or when a student submits a new transfer course evaluation or ACPL request, faculty members conduct a discipline-specific review. This ensures that credits awarded for transfer or ACPL are comparable in content and rigor to those taught at Peninsula College.

ix.1.C.9

*1.C.9 The institution's graduate programs are consistent with its mission, are in keeping with the expectations of its respective disciplines and professions, and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. The graduate programs differ from undergraduate programs by requiring, among other things, greater: depth of study; demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or relevant professional practice.*

Peninsula College does not offer graduate programs.

d. Standard 1.D: Student Achievement

i.1.D.1

*1.D.1 Consistent with its mission, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.*

Peninsula College is an open-enrollment institution that recruits and admits students from both the local service region and beyond. The college engages in recruitment and enrollment outreach throughout the region, targeting high school students and collaborating with community and workforce partners. This outreach takes place at high school fairs, program-specific events, and various community and Tribal events across the area. Additionally, recruitment for athletic programs attracts a diverse population of out-of-state and international students to the campus. While the TargetX CRM system is relatively new to the college, plans are underway to further integrate both



internal and external communications to enhance outreach and retention efforts.

The institution has a highly developed program for orientation and enrollment transition, having made changes to accommodate student needs following the pandemic, as well as shifting the orientation program structure to accommodate larger groups of students alongside the college's enrollment increases. A Guided Pathways work group informs the orientation program content. It is well-aligned in its ability to provide students with information about both program and degree requirements and institutional policies. Through orientation and new-student onboarding, scaffolded online and in-person content works to ensure that students develop self-efficacy and self-advocacy alongside building awareness of the campus and its policies and services. Orientation and new student surveys provide an opportunity to assess orientation and advising outcomes. Advising and Student Services staff use these data to inform program development and decision making.

Students spoke highly of the ability to contact advisors and student services staff and receive prompt and friendly support and assistance in accessing resources and information for advising, registration, and program planning.

#### ii.1.D.2

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

Peninsula College has established a set of student achievement indicators consistent with its mission as a community college. The indicators are: Fall-to-Fall Retention or Completion rates; completion in Year 3; Four-Year College Completion; Earnings Indicator Year 4; percent of students who take 45 credits in Year 1; percent of students who take English in Year 1; and percent of students who take Math in Year 1.

The college has carefully chosen peer institutions, as well as aspirational regional and national comparators, based on a variety of relevant characteristics for their type of institution. The indicators can be broken down by factors such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first-generation college status, high school courses taken, program type, and

other important characteristics. Disaggregated student achievement data are regularly reviewed and analyzed, and this information has been used to enhance processes, such as the advising and support provided to Indigenous students.

iii.1.D.3

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

The college widely publishes its disaggregated indicators of student achievement on its main web site under "Facts and Figures." The results of student achievement measures are also shared regularly with the Board of Trustees and the college community at the monthly President's Meetings. Benchmark institutions have been identified, but Peninsula College recognizes that more work needs to be done in regularly using benchmark data to inform appropriate practices.

**Concern:** The college should regularly incorporate its review of benchmark institutions into its analysis and use of student achievement data to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.

iv.1.D.4

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

The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent. Reports are provided regularly to the Board of Trustees and the college community. Employees are also well-informed about key metrics such as retention, persistence, transfer and completion. Instructional areas and student service areas have access to data that inform changes to advising, student support and curriculum. The college has charged its Guided Pathways committee with focusing on student achievement data, particularly disaggregated data to address equity gaps and other areas of concern regarding student achievement.

**Compliment:** Employees at Peninsula College are well-informed about indicators of student achievement. The institution is committed to making

data-informed decisions and uses indicators of achievement in its efforts to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.

## **VI. Standard 2: Governance, Resources, and Capacity**

The following Standard 2 elements were specifically reviewed during the visit as either PRFR findings, items included in the self-evaluation report addenda, or as areas of interest resulting from meetings during the visit.

### **a. Standard 2.C: Policies and Procedures**

#### **i.2.C.4**

*2.C.4 The institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.*

Peninsula College has implemented and consistently adheres to policies and procedures for securely retaining student records. The college follows the general records retention schedule established by the Washington State Community and Technical College System (SBCTC). The SBCTC is responsible for backing up all student records stored in ctcLink. Employees with access to ctcLink must complete a multi-factor authentication process to access student records, with varying access levels determined by supervisors, in collaboration with system data analysts and the registrar.

Additionally, Peninsula College has implemented multi-factor authentication for students, which is required to access the single sign-on portal. Records that are not stored in ctcLink (such as submitted transcripts or materials required for financial aid) are kept in OnBase, a cloud-based system. Access to OnBase is restricted to personnel with the appropriate permissions, with tiered confidentiality levels based on position and responsibilities. The retention schedule in OnBase aligns with the Washington SBCTC's records retention schedule.

The institution plans to conduct data systems penetration audits every four years. Several board policies related to information security have either been approved or are currently being presented to the board, addressing concerns regarding the security and confidentiality of student records and campus data.

**Compliment:** The evaluation committee commends the institution for its diligent and collaborative efforts to ensure the security and integrity of student and campus data. The initiatives to modify data management and access policies, along with measures to reduce fraudulent enrollment applications, significantly contribute to the integrity of the entire system.

b. Standard 2.G: Student Support Resources

i.2.G.7

*2.G.7 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.*

Peninsula College has established clear procedures for student identification that begin with the admissions process. All students who live outside of the service district must go through an identity verification process, which requires students to provide a picture ID (front and back) and proof of a permanent address. If identity is not verified, then a face-to-face verification meeting is required. Once admitted, students can access the college's student portal, including CANVAS for online and other digital course content, using single sign-on protocols that require multi-factor authentication. These procedures adhere to the digital and cybersecurity standards set by the Washington State system of higher education. Additionally, faculty teaching online or distance education courses have the option to create authentic online assessment materials, use Zoom accounts for synchronous student testing, or utilize the main campus testing center to verify that the students enrolled in the course are the same individuals participating and receiving credit.

FERPA, HIPPA, and other similar policies are in place and faculty undergo required FERPA training, which includes FERPA breach reporting procedures. Office personnel working with hard copy student records (e.g., transcripts, etc.) receive student privacy training and sign non-disclosure documents. Access to the ONBASE student information system is permissions-based and regularly reviewed.

Verification procedures are no cost to the students. Students receive notification of fraud detection, which locks their student account and blocks their access to course materials at Peninsula College and all Washington state institutions. Students can work with the Registrar's Office to re-verify their identification and restore their account access (a 2-to-3-week process).

Peninsula College ensures regular and meaningful interaction in its distance education programs through the TILT (Transparency in Teaching and Learning) framework and the 4-Connections best practices. These resources are made available to distance education instructors through the Center for

Equity in Teaching and Learning (CETL), along with various professional development and faculty learning communities.

The CETL provides faculty with templates for course design and communication plans for students, which outline faculty working hours and expectations for feedback on student work. Additionally, faculty contracts include provisions for both in-person and online regular and substantive interaction, which is supported by board policy that was adopted March 19, 2024 ([Peninsula College Board Policy 335 Regular and Substantive Interaction](#)).

## **VII. Summary**

Peninsula College's Standard One Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) report was well-written and thoroughly documented, providing a comprehensive self-assessment of the institution. The main report, along with linked documents and information gathered during the site visit, offered evidence of the college's institutional planning and improvement efforts, which are driven by its core themes and strategic plan. This work is supported by the college's budget planning cycle and annual operational planning.

The site visit complemented Peninsula College's report effectively. Personnel were well-prepared to answer questions and spoke candidly about the institution's progress. The Evaluation Team recognized the impact of the college's Guiding Principles, exemplified by leadership and personnel on both the Port Angeles and Fork campuses. All materials and interactions highlighted Peninsula College's commitment to developing resilient community-engaged programs and services that promote student equity and success.

## **VIII. Commendations and Recommendations**

### **a. Commendations**

#### **Commendation 1:**

The peer evaluation team commends the institution for the culture of respect, transparent communication, and collaborative decision-making built upon the college's guiding principles.

#### **Commendation 2:**

The peer evaluation team commends the institution for its Center for Equity, Teaching, and Learning (CETL), which is recognized across campus for its commitment to making assessment meaningful, useful, and integrated with effective professional development.

#### **Commendation 3:**

The peer evaluation team commends the institution for its data-driven, transparent, and inclusive decision-making budget process and rubric that is effectively used for budgeting, operational planning, and resource allocation aligned with the college's strategic priorities.

Commendation 4:

The peer evaluation team commends the institution for its intentional outreach, partnership, and community building work at the Peninsula College campuses and throughout the greater peninsula.

b. Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The peer evaluation team recommends the institution establish a consistent system of assessment to evaluate and improve all of its instructional programs (Standard 1.C.5).

Recommendation 2:

The peer evaluation team recommends the institution develop an assessment cycle that systematically measures all institutional learning outcomes (Standard 1.C.6).

Recommendation 3:

The peer evaluation team recommends the institution consistently document and utilize the results of its assessment efforts to improve all levels of student learning outcomes (Standard 1.C.7).