



Flathead Valley Community College Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Prepared for the Northwest Commission on
Colleges and Universities

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Introduction

Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) is in the third year of its seven-year accreditation cycle. Since the college's NWCCU virtual site visit in 2020, FVCC has updated its strategic plan, redefined what it means to fulfill its mission, identified a meaningful set of regional and national peers, and begun to instill a data-informed culture focused on student achievement.

Mission Fulfillment

The institution provides an executive summary of not more than three pages, which describes the institution's framework for its ongoing accreditation efforts. This might include evidence of institutional effectiveness, Core Teams, or other appropriate mechanisms for measuring mission fulfillment of its mission.

Mission fulfillment is a continuous, ongoing process, and FVCC's mission statement provides the framework and guidance for the college's daily operations and aspirational goals. Mission fulfillment is the highest level at which FVCC evaluates its effectiveness. Since 2004, the college's long-standing [mission statement](#) states, "FVCC promotes excellence in lifelong learning focused on student success and community needs."

Strategic Goals

While FVCC's mission statement describes what the college does, the college's strategic plan outlines how the college fulfills its mission. The strategic plan sets priorities, focuses resources, and ensures the college works toward common goals based on mission fulfillment.

After taking a brief hiatus following the year seven virtual visit in April 2020 to pivot and support students during the initial year of the pandemic, the [strategic planning and accreditation council](#) (SPAC), previously known as the strategic planning council, reconvened in February 2021 to revisit and update the college's strategic plan in coordination with [data governance](#).

SPAC has broad campus [representation](#) and assists the college in achieving its mission by coordinating the strategic planning process and monitoring progress toward college-wide goals, while data governance provides guidance and data-driven recommendations. Data governance, appointed by the president, consists of key stakeholders of data and gatekeepers of student information.

During Spring 2021, the college worked on creating a new strategic plan. At the Fall 2021 in-service, a new [strategic plan](#) consisting of four strategic goals was presented to staff and faculty. With additional input from the campus community, the plan was brought to [executive](#)

[staff](#) for their review and recommendation to the board of trustees. In [September 2021](#), the board of trustees approved the new strategic plan and, hence, reaffirmed the college's mission.

The [2020-2027 Strategic Plan](#), shared widely [online](#) and referred to in multiple college forums and processes, aligns with the seven-year accreditation cycle and reflects FVCC's commitment to student success, as illustrated by the four strategic goals listed below.

Goal 1: Increase Completion of Degrees and Certificates

Goal 2: Cultivate a Supportive Teaching and Learning Environment

Goal 3: Foster an Environment of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Goal 4: Enhance Institutional Vitality

Embedded in the [strategic plan](#) are ten objectives and several corresponding strategies to help guide the college toward mission fulfillment.

Following the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities' (NWCCU) lead with the [NWCCU 2020 Standards](#), FVCC decided to sunset its core themes with the adoption of the new strategic plan so that the college can focus on its strategic goals and student achievement.

Mission Fulfillment Indicators

After the board of trustees approved the strategic plan in September 2021, SPAC then developed a meaningful set of indicators that the college could use to assess mission fulfillment, measure student success, support the college's strategic goals, and benchmark with its peer institutions.

Aligned with FVCC's mission, the college defined mission fulfillment in terms of student success and chose nine mission fulfillment (or student success) indicators that can easily be disaggregated to ensure the college is supporting all students.

These indicators were presented to the college community during the all-employee Fall 2022 in-service for their feedback and suggestions. In [September 2022](#), the board of trustees approved the college's nine mission fulfillment indicators recommended by SPAC and executive staff. In [February 2023](#), the trustees approved SPAC's recommendation to modify the eighth indicator to yield more meaningful data. FVCC's nine indicators are listed below.

1. Students will persist from fall to fall (i.e., retention rates)
2. Percentage of students who complete degrees or certificates (i.e., graduation rates)
3. Percentage of degree-seeking students who transfer and earn a degree
4. Percentage of (MT resident) students who complete CTE degrees and earn wages in MT
5. Student success rate (C- or better) for online/hybrid courses is similar to face-to-face courses

6. Students successfully pass college-level courses upon completion of foundational/developmental (i.e., next course in sequence or W101 for ALPS)
7. Licensure/certification pass rates of accredited programs
8. Percentage of students in individual courses who earn a 2.0 or higher
9. Percent of students who meet or exceed expectations of general education learning outcomes

These indicators identify how the college will measure mission fulfillment, and at the all-employee Spring 2023 in-service, employees were introduced to the initial set of data dashboards highlighting student achievement data and the ninth mission fulfillment [indicator](#) demonstrating that 88% of general education learning outcomes were met or exceeded expectations in Fall 2022.

Although the extent to which FVCC fulfills its mission is yet to be determined using the new set of indicators, the college will continue to strive to meet or exceed its benchmarks. The college anticipates peer-based benchmarks will be established by mid-April.

Next Steps

This spring, the data team, a subset workgroup of data governance, will continue to disaggregate each indicator and present that data to SPAC. This information will provide a better understanding of where and why changes happen, if the changes are expected and what the college can do to support students better.

Additionally, data governance will work in tandem with SPAC to set meaningful targets benchmarked against the college's peer institutions. As the governing body of the college, the board of trustees will determine to what extent FVCC is fulfilling its mission based on SPAC's recommendations.

Moving forward, assessment results will be reviewed annually by SPAC and shared widely with the college community via annual monitoring reports to the board of trustees and regular presentations at the all-employee spring in-service. The annual report will include an overview of progress made and recommendations for improvement.

Lastly, SPAC will begin documenting the college's progress toward achieving its strategic objectives through its identified strategies so the college can start assessing the outcomes of each associated performance indicator. For example, in support of strategy 4a(i) of the [strategic plan](#), data governance created several data dashboards and a data request form this academic year. In addition to the student achievement dashboards publicly available online at fvcc.edu/data, faculty now have access to interactive Fall 2022 general education learning outcomes data dashboards and, currently, static program specific data dashboards (i.e., [chemistry](#), [information technology and security](#)). By creating a [data request form](#), data governance also established a clear pathway for data requests. This new form was introduced

to the campus community during the all-employee Spring 2023 in-service and is readily available at fvcc.edu/data. To determine to what extent FVCC is improving access to student data, it will be important to gather user-end feedback from the faculty regarding the usefulness of the data dashboards as well as track the number and types of data requests submitted by faculty and staff. For example, the data team received seven distinct data requests within the first month of launching the data request form. Prior to this academic year, data requests were not regularly tracked or cataloged for future data inquiries.

Student Achievement

The institution provides a brief overview of the student achievement measures it uses as part of its ongoing self-reflection, along with comparative data and information from at least five institutions it uses in benchmarking its student achievement efforts. In providing the overview, the institution may consider including published indicators including (but not limited to) persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation student success achievement measures. Additionally, the report must include the widely published indicators disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, Pell status, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close equity gaps, i.e., barriers to academic excellence and success amongst students from underserved communities.

Student Achievement Measures

FVCC chose four student achievement measures—persistence, completion, retention and postgraduation success—as a part of its ongoing self-reflection. These measures, approved by [executive staff](#), were thoroughly vetted by [SPAC](#) and [data governance](#) and shared widely with the college community during the all-employee Fall 2022 in-service. Although other indicators were initially discussed, the college opted to select student achievement measures that are publicly available through national reporting tools such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

To fully monitor and promote student achievement for all students, FVCC disaggregates each of these student achievement indicators by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student and Pell status in order to identify potential equity gaps.

Additionally, because FVCC is considered a [military-friendly institution](#) and since an average of 6% of degree-seeking students either self-identify and/or receive Veterans benefits each year, SPAC felt it was important for the college also to disaggregate student achievement indicators by veteran status.

FVCC's disaggregated student achievement measures and comparative data are publicly available on the college's Institutional Research [webpage](#) at fvcc.edu/data.

Comparison Colleges

FVCC selected six community colleges as regional peer comparisons: Blue Mountain Community College (OR), Centralia College (WA), Grays Harbor College (WA), North Idaho College (ID), Rogue Community College (OR) and Umpqua Community College (OR).

Additionally, FVCC selected nine community colleges as national peer comparisons: Cloud County Community College (KS), Fulton-Montgomery Community College (NY), John Wood Community College (IL), Lake Michigan College (MI), Lurleen B Wallace Community College (AL), Marshalltown Community College (IA), Mid-State Technical College (WI), Patrick Henry Community College (VA) and Washington State Community College (OH).

The metrics SPAC and data governance considered for identifying and selecting FVCC's peer institutions include IPEDS rural: fringe classification, similar student body size and race/ethnicity makeup, a similar percentage of financial aid recipients, similar cost and two-year public institution using Fall 2020 data. Identified colleges may or may not have student housing.

Although no other two-year college in Montana met all the above criteria, SPAC felt it was important to identify at least two peer institutions from within the state; therefore, FVCC added Helena College and Great Falls College to its list of regional peer institutions since their size, location and programs most closely align with FVCC.

Below are the 17 colleges currently identified as FVCC's regional and national peers, along with each college's Fall 2020 enrollment and corresponding student achievement measures. This data is also available graphically at fvcc.edu/data.

	College Name	Location	Graduation Rate	Retention Rate (FT/PT)	Enrollment
National	Patrick Henry Community College	Martinsville, Virginia	40%	60%/41%	2,050
	Fulton-Montgomery Community College	Johnstown, New York	33%	56%/49%	1,946
	Washington State Community College	Marietta, Ohio	32%	56%/43%	1,809
	John Wood Community College	Quincy, Illinois	44%	68%/52%	1,881
	Marshalltown Community College	Marshalltown, Iowa	35%	59%/34%	1,836
	Lake Michigan College	Benton Harbor, Michigan	21%	91%/52%	2,499
	Mid-State Technical College	Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin	39%	62%/50%	2,648
	Lurleen B Wallace Community College	Andalusia, Alabama	33%	66%/54%	1,666
	Cloud County Community College	Concordia, Kansas	47%	47%/35%	1,589
Regional	Blue Mountain Community College	Pendleton, Oregon	23%	42%/27%	1,292
	Rogue Community College	Grants Pass, Oregon	11%	50%/34%	3,765
	Umpqua Community College	Roseburg, Oregon	28%	45%/49%	2,140
	North Idaho College	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	28%	56%/35%	4,737
	Grays Harbor	Aberdeen, Washington	33%	-	1,553
	Centralia	Centralia, Washington	42%	-	2,314
	Great Falls College - MSU	Great Falls, Montana	18%	59%/38%	1,071
	Helena College	Helena, Montana	37%	56%/39%	1,324
	Flathead Valley Community College	Kalispell, Montana	30%	63%/49%	2,049

Initiatives Informed by Achievement Data

Not only does FVCC compare its student achievement data externally, but the college also looks at its student achievement data internally to pursue and implement new initiatives to improve student learning and student success. Below are two recent examples of FVCC employees using achievement data for the betterment of students.

- Health Care Study Lab at Lincoln County Campus (LCC): Upon review of data, the director of LCC and vice president of academic and student affairs noticed that regardless of the instructor, students enrolled in BIOH 201NL Human Anatomy & Physiology I or BIOH 211NL Human Anatomy and Physiology II (required prerequisite courses for the registered nursing program), at LCC consistently earned lower grades than those students enrolled in the same course on the Kalispell campus. Similarly, no students enrolled in BIOH 104 Basic Human Biology (required prerequisite for the practical nursing program) achieved an A grade. Upon further investigation and conversation with students, a dedicated study lab in Kalispell surfaced as a significant component of student success on the Kalispell campus. Therefore, the director of LCC, in collaboration with anatomy and physiology (A&P) faculty, [applied](#) for FVCC Perkins funding in Spring 2021 to create a healthcare study lab like the space available to students on the Kalispell campus. After equipping the new designated study space in Libby for healthcare CTE and pre-nursing students with an eye model, full-size skeleton with muscle layer, anatomy flash cards, virtual reality headsets and other study guides, a student earned an A grade in A&P for the first time since the college began offering the courses in Libby. However, with low enrollment numbers, more data needs to be gathered to determine the impact of the Perkins funding.
- S-STEM Grant: Faculty from the STEM divisions used [student success data](#) (see pages 4-7) to discover a population of academically talented low-income degree-seeking STEM students at FVCC. The faculty then surveyed this population and learned that these students also often face mental health and identity challenges. Armed with this data, the STEM divisions applied for and were awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) S-STEM grant to help address these students' financial, socio-emotional and identity-based needs and thus increase their rates of retention, persistence and graduation.

Next Steps

Student achievement data will continue to be reviewed annually. After the current list of 17 peer institutions has been thoroughly reviewed and benchmarked this spring against FVCC's mission fulfillment indicators, SPAC will narrow the list of peers to a more manageable size consisting of five to eight most relevant and aspirational colleges. Afterward, SPAC will review the college's remaining peer institutions each spring to ensure the peer institutions still serve as appropriate comparisons.

Additionally, SPAC will continue to monitor FVCC's rates of persistence, completion, retention and postgraduation success of its students on an annual basis and findings will be shared widely with the campus community (and updated online) in conjunction with the all-employee fall in-service/data summit to allow for ample time for cross-departmental discussions and idea sharing.

Lastly, to continue to inspire and nurture a data-informed culture, data governance and the accreditation steering committee (the advisory team for SPAC) will highlight student achievement initiatives at future [data bite](#) presentations as well as make recommendations to executive staff for potential student success presentations for upcoming board of trustees meetings.

Programmatic Assessment

The institution must provide programmatic assessment of at least two programs as evidence of a continuous process of improvement. The programs should be broadly representative of institutional efforts (and as a result programs that are approved by a CHEA-recognized programmatic accreditor are discouraged for this report).

FVCC uses three distinct assessment processes—program review, general education assessment and non-instructional department review—to evaluate progress and improvement through institutional efforts. Below are four examples of programmatic assessment providing evidence of continuous improvement at the course, program and department level.

The first two examples demonstrate traditional academic program assessment while the third example highlights the college's recently remodeled degree-level assessment for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. The fourth example shows how programmatic assessment occurs within non-instructional departments.

Program Review

The program review process is an important opportunity for faculty to actively participate in the growth of their programs and the growth of the college as a whole. The review process helps the college to evaluate the role of its programs in supporting FVCC's mission and strategic goals.

The [program review](#) committee consists of twelve members, including a faculty member from each academic division (i.e., business and technology, health science, humanities, math and computer science, science and engineering, social science) and nursing department. Faculty committee members serve three-year terms, and membership is staggered to ensure continuity among returning and new members. The [faculty senate](#) president, director of academic affairs, director of LCC, academic affairs coordinator, and dean of compliance/accreditation liaison

officer (ALO) serve on the committee as ex-officio members. The director of academic affairs and faculty senate president co-chair the committee.

Program Assessment Description. Academic programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle. Each spring, the program review schedule is reviewed and modified, if necessary so programs are reviewed within an appropriate timeframe. Division chairs and instructors of those programs scheduled for review in the upcoming academic year are notified in the spring prior to their review.

The committee also annually evaluates the templates to ensure the review process continues to provide meaningful, useful information for both the department being reviewed and the committee.

Changes to the FVCC [career and technical education](#) (CTE) and [transfer](#) program review templates for the 2022-2023 academic year included adding the following questions that specifically address online learning and student success, budget expenditures, and program improvement:

- Which program instructors have completed the training to develop and/or teach hybrid/online?
- Which currently offered online and hybrid courses have undergone the design quality review process?
- Are students successfully completing online/hybrid courses offered in the program?
- Compare grades or pass rates/withdrawal rates between online/hybrid and face to face courses.
- Identify all funding sources for this program. Discuss the adequacy of funding. Are there any changes that might better support the program/learning outcomes and the student learning experience?
- Discuss any anticipated expenses that will require additional financial support in the next 3-5 years. How can the program prepare to meet this need?
- List recommendations and plans for improving student learning in the program/transfer area.

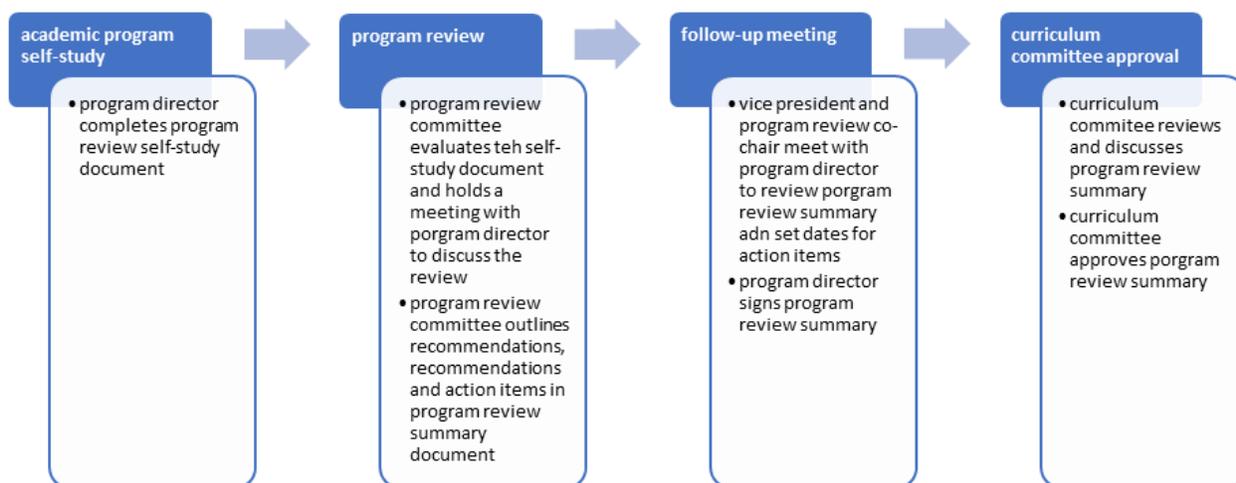
The updated CTE program review template also asks the following question:

- What additional data would be useful to track student success in the program and/or inform program improvements?

The comprehensive program review templates are collaborative in nature as several individuals/departments contribute to the document: namely, the program director, academic affairs, instructional design and technology, institutional research, business office and advising liaison. The report is stored in a shared folder accessible to employees.

The program review committee evaluates the completed review forms and holds a meeting with the program director to discuss the review. The committee makes recommendations to the program director and then forwards the review summary to the vice president of academic and student affairs. After reviewing the summary of recommendations, the vice president of academic and student affairs holds a meeting with the program director, the respective division chair, a program review committee co-chair, and the dean of compliance to review the commendations and recommendations as well as set dates for any follow-up action items. The program review summary template was also updated for the 2022-2023 academic year to include a faculty response to the summary memo. Afterward, [curriculum committee](#) reviews and approves the program review summary at the last curriculum committee meeting of the semester.

The graphic below illustrates each step of the program review process.



Program Assessment Results. Each year, 10 to 12 academic programs are [reviewed](#). Typically, CTE programs (e.g., Associate of Applied Arts, Certificates of Applied Science and Certificates of Technical Studies) are reviewed in the fall to allow ample time for curricular changes to occur prior to the February catalog deadline while transfer tracks are reviewed in the spring. [Transfer tracks](#) are customized programs of study that prepare students to transfer to an institution without an established transfer articulation agreement. Upon completion, students will earn an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree customized to their area of interest, like engineering, music, or psychology.

Below are two examples of academic programs that recently completed the program review process. The first example involves a CTE program, while the second involves a transfer track.

Example 1 – Programming and Game Development, Associate of Applied Science

In Fall 2022, the [programming and game development](#) program was reviewed as a part of the regular five-year program review process using the updated CTE program review template. The

documents linked below demonstrate the outcomes for each phase of the program review assessment cycle as illustrated above.

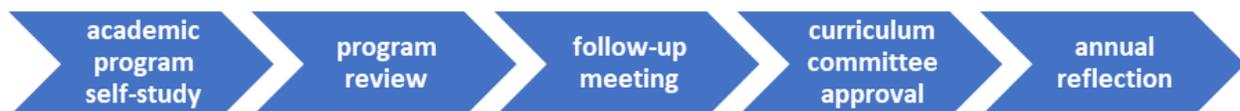
- [Fall 2022 Program Review - Programming & Game Development](#)
- [Fall 2022 Program Review Summary - Programming & Game Development](#)
- [Curriculum Committee Agenda Packet - December 2, 2022](#)

Example 2 – Music, Transfer Track

Last spring, in addition to the five-year review, [SPAC](#) and program review recommended that academic programs complete an [annual reflection](#) beginning in Fall 2022 to review program-specific data on an annual basis as well as track progress made towards recommendations. The [music transfer track](#) is an example of an academic program that completed the five-year program review in Spring 2022 and then completed an annual reflection in January 2023.

As a part of the new annual reflection process, faculty are provided with a custom [data dashboard](#) that includes student headcount; enrollment by course; enrollments by course mode; enrollments by ethnicity, race, residency, age, and school status; course counts, course completion, course completion by mode, success by course mode; and retention and graduation rates for CTE programs. Academic programs were initially asked to complete the inaugural annual reflection by November 1, 2022, but the deadline was moved to January 20, 2023, based on faculty feedback. Academic programs scheduled for a five-year review (like the previous example of the programming and game development program) will not be asked to complete an annual reflection during the year of their scheduled program review. The program review committee will review the annual academic reflections in February during their first meeting of Spring 2023.

The documents linked below demonstrate the outcomes for each phase of the program review assessment cycle with the new annual reflection requirement.



- [Spring 2022 Program Review - Music Transfer](#)
- [Spring 2022 Program Review Summary - Music Transfer](#)
- [Curriculum Committee Agenda Packet - April 22, 2022](#)
- [2022 Annual Reflection Data Dashboard - Music](#)
- [2022 Annual Reflection - Music](#)

General Education Assessment

General education assessment at FVCC includes assessment of the [general education core curriculum](#) for the AA and AS degrees, which are organized into eight categories: writing, communications, mathematics, humanities, fine arts, social sciences, natural science and global issues. The evaluation process helps determine whether students are meeting the general education learning outcome and aligns with the ninth mission fulfillment indicator of “percent of students who meet or exceed expectations of general education learning outcomes.”

Each course within the general education curriculum provides instruction on the general education learning outcome for the category for which it is listed.

General Education Category	Outcome Statement
Writing	Students should be able to . . . demonstrate organization, coherence, and clarity in writing.
Communications	evaluate purpose and audience to create a well-developed, supported, and stylistically fluent response.
Mathematics	use mathematical techniques to problem solve.
Humanities	examine the nature of human experience and/or artistic expression.
Social Sciences	evaluate multiple perspectives to arrive at and articulate a conclusion.
Natural Sciences	apply scientific concepts and methods of inquiry.
Global Issues	demonstrate awareness of self as a member of a multicultural global community.
Fine Arts	examine the role of the arts as a reflection of culture.

The [General Education Requirements](#) section of the academic catalog includes the learning outcomes for each general education category and lists the courses approved as meeting those requirements for both AA and AS degrees. The general education learning outcomes are also listed within the respective course [description](#) in the academic catalog and corresponding course syllabi.

In Fall 2021, a faculty-led general education assessment ad hoc work group consisting of all six division chairs, a former member of the general education team (the division chairs absorbed the responsibilities of the committee after the pandemic), and dean of compliance met to review the [status](#) of assessing general education and related instruction curriculum. The work group concluded that the previous system was ineffective and learning outcomes were inconsistently assessed by each division. More importantly, the previous system did not yield meaningful data, except for writing and mathematics, and the data could not be disaggregated.

As a result of a brainstorming session, the workgroup brought the instructional design and technology department into the conversation to explore potential capabilities in FVCC’s learning management system to assess learning outcomes. This led to a general education learning outcome [pilot](#) in Spring 2022 through Eagle Online, FVCC’s branded learning

management system. The [pilot](#) consisted of 14 faculty and 35 general education courses resulting in 431 individual assessments. At the Fall 2022 in-service, faculty met, by general education categories, to review the [disaggregated data](#) and provide feedback before adopting the pilot as the new method to assess all general education and related instruction courses.

Example 3 – Assessment of AA and AS Degrees

Program Assessment Description. The assessment of AA and AS degrees occurs through the general education curriculum assessment as the degree-level general education outcomes (for AA and AS degrees) are the same as the general education course learning outcomes.

Prior to implementing the new method to assess general education learning outcomes across all general education courses, a [master list](#) was created in Fall 2022 documenting how the learning outcome will be assessed for each general education and related instruction course, along with the rationale of why that method of assessment was selected. Then, in tandem with submitting fall semester grades, all faculty (full-time and adjunct) assessed whether each student met (by achieving the equivalent of 70-83% or C- to B-), exceeded (by achieving at least an 84% or B or better), or did not meet (by achieving 67% or less or D+ or below) the specific general education or related instruction learning outcomes for their course.

Beginning with Fall 2022, general education learning outcomes assessment will now occur each semester—fall, spring, and summer—for all general education courses taught.

Program Assessment Results. At the Spring 2023 in-service, faculty reviewed the results of 2,427 individual assessments consisting of 970 students disaggregated by general education/related instruction category, age, gender, residency, school status (full-time v. part-time), race, ethnicity, Pell recipient, veteran status, course mode and program type. Initial [data](#) (not including [Running Start](#) students) show that 88% of general education learning outcomes were met or exceeded expectations in Fall 2022.

Since Fall 2022 was the first semester that the learning outcomes for all general education courses were evaluated using the new system, it is too soon to determine what percentage of students who earn an AA or AS degree have met or exceeded the general education learning outcomes in each of their general education courses. Several years of data will be needed to assess how individual students meet the complete array of general education courses required for graduation.

Decision-Making Informed by Assessment. Although it is too early to identify key trends or significant achievement gaps, [faculty feedback](#) gathered during the Spring 2023 in-service has provided insightful observations and questions for the data team and general education ad hoc work group to consider. For example:

- Although the learning outcome for Social Science Group A and Social Science Group B are the same, students are required to take one course from each group. Therefore, would it be possible to disaggregate the outcome data by group type (A or B)?
- The assessment of learning outcomes is determined by the final grade for most courses. For those courses that rely on an alternative assessment (e.g., specific test or assignment) to determine if the student has met or exceeded the learning outcomes, does the grade earned in the course correspond to the student's achievement of the general education learning outcome?
- There are large numbers of students of unknown race/ethnicity. Do students have good directions when filling out the categories on their application for admission?

In preparation for the Fall 2023 in-service (and future fall in-services), the director of institutional research and the data team will continue to compile, disaggregate, and dive deeper into the general education learning outcome data to identify potential variables (or barriers) and trends to student success, so faculty can more easily digest the information and focus on action items to help close identified achievement gaps.

Non-Instructional Department Review

Non-instructional departments (e.g., residence life, financial aid, information technology) make significant contributions to student learning. SPAC coordinates department assessments, and, like academic programs, the assessments occur on a five-year [cycle](#).

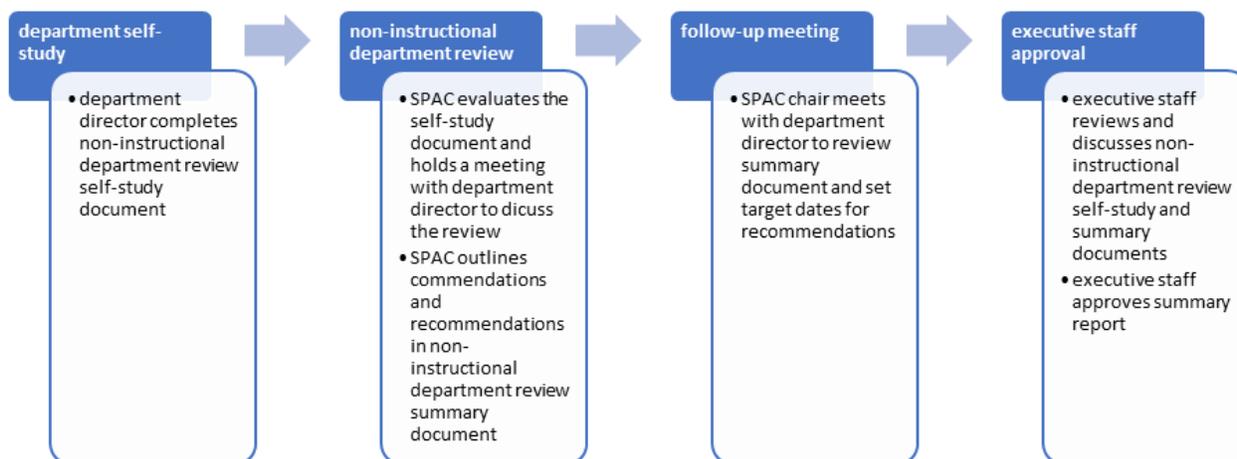
The non-instructional department review process went into hiatus after the start of the pandemic during the 2020-2021 academic year. After reconvening in February 2022, SPAC reviewed the non-instructional review self-evaluation template. The template was completely revised to drive data-driven decision-making by introducing new elements such as a SWOT analysis, identifying primary customers, and listing key findings of data collected.

Program Assessment Description. Through a self-study, each department identifies goals and objectives that align with FVCC's mission and strategic goals and develops a plan to assess the department's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.

Before completing the non-instructional department review (self-study) [document](#), the SPAC chair holds a meeting with the department director and director of institutional research to orient the department director to the non-instructional department review process. At the meeting, the director provides a copy of the previous self-study and corresponding recommendations along with the non-instructional department review [template](#). Together, the group walks through the process, timeline, and document in detail and addresses any initial questions or concerns. The director of instructional research also helps the department director identify existing or other appropriate resources, such as a satisfaction survey that will provide the department with meaningful data as the department reflects upon its achievements and alignment with the college's mission and establishes new goals and objectives to attain.

Upon submission of the self-study, SPAC evaluates the completed self-study and then holds a meeting with the department director to discuss the review. The director shared three to four department highlights or challenges at the meeting with the council. Then, the council discusses the self-study with the director. Afterwards, at a separate meeting, the council will make recommendations for the department based on the discussion and review of the self-study. The SPAC chair then invites the department director and supervisor to a follow-up meeting to review the council’s commendations and recommendations as well as set dates to follow up on any action items and places the summary document in the department’s folder in Teams. Lastly, the SPAC chair forwards the self-study and review summary to [executive staff](#) for their review and approval.

The graphic below illustrates each step of the non-instructional department review process.



Program Assessment Results. Each academic year, three to five non-instructional departments are reviewed. Below is an example of a department completing the non-instructional department review under the newly updated process.

Example 4 – Department of Information Technology

In Spring 2022, information technology was scheduled to be reviewed at the end of the semester, but due to the pending retirement of the executive director, the department requested that their review be postponed until August 2022, so the new executive director could actively participate in the review process.

The documents linked below from information technology’s non-instructional review conducted in August demonstrate the results for each step of the assessment cycle for non-instructional departments under the updated process.



- [2022 Non-Instructional Department Review - Information Technology Self-Study](#)
- [2022 SPAC Review Summary - Information Technology](#)
- [2022 Executive Staff Approval - Information Technology Non-Instructional Department Review](#)

Decision-Making Informed by Assessment. Based on feedback from the non-instructional department review, the department of information technology (IT) has since implemented changes, adopted initiatives and adjusted structures to serve the institution’s needs better. More specifically, the department has:

- Developed, adopted and executed a staffing plan and additional staffing group by:
 - Hiring a full-time database systems analyst and a part-time data analyst.
 - Creating and organizing an additional staff group, the data team. The data team consists of the director of institutional research, the database systems analyst, the data analyst and the executive director of information technology.
- Selected and set up Tableau as a data visualization and reports system in partnership with the Montana University System.
- Started an IT advisory committee.

Next Steps

Like the AA and AS degrees, the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Certificate of Applied Science (CAS) programs require a core of [related instruction](#), which is built into the program listings. [Learning outcomes](#) are identified in three related instruction areas—communication, interactions and quantitative literacy—as listed below.

Related Instruction Category	Outcome Statement
Communication	Students should be able to . . . express, interpret, or modify ideas to communicate effectively.
Quantitative Literacy	understand and apply quantitative concepts and reasoning using numerical data.
Interactions	collaborate effectively with others in complicated, dynamic, and/or ambiguous situations.

Degree-level related instruction outcomes for CTE programs are published in the Academic Procedures and Requirements: [Related Instruction Learning Outcomes](#) section of the academic catalog. The related instruction learning outcomes are also listed within the respective course [description](#) in the academic catalog and course syllabi.

Related instruction assessment is discussed with program directors during the academic program review process even though it was not possible, prior to Fall 2022, to collect and disaggregate student-level course learning outcome data for related instruction courses. However, the successful Spring 2022 general education learning outcome pilot paved the way for faculty to easily track related instruction learning outcome data each semester—fall, spring, summer—beginning Fall 2022. As with general education assessment, the evaluation process for related instruction courses also aligns with the ninth mission fulfillment indicator of “percent of students who meet or exceed expectations of gen ed learning outcomes.”

Beginning with the Fall 2023 program review cycle, CTE programs will receive a custom data dashboard for related instruction designated courses within the program. Thus, allowing program directors to compare and reflect on how programming and game development students, for example, enrolled in COMX 115C Introduction to Interpersonal Communication compared to all students enrolled in COMX 115C.

In Fall 2022, 84% of related instruction outcomes met or exceeded expectations. It will be important to monitor this percentage moving forward. Likewise, it will be important to compare the outcome success rate for courses, such as COMX 115C, that satisfy a general education requirement and two related instruction requirements.

Since fall 2022 was the first semester that the related instruction learning outcome data were gathered for all courses designated as a related instruction course, it is too soon to determine what percentage of students who earn an AAS or CAS degree has met or exceeded all related instruction learning outcomes.

Moving Forward

The institution must provide its reflections on any additional efforts or initiatives it plans on undertaking as it prepares for the Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report.

FVCC is scheduled for an Evaluation of Institution Effectiveness visit in Spring 2027. Looking ahead and in preparation for the year seven report, FVCC will continue to build upon its current momentum of instilling a data-informed culture focused on student success and mission fulfillment by:

- ***Institutionalizing processes.*** The college discovered that not all processes were institutionalized, meaningful or effective during the pandemic. Notable changes previously mentioned in this report include overhauling the general education learning outcomes assessment process as well as adding an annual reflection to the program review and non-instructional department review processes to help academic programs and departments maintain focus, track progress, identify gains, and be aware of environmental shifts. The ALO responsibilities and lead assessment work also moved

from the vice president of academic and student affairs to a seasoned dean to manage and monitor in July 2022.

- **Automating reports.** To make more data readily available for employees and increase department efficiencies and consistencies, over three dozen automated reports and data sets have been created by information technology and the data team since November 2020. Examples of automated reports include a daily enrollment summary report for key stakeholders, a student prerequisite information report that is generated semesterly and updated live for chemistry and math department chairs, and a housing student academic data report used by the residence life coordinator and dean of students to make decisions while managing student eligibility and housing availability changes. The data team will continue to develop and catalog more reports and data dashboards as new [data requests](#) are submitted at fvcc.edu/data.
- **Tracking student engagement.** To streamline the tracking of student engagement, the coordinator of student engagement along with the director of institutional research and executive director of information technology have identified a student engagement app ([CampusGroups](#)) to purchase that will help the college facilitate student engagement, track student participation and assess program outcomes beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year.
- **Hosting regular data summits and data bites.** In conjunction with the all-employee in-service and in coordination with the teaching and learning center, the accreditation steering committee facilitated an inaugural “data summit” in Fall 2022 introducing the campus community to the college’s proposed peer institutions and mission fulfillment indicators as well as provided faculty with department-level data and facilitated general educational learning outcomes discussions. The accreditation steering committee will provide data on the following schedule, with student achievement data in the fall and mission fulfillment data in the spring. Additionally, throughout the year, quick [data bites](#) will continue to highlight various data findings and showcase achievements made through data-informed initiatives.
- **Participating in the National Student Clearinghouse’s Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) and leveraging data.** The data team will submit the first data set to the PDP by the end of Spring 2023. The PDP’s interactive dashboards and metrics will be insightful for the college and instrumental for continuous improvement as the college incorporates comparative data in its day-to-day operations as well as use the data to inform institutional effectiveness. At the same time, it will be important for the college to also leverage the data shared and acquired from participating in the [Voluntary Framework of Accountability](#), [Military Friendly School](#) survey, and [National Student Clearinghouse](#).
- **Increasing data literacy.** As the college community shifts from a reliance of using analytical data to accessing data and asking questions such as “What evidence supports that?” it will be important that all employees become more data literate especially as data becomes more prevalent and accessible. During the all-employee Spring 2023 in-service, [data governance](#) facilitated two data literacy workshops—the first session was an introduction to data literacy for all employees and the second session was tailored for faculty. Therefore, in support of the strategic plan and to scaffold upon the training

presented at the spring in-service, more opportunities for data literacy professional development will continue to be provided for faculty and staff.

- **Documenting progress.** As the college continues to strive for institutional effectiveness, the college will document its accomplishments and setbacks by conducting a regular assessment of its processes, developing an annual assessment plan in lieu of a four-year [assessment plan](#), gathering annual updates from academic programs and non-instructional departments, and publishing an annual mission fulfillment monitoring report.

Lastly, the college will embrace and pursue the action items identified as next steps in the previous sections of this report.

Addendums

Institutions which have been asked to address prior recommendations or which have been asked to address any transitional efforts to the 2020 Standards may be included in an Addendums section.

FVCC received five recommendations from the NWCCU Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability year seven visit to be addressed as an addendum in this mid-cycle report.

Recommendation 1

Ensure core theme planning, inclusive of outcomes, indicators, and targets, guides the selection, implementation, alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services at all levels (1.B.2, 1. B.4).

Standard 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 peer institutions.

Standard 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.

As previously mentioned, with implementing a new [strategic plan](#) and adopting of the 2020 accreditation standards, FVCC no longer uses core themes to guide the planning, alignment, and integration of programs and services. Instead, FVCC identified a new set of meaningful strategic goals, objectives, and mission fulfillment indicators to guide planning as well as define and improve its effectiveness in comparison to its peer institutions.

After a year of identifying a new set of strategic goals and corresponding objectives in collaboration between [data governance](#) and [SPAC](#) and input from the campus community during the all-employee Fall 2021 in-service, the updated strategic plan was presented to and approved by the board of trustees in [September 2021](#). The college then spent the following year identifying a meaningful set of peer institutions with a clear set of criteria (as noted earlier) and nine mission fulfillment indicators that can be disaggregated and benchmarked against the college's peer institutions. The recommended peer institutions and mission fulfillment indicators were presented to all employees at the Fall 2022 in-service for input before forwarding the indicators to [executive staff](#) for review and the board of trustees for approval in [September 2022](#).

The newly approved mission fulfillment indicators and peer institutions were also a focus of discussion during the all-employee Spring 2023 in-service and are also shared widely online at fvcc.edu/data. The data team, consisting of the director of institutional research, executive director of information technology, database systems analyst, and data analyst, is currently in the process of sifting through the mission fulfillment indicator data to help SPAC set appropriate benchmarks and identify potential equity gaps. After the benchmarks have been set, SPAC, in coordination with data governance, will create an annual monitoring report using longitudinal data that will address and analyze progress made toward institutional effectiveness and discuss strategies for improvement. The annual report will be shared widely with the campus community and presented to the board of trustees annually. Furthermore, this spring, SPAC will take a closer look at all 17 peer institutions with help from data governance to identify the five to eight most appropriate aspirational peer institutions to whom FVCC compares itself. SPAC will then continue to review the revised list of peer institutions each spring to ensure that the college's peer institutions continue to yield a meaningful, aspirational comparison.

The alignment of strategic goals continues to play a prominent role in many existing procedures, including, but not limited to, the [development of new academic programs](#), [FVCC Perkins funding](#), [grant development proposals](#), [employee reclassifications](#), and [new budget requests](#), as well as [non-instructional department reviews](#). The strategic goals also guide the college's daily operations as documented in the monthly executive staff reports presented in the board of trustees agenda as of [December 2022](#). Like the annual monitoring report, SPAC will also review the college's strategic plan yearly and assess progress made towards the college's strategic objectives in alignment with the strategic goals.

As a part of SPAC's annual process of reviewing its non-instructional department review process each spring, a SWOT analysis was added to the [non-instructional department review template](#) beginning in 2022 to help non-academic departments formally monitor their internal and external environments regularly. Furthermore, to assist academic programs and non-instructional departments with tracking their progress towards goal attainment or setbacks due to environmental challenges, a department update was also embedded in the new annual reflections for [academic programs](#) and [non-instructional departments](#). These new tools complement the college's ongoing environmental scans that occur through the president's

yearly [community conversations](#) with businesses and community leaders throughout the college's service region in Flathead and Lincoln counties as well as annual advisory committee meetings for career and technical education programs, the creation and hiring of a new executive director of workforce development, and numerous employee community connections with business partners and service organizations.

Advisory committees continue to play a vital role in providing feedback to program chairs regarding emerging trends and employment needs; their input is now documented in the career and technical education program review [template](#) beginning with Fall 2022 reviews. Recent curricular changes implemented from advisory committee feedback include the following programs:

- Natural Resources Conservation and Management, AAS: Advisory committee feedback indicated a need for students to gain more experience with traditional skills. With this recommendation, three new one-credit classes—FORS 260 Chainsaw and Crosscut Saw Operation and Maintenance, FORS 262 Stock Packing Skills, and ECP 102 Wilderness First Aid—were created in 2019. To accommodate these courses, ECNS 132 Economics and the Environment, a previously required course, was eliminated from the program as the advisory committee felt the new courses were more important and relevant for program graduates.
- Graphic Design, AAS: Conversations with advisory committee members led to the purchase of several Apple pencils and iPads loaded with Adobe Suite for students to use for class assignments, much like graphic designers use for work projects.
- Personal Trainer, CAS: Advisory committee feedback confirmed FVCC student enrollment and Montana employment data that the one-year certificate no longer meets the needs of local employers. Instead, advisory committee members shared that they are hire individuals with National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) certification (that can be completed online without a college degree) and individuals with more hands-on training. Based on feedback from the advisory committee and data gathered through the program review process, the program director and [program review](#) committee recommended that the program be eliminated effective Fall 2022.

Similarly, the medical laboratory technology program adjusted its program format to accommodate remote clinical sites across Montana to support the needs of rural communities, and the paramedicine program partnered with Miles Community College, located in eastern Montana, to meet the needs of the community by delivering the paramedicine program to students in Miles City.

Recommendation 2

Fully implement the use of and analysis of meaningful, assessable, verifiable data to evaluate core theme objectives in Developmental Education, Community Education, and Workforce Preparation (1.B.1).

Standard 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.

As previously mentioned, and in alignment with the 2020 standards, FVCC opted to sunset its core themes when the board of trustees approved a new [strategic plan](#) in September 2021. The college is now focused on its four strategic goals and nine meaningful, assessable mission fulfillment indicators, including the percentage of students who complete degrees or certificates, the percentage of degree-seeking students who transfer and earn a degree, the percentage of students who complete CTE degrees and earn wages in Montana, students successfully pass college-level courses upon completion of foundational/development course, and the success rate for online/hybrid courses is similar to face-to-face courses. Incidentally, many of these new disaggregated indicators also honor the college's former core themes of developmental education, transfer preparation, workforce preparation and community education. Furthermore, the college continues to refine its processes of assessing institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. For example, all academic and non-instructional departments are reviewed every five years, and the respective processes and corresponding forms are reviewed and modified, as needed, annually to ensure the processes continue to yield meaningful, relevant data while supporting student success (and mission fulfillment). Additionally, as described in Recommendation 1, FVCC assesses its institutional effectiveness through annual monitoring of its strategic goals and mission fulfillment indicators.

The most notable outcomes from the Spring 2022 discussion and review of the program review and non-instructional department review processes with [curriculum committee](#), [program review](#) and [SPAC](#) were the creation of an annual reflection form for [academic](#) and [non-instructional](#) departments to support continuous improvement and assist departments with tracking progress made towards their goals and recommendations as well as document achievements gained from attaining those goals. As stated within the Programmatic Assessment section, to better support faculty (and student success), faculty are now provided each year, as of Fall 2022, course-level longitudinal program data via custom data dashboards, like the [math](#) annual reflection data set, to evaluate student achievement and inform planning.

Similarly, as SPAC gathered feedback from departments regarding the non-instructional department review self-evaluation template, it became apparent that many departments do

not regularly track progress made toward their goals or recommendations. Therefore, SPAC created an annual update form that departments began submitting during Summer 2022. Then, each fall, SPAC reviews the yearly updates and then forwards an acknowledgment memo to the department chair and [executive staff](#) for their review. Departments scheduled for their five-year review during the proceeding or the following semester are not asked to complete an annual reflection.

Below is an example of the recently enhanced non-instructional department review process involving the FVCC Foundation. The FVCC Foundation completed its most recent five-year review in 2019. The following documents demonstrate the outcomes for each step of the updated assessment cycle for non-instructional departments minus the executive staff approval as that step did not exist in 2019.



- Department of FVCC Foundation:
 - [2019 Review - Foundation](#)
 - [2019 Review Summary - Foundation](#)
 - [2022 Annual Update - Foundation](#)
 - [2022 Annual Update Acknowledgment - Foundation](#)

Recommendation 3

Track program, service, and core theme outcomes and compare that data to meaningful targets with a purpose of authentic achievements and results that lead to improvement (1.C.7, 1.B.4).

Standard 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.

Standard 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.

Although FVCC no longer uses core themes to guide mission fulfillment and continuous improvement, the college does use the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning support planning and practices as demonstrated by the previously explained academic and non-instructional department review processes (see Programmatic Assessment and Recommendation # 1).

As noted in Recommendation 1, FVCC monitors its internal and external environments in multiple ways. For instance, the college regularly identifies current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations as documented within the academic and non-instructional department review documents and annual updates/reflections. Similarly, the college actively monitors its internal environment through the regular, ongoing assessment of student achievement data, mission fulfillment indicators and student learning outcomes. Examples of external monitoring include the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment process and employee participation in a variety of state, regional, and national organizations. Surveys such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), administered every three years, and FVCC's taking stock survey, which students are invited to complete each semester, provide insightful information regarding the current state of students. Additionally, as previously mentioned, Advisory Committees assist the college with monitoring workforce needs and providing feedback. Through interactions and input from local business leaders, FVCC created a micro-credential task force in December 2022 to explore and develop short-term, skill-specific training opportunities, or micro-credentials, that is more in-depth than a continuing education course but shorter in length than a certificate of technical studies.

The marketing and communications department also monitors the internal and external environment by leveraging social media and website analytics. Through close monitoring of Google Analytics, the marketing and communications department and the college's website vendor discovered in January 2023 that the employee email signature template needed to be updated as the embedded link to the college webpage would automatically count as a webpage visit after the email message was opened by the intended recipient even though the recipient did not physically click on the link to the FVCC webpage resulting in an inflated, inaccurate webpage visit count. As a result of continuous monitoring, a new employee email signature template was developed and shared with employees in February.

FVCC also uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning support practices to improve student learning outcomes and ultimately student success as noted below.

- Taking stock survey: The first example involves the [student success committee](#), a committee of faculty and staff chaired by the dean of student success. The committee's purpose is to increase the percentage of students who graduate or transfer. The committee examines academic issues and creates initiatives to alleviate academic challenges by reviewing campus academic policies and procedures and making recommendations for change to [executive staff](#) and curriculum committee. The committee also reviews retention rates across campus and in academic programs, examines D, F, W, and WI course rates, and creates initiatives to increase student retention and improve student outcomes.

In Fall 2019, the student success committee launched its first four-minute taking stock survey. Since then, each fall and spring semester, all students are invited via email to take the voluntary survey during the fifth week of the semester. In the email and start of the survey, students are informed that their responses will be shared with advisors and

other professionals on campus to connect them with helpful resources. The survey is also posted on Eagle Online, available for all students. A second email is sent directly to degree-seeking students. Upon taking the taking stock survey, the student receives tailored outreach by assigned individuals (e.g., mental health counselor, career advisor, financial aid advisor, academic advisor) based on the students' responses. In Fall 2022, 168 students, or 7.7% of all students, submitted a survey.

The student success committee also reviews the overall [results](#) from the taking stock survey each semester to determine if any adjustments to the survey should be made for the upcoming semester as well as discuss what additional support might help students be more successful. The dean of student success all shares the survey results with division chairs. Recent results from the survey and feedback from faculty regarding student mental wellness and stress management concerns led to the creation of Mindful Mondays and an expressive art therapy group during the 2021-2022 academic year. Additionally, the student success committee began distributing bi-weekly [student success announcements](#) in Fall 2022 to all lecture classrooms for faculty to announce in class as time permits. The timely announcements include upcoming opportunities for students to get involved and engaged on campus, friendly reminders of relevant student support resources and deadlines to help facilitate student success.

The student success announcements also compliments the weekly email [messages](#) the professional advisors send to all new degree-seeking students during their first semester of enrollment at FVCC. New degree-seeking students are informed of student support services such as the math and science tutoring center and writing lab when they meet with an advisor for their one-on-one orientation and course registration. New degree-seeking students receive emails within 24 hours of meeting with a professional advisor and weekly [emails](#) throughout their first semester with timely information regarding campus resources and upcoming deadlines.

- **M115/M140 Corequisite Course:** In Fall 2022, the math department investigated the question of whether or not FVCC should design and implement a [corequisite](#) course for M115M Probability and Linear Mathematics (M115) and M140M College Math for Healthcare (M140) for students who are either coming into the courses from M094 Quantitative Reasoning (M094) (where they may not have performed well, but still passed) or for students who place into M094 but could be successful in M115/M140 with additional support. After an analysis of five years of data, the department concluded that it seems that there are two groups of M094 students who could benefit from a M115/M140 corequisite course:
 - 1. Students who would likely get an A or A- in M094; these students tend to succeed in M115/M140, earning grades that are on par or better than their traditional student counterparts.
 - 2. Students who passed M094 but received a B- or lower. This group of students on average does not pass M115/M140 and thus could benefit from a corequisite course.

As a result of the investigation, the math department is proposing a prerequisite change for M115/M140 of a B- or higher instead of a C or better or a C- or better with a corequisite effective Fall 2023. After the changes are implemented, the math department will track student outcomes to see to what extent the intended outcomes were achieved. The math department will also track placement test scores and M094 grades to see what placement test score would be appropriate to determine the students in the first group.

- Academic alert: In 2019, the student success committee revamped the academic alert system based on faculty feedback and consistently few student referrals. In collaboration with faculty, a new [academic alert](#) form was created through [Maxient](#), allowing faculty to identify the specific areas of concern (e.g., late or missing assignments, excessive absences) and what information the instructor would like the advisors to reinforce with the student. Now that the new system has been in place for a few years, the student success committee will track the success rate for academic alerts. Anecdotally, the referrals make a difference, but what does the data show? For example, what percentage of students withdrew or earned a passing grade? How does this percentage compare to the overall student success rate?

Recommendation 4

Document how core theme indicators and the assessment process drive planning and resource allocation (1.B.3).

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

With the adoption of the NWCCU 2020 standards and a new strategic plan, the college chose to do away with its core themes. Instead, the college's strategic goals guide planning and resource allocation. As previously noted in Recommendation 1, the alignment of strategic goals plays a key factor in multiple processes, including the [development of new academic programs](#), [FVCC Perkins funding requests](#), [grant development proposals](#), [new budget requests](#) and [non-instructional department reviews](#) and becomes the basis for decisions made.

Equally important, FVCC's planning and resource allocation processes are broad-based and provide ample opportunities for input from appropriate constituencies. For example, the program review process is collaborative by design as multiple individuals and departments contribute to the program review [document](#) (i.e., academic affairs, the director of institutional research, business services, the program director, the advising liaison, and instructional technology specialists). Likewise, the 12-member program review committee includes a faculty member from each division, the [faculty senate](#) president, and ex-official representation from academic affairs. Similarly, the non-instructional department review process is facilitated by

[SPAC](#), a wide-ranging committee with faculty and staff representing many facets of FVCC, including the vice president of academic and student affairs, the vice president of administration and finance, the director of institutional research, the dean of student success, the dean of compliance, the faculty senate president, the faculty senate vice president, the science and engineering division chair, the math and computer science division chair, the art department chair, the director of LCC, and the continuing education program assistant. Discussions are robust, collaborative and not siloed. At the conclusion of both processes (and shared earlier in Programmatic Assessment), department chairs are provided with a summary of the department's commendations and recommendations, along with the vice president of academic and student affairs. [Curriculum committee](#) approves academic program review summaries, while [executive staff](#) approves and acknowledges non-instructional department reviews.

Once a recommendation or need has been identified through the academic or non-instructional review process, the director may pursue multiple planning and resource allocation pathways. Within each avenue, as noted below, FVCC's strategic goals, along with supporting data play a key role in moving requests forward to fruition.

- **Budget Committee**: The [budget committee](#) is a diverse group of faculty, staff and students appointed by the president. The committee reviews enrollment trends, current revenue from tuition and fees, and the tuition and fee landscape throughout the state and gathers student input before making a tuition and fee recommendation for the president to consider. The budget committee also prioritizes [new budget requests](#) for one-time only or new ongoing expenses based on the college's mission. The budget committee meets in the spring to prioritize budget requests and make tuition and fee recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Equipment Fee**: The Equipment Fee Committee consists of the six division chairs, the program director of nursing, the director of trades and industrial arts, and the vice president of academic and student affairs. [Requests](#) for instructional equipment and supplies have a direct impact on student instruction. In Fall 2022, the committee awarded \$32,824.98 supporting seven academic programs; each request aligned to one or more strategic goals.
- **FVCC Perkins Funds**: [Project Requests](#) must directly support CTE programs and students, with a particular focus on technology, innovation, workforce pipeline building, and workforce development. Activities include professional development, events, supplies, equipment, wages, industry partnerships, or 5-12 partnerships. CTE program directors are reminded of the availability of Perkins funding each spring and during program review. The Perkins Review Committee, chaired by the director of academic affairs, includes the vice president of academic and student affairs, the executive director of workforce development, the dean of student success, the director of trades and industrial arts, the director of nursing, the dean of compliance, and director of LCC.

- Position Justification: To request a vacant position to be filled, a [position justification](#) must be submitted for executive staff's consideration and approval. Requests for new positions go through budget committee.
- Grant Development Proposal: College employees must submit a [grant development proposal](#) before applying for an outside grant. Like the other processes, the request must align with a strategic goal. If executive staff approves, the employee can apply for the grant.

Additional sources of funding that are not explicitly connected to FVCC's strategic goals include the following:

- Budget Reallocation: Supervisors can reallocate and transfer funds to another account as needed.
- FVCC Foundation Enhancement Grants: [Enhancement Grants](#) are available to all faculty and staff through the FVCC Foundation for projects that enrich the student experience. Two grants of \$10,000 are awarded annually. The remaining proposals are considered for awards up to \$5,000.

Although not clearly documented in the past, FVCC's strategic goals and [assessment](#) processes drive planning and resource allocation, as noted below.

- Residence Life: Following Residence Life's [non-instructional department review](#) in April 2022, Residence Life implemented a furniture replacement cycle plan with Business Services. Residence Life also received approval via budget reallocation to purchase a new keyless access control system for Founders Hall, which the board of trustees approved in October 2022. Both items were recommendations made by SPAC as an outcome of the non-instructional review process.
- Music and Early Childhood Education: The director of the [early childhood education](#) program received a budget increase via budget reallocation from the vice president of academic and student affairs to cover the Flathead Early Childhood Coalition membership dues. Similarly, the [music](#) program received a budget increase via budget reallocation from the vice president of academic and student affairs to pay for an accompanist. Both budget increases correspond to recommendations made by program review.
- Lincoln County Campus: The director of LCC, in collaboration with the health science division chair/associate professor of A&P, submitted a request via FVCC Perkins Funds to create a healthcare study lab to close the achievement gap between LCC A&P students and Kalispell A&P students. The FVCC Perkins Committee approved the proposal, followed by the state of Montana Perkins director.
- Chemistry/Biology: Upon the resignation of a tenured faculty member from the chemistry department in December 2022, the vice president of academic and student affairs submitted a request to fill the vacant position with a full-time biology instructor via a position justification on behalf of the science and engineering division in January

2023 based on enrollment data and in alignment with the college's strategic goals. Executive staff approved the position justification.

To increase transparency and better document approval processes, executive staff began posting minutes of their weekly meetings in November 2021 in Teams. In Spring 2022, the president developed a president's leadership team that joins executive staff for the second hour of their weekly meetings, thus allowing for more opportunities for comment and collaboration by employee constituents. The [leadership team](#) includes executive staff, the dean of students, the dean of student success and two faculty representatives. During one of the initial meetings of the leadership team, the president and the executive director of marketing and communications shared for discussion the draft internal communications plan that marketing and communications developed to improve internal communication by streamlining employee messages and delivery methods in alignment with the college's strategic goals and in support of institutional effectiveness.

Lastly, the [new program approval process](#) is another example of an inclusive, well-documented planning process in which multiple steps and entities are involved throughout the review and planning process, both internally and externally. The first step entails submitting a program development request form for executive staff's approval before the new program approval process can officially begin. Two of FVCC's newest programs include [Biotechnology CTS](#) and [Social Media Marketing CTS](#).

Recommendation 5

Use the results of evidence-based assessment to make data-driven decisions around quality and effectiveness of college efforts leading to mission fulfillment (1.C.7, 1.D.2).

Standard 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.

Standard 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).

FVCC uses the results of evidence-based assessment to make data-driven decisions around quality and effectiveness throughout campus at the individual, committee and department

levels. As evidenced by the examples below, these efforts, primarily focused on student success, lead to mission fulfillment.

- Academic Fresh Start: The Academic Fresh Start Policy resulted after an extensive review of FVCC data and a comparative review of policies and procedures at Montana colleges, universities and other aspirational institutions by the [student success committee](#). Effective fall 2022-2023 academic year, the [Academic Fresh Start](#) program is designed explicitly for readmitted students who have been away from FVCC for three or more years. The Academic Fresh Start policy allows students to restart their FVCC grade point average while retaining credit for courses in which they earned a D- or better. Although it is too early to determine the success of this program, the student success committee will monitor the number of students who enroll in the Academic Fresh Start program and their success in the coming semesters to ensure the program serves students as intended.
- Remote Delivery and Wi-Fi hotspots: The second example illustrates how multiple departments and individuals adjusted services and methods of delivery based on student feedback and student traffic. Before the pandemic, support services such as the math and science tutoring center, the writing lab, academic advising and mental health counseling were not readily available to students who could not come to campus. However, accessing these services remotely quickly became a reality for students in March 2020 and continues to be available to students today. Based on students' expressed interest and need, these remote options remained available to students long after the college transitioned back to in-person classes.

Similarly, many faculty work with their students and will adjust their teaching methodology, in supporting student success and the college's mission, based on student feedback. For example, as noted in the recent programming and game development program review [summary](#), the program director (and primary instructor for the program) continues to open a zoom session post-pandemic for every face-to-face class to support student access. In the [report](#), the program director noted that a small percentage of students opt to join the class remotely on occasion while others join Zoom all the time. Since providing the remote option to the face-to-face course, the student success rate for face-to-face courses has increased. Likewise, the program review committee noted in the early childhood education program review [summary](#) from fall semester that the program director has adjusted schedules and courses to support student needs while still providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum. For instance, in the [report](#), the program director shared that when looking ahead to the upcoming semester, the program director seeks student feedback about times and tries to accommodate their needs as much as possible while finalizing the schedule of classes. The program director also noted the purchase of two Kubi telepresence robots through an FVCC Foundation Enhancement Grant to support students remotely.

Additionally, students can check out Chromebooks and HP notebook laptops through the library and rent Wi-Fi hotspots through the bookstore. During the first two years of the pandemic, through a grant, the college was able to provide free Wi-Fi hotspots for students to check out through the library. Upon a review and analysis of data, including data from the library's check-out system and hot spot usage data, local home internet service costs, and the ability to apply financial aid to the cost of hotspot internet for students, executive staff approved a proposal from Information Technology to begin offering the internet to students at both campuses beginning Spring 2023 via T-Mobile hotspots for an entire semester at an affordable rate. As students sign up for the service, hot spots will be ordered for students, and participation rates will be further studied.

- **No Holding Back:** FVCC was one of 12 institutions selected to participate in a 15-month community of practice sponsored by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (ACCRAO) to understand better the impact of administrative and/or student success holds on students. The FVCC [holds task force](#) is charged with collecting, cleaning, disaggregating, and analyzing administrative hold data and, more importantly, revising policies based on those findings.
- **Data Bites:** In support of a data-informed culture while promoting data literacy through continuous improvement and transparency, [data governance](#) hosted the first set of short, 30-minute data bite sessions in conjunction with the all-employee Fall 2022 in-service/data summit. Each data bite focuses on an institutional research question, special interest topic or results from a survey. In Spring 2023, [data bites](#) will be offered monthly, with two sessions per month. The days and times selected for the sessions were based on room utilization availability to better accommodate faculty teaching schedules. Upcoming data bite sessions include who are FVCC's current transfer-in students, Running Start demographics and student achievement data, a quick dive into FVCC's mission fulfillment indicators, and an analysis of registration dates versus course success.

As previously addressed within Mission Fulfillment, FVCC selected 17 regional and peer institutions and identified four student achievement measures—persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success—to compare and aspire towards as the college strives for continuous improvement. The college shares these measures widely through in-service presentations, monitoring reports, data bites and online at fvcc.edu/data. Additionally, these student achievement measures, in addition to the college's mission fulfillment indicators, are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and veteran status so, moving forward, the college can close barriers to academic success as it seeks mission fulfillment.