**Peer-Evaluation Report**

**Lake Washington Institute of Technology**

Kirkland, Washington

October 21$^{st}$ – 23$^{rd}$, 2019

*A Confidential Report Prepared for the*
*Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*
*that Represents the Views of the Evaluator*

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## I.    Evaluation Committee

Dr. Rachel Solemsaas (Chair), Chancellor, Hawai'i Community College
Dr. Jessica Hopkins, Director of Academic Affairs, Flathead Valley Community College
Dr. Dale Moon, Associate Dean, Linn-Benton Community College
Mr. Scott Morrison, Academic Director Liberal Arts, Western Nevada College
Ms. Gail Schull, Director of Admissions, College of Southern Idaho
Ms. Megan Dugan, Dean of AVID|Learning Success Center & Library, Mt. Hood Community College
Ms. Patricia Charlton, Vice President & Provost, College of Southern Nevada

## II.    Introduction

Lake Washington Institute of Technology (LWTech) is the only public institute of technology in the state of Washington located in Kirkland, Washington. Founded in 1949, the College offers 136 degrees and certificates in 41 areas of study, including seven applied bachelor's degrees and STEM-focused programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. With its commitment to workforce pathways, the College's journey to becoming a polytechnic institute started a decade ago by offering the very first applied baccalaureate program at a technical college in the State of Washington. With expanded program offerings, LWTech serves a diverse student body of approximately 3,000 FTE and over 6,500 headcount annually. The majority of students have workforce training goals (56%) with 14% seeking transfer and 18% basic skills. The Year Seven Self Evaluation Report provides an assessment of College compliance with Commission standards, as well as updates on institutional changes since the last report in Fall 2012, Mid Cycle Report of Fall of 2014 and Ad Hoc Report in Fall of 2015. The report also addresses one outstanding recommendation from the comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2011.

## III.    Assessment of the Institution's Self-Evaluation Report

Lake Washington Institute of Technology's Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report is extensive, well written and represents fairly the work of the community. The Evaluation Committee found the study helpful and engaging. The Committee was particularly impressed with the knowledge of the study throughout the campus community. The College has done an excellent job of evaluating its efforts and communicating its plans to all constituents. Overall, the Evaluation Committee found that the core themes were effectively connected to the mission and that was encouraging. The Committee appreciated the hard work of the people of the College in preparing documents and the Self-Evaluation Report for the on-campus visit.

## IV.    Progress on Recommendations/Issues Requested by the Commission

The institution provided a history of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and University

(NWCCU) responses from the last comprehensive evaluation including on site review in Fall 2011 to the Ad Hoc report from Fall 2015. Since then, one recommendation remained outstanding relating to the program for international students. The College provided responses that would effectively align the program within its mission fulfillment and core themes. Based on these responses, the Evaluation Committee believes that the College has met the requirements set for Recommendation One from the comprehensive evaluation of Fall 2011.

## V.    Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements

The Evaluation Committee believes that the College meets the eligibility requirements of the NWCCU. Instead of discussing each item in a paragraph at the beginning of the report, our findings regarding the eligibility requirements are noted in our assessment.

## VI.    Mission, Core Themes and Expectations

### 1.A   Mission

The institution has adopted a mission statement for nearly two decades that is consistent with a workforce based institution. The Evaluation Committee found that the mission statement is simple, providing a clear mandate to the campus community to respond to the evolving workforce needs of its community. It is this mission statement that led LWTech's pursuit to be the first polytechnical institution in the State. The mission is articulated well and is a vibrant part of the LWTech community.

LWTech defines mission fulfillment effectively in terms of its purpose and expectations. The College has effective identified measurable outcomes that specifically demonstrate their accomplishments in 1) preparing students, 2) for today's careers and/or 3) tomorrow's opportunities. It has set an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

### 1.B   Core Themes

LWTech identifies four core themes as manifesting its mission: 1) Pathways, 2) Student Achievement, 3) External Engagement, and 4) College Community.  A mission fulfillment matrix is updated annually in order to document achievement of each core theme objective.

**Core Theme -- Pathways**
Lake Washington Institute of Technology is accessible to the community by providing multiple entrance points and educational pathways. The college is a conduit for students to upgrade their skills, transition into new careers, or further their education and training.

**Core Theme -- Student Achievement**

LWTech's Core Theme *Student Achievement* manifests an essential element of LWTech's mission, that students gain the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their educational goals and participate in the workforce.

*Student Achievement* includes three objectives: 1) Students demonstrate year to year increases in achievement of threshold steps in progressing toward academic goals, 2) Students achieve educational goals, and 3) Students demonstrate the potential to participate in the workforce. These outcomes are supported by eight indicators. The first two outcomes are measured, in part, by Washington State Student Achievement Points for basic skills transition, college readiness English and Math, 15, 30, and 45 college credits, retention, and completion. Student progress toward academic goals is also measured by faculty assessment of course, program, and global learning outcomes, while achievement is measured by certificate/degree completion.  The third objective is measured by student employment data, pass rates on internships and industry exams, and student self-perception of preparation.

**Core Theme -- External Engagement**

LWTech's Core Theme *External Engagement* manifests a vital component of LWTech's mission fulfillment framework. It is clear from conversations with faculty, staff, and students that connections with business and industry partners benefit students and programs directly and indirectly through advisory committee involvement with curricula, career connections, and assistance with resources. The LWTech Foundation was also noted as an institutional strength supporting connections to grant funding and scholarship support.

*External Engagement* includes one outcome (objective): LWTech forms partnerships with governmental, community, educational, business, and labor organizations in order to effectively support the Institution's mission. This outcome is supported by one indicator consisting of six measures related to the following: value of current federal grants, value of annual scholarship donations, number of articulation agreements, number of dual enrollment agreements, percent of programs with advisory committees in compliance with Perkins requirements. Each of the five measures includes a single item with progress measured in comparison to established targets.

**Core Theme -- College Community**

LWTech's Core Theme *College Community* manifests a vital component of LWTech's mission fulfillment framework. It is clear from conversations with college community members that conversations and initiatives regarding safety and engagement have been collaborative and productive. Many community members, including faculty, staff, and students, report that they

feel responsible for contributing to the success of the students and the institution. There is a pervasive sense of ownership related to the mission and focused on serving students' needs.

*College Community* includes two primary outcomes (objectives): LWTech is a safe, supported, engaging learning environment for students; LWTech is a safe, supported, engaging learning environment for employees. These outcomes are supported by six indicators. Indicators CC-1A-C are focused on student feedback based upon specific responses from the SENSE and CCSSE surveys which are regularly administered by the institution. Indicators CC-2A-C are focused on employee feedback based on the same questions included in the 'Employee Satisfaction Survey.' Each indicator depends upon multiple (2-3) sub-measures for which targets are set; progress is measured in comparison to established targets.

The Evaluation Committee conducted extensive conversations with leadership in its two days at the College and held public meetings. The Committee found universal articulation of the mission of the institution from the Board, administrators, faculty, staff and students. The mission and core themes are well known and drive not only planning, but every aspect of institutional direction. Clear mission alignment is a significant achievement in this community.

**Compliments:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments the progress the College has made in achieving, even exceeding the threshold set for mission fulfillment.

The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech on establishing clear, verifiable indicators of achievement for *External Engagement*-- an area that is important for mission fulfillment and is often difficult to quantify.

The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech on developing an inclusive and collaborative environment of shared governance where stakeholders feel their voices can be heard and where faculty and staff can focus their energy on supporting the mission of the college.

## VII.     Resources and Capacity

### 2A.  Governance

Lake Washington Institute of Technology serves as the only public institute of technology (polytechnic) in the state of Washington governed by a five-member Board of Trustees, appointed by the Governor. LWTech's systems and processes for governance and management effectively define the roles and responsibilities of individuals and constituencies and ensure appropriate consultation with the campus community at all levels of policy formulation and decision making. The College's committee structure allows for appropriate representation as well as optimal distribution of workload and responsibility. The Evaluation Committee noted that LWTech has an extensive committee structure that flows from the Board to the rest of the

College. We commend the institution for its broad-based involvement of all members of the community in an effort to sustain and coordinate mission fulfillment.

LWTech is one of 34 public community and technical colleges in the state and is part of the Washington State Community and Technical College (SBCTC) system. The Evaluation Committee found that the SBCTC policies provide for both broad and meaningful participation and guidance for LWTech's campus governance and operations. It also regularly monitors its compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation at various governance meetings, including a review of impacts from bargaining agreements and legal mandates.

### 2A.  Governing Board

Members of the Evaluation Committee met with members of the Board of Trustees on the first day of the evaluation visit. Our discussion was candid and engaging. The Board members we met all support the mission and are dedicated to sustaining the vision of the College. In addition, related state and college policies were reviewed. These policies clearly define the board's roles, responsibilities and authority. The Board also understands that they operate as a team, not as isolated individuals, to make sure that LWTech is served well.

The board conducts annual evaluation both as individual board members and together as a board. The evaluations provide highlights on what the board does well and also outlines areas it can improve upon. More than half (52%) of LWTech employees surveyed in 2019 agree that the Board is effective in carrying out its duties; another 45% responded as "neutral". The Board recognizes a need to improve communication of their role in supporting the College based on this survey.

In supporting the campus ability to adapt and sustain itself in fulfilling its mission, the board considers the continuity of leadership. The Evaluation Committee observed the length of service of board members with several members providing institutional history and support while engaging upcoming board capacity through its community work. We encourage the board to continue its role in succession planning.

The Board has an excellent relationship with its chief executive officer, Dr. Amy Morrison, and has an established process for her evaluation. Through its own goals, the board ensures ongoing support to their CEO in advancing the College.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments the leadership provided by the LWTech Board of Trustees in supporting President Morrison and the campus community in its transformation to achieve its mission.

### 2A. Leadership and Management

President Morrison has a strong executive team with impressive credentials to support planning, organizing and managing the operations of the College. Further, the College employs a sufficient number of well qualified administrators committed to the success of the College. LWTech's employee survey in 2019 provided a rating of 69% believe leadership is effective in carrying out it responsibilities with an additional 23% responding "neutral". Faculty and staff have shared their appreciation for transparency and openness from College leadership.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments President Morrison and her executive cabinet for demonstrating adaptive leadership as the College transforms to achieve its mission.

### 2A. Policies and Procedures

#### a. Academics

Academic policies, including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation, are communicated to students, faculty, staff, and administrators through a variety of sources including the college's website, catalog, campus intranet and the Policy & Procedures Manual. Some of these are state requirements and can be found on the government website of the Washington Administrative Code.

Policies on access and use of library and information resources for faculty, staff, students, and guest users are detailed on a website maintained by library personnel and enforced consistently by library staff.

The Evaluation Committee found evidence that indicates this standard is substantially met. There are clearly stated policies concerning the transfer of credit in the college catalog. Also, this information can be found with advisors. Mainly, the college adheres to the SBCTC's Community and Technical College Inter-College Reciprocity Policy and follows the statewide "Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation among Washington Public Colleges and Universities (Umbrella Policy)" adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Board in 1986.

#### b. Students

Review of the College Catalog, Student Handbook, and Disability Support website provided evidence that LWTech has appropriate and clearly articulated policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities. Policies and procedures appear to be properly constructed and administered, as supported by conversations the evaluators had with student services, academic affairs, human resources, registrar, and enrollment personnel, as well as students and

faculty.

LWTech is an open door institution, admitting all eligible students who are at least 18 years old and who have completed high school or GED. As evidenced by a review of the College Catalog and Admission Requirements webpage, LWTech has adopted admission requirements that adequately assess students' qualifications for succeeding in the institution's educational programs. Specific information is provided for first-year students, adult basic education students, high school students, and international students. Requirements outlined include those for programs with selective admissions processes.

There are many opportunities for students to demonstrate readiness: guided self-placement, transfer coursework on an official transcript from another regionally accredited college, high school transcripts documenting a 3.0 or higher in calculus (math), and requesting reciprocity for test scores from another college.

LWTech does not maintain broad continuation and termination policies as an open enrollment institution. A few of its programs have procedures in place as required by their individual accrediting bodies. Currently, these programs include Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, Funeral Service Education, Medical Assisting, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Physical Therapy Assisting.

LWTech's relationship to co-curricular activities are articulated clearly in the Student Handbook and College catalog. Policies describing the process for clubs obtaining official College recognition are clearly articulated in the Lake Washington Institute of Technology Policy located on the Associated Student Government (ASG) website. ASG executive board creates opportunities for student involvement, advocates on behalf of the student body to the administration, and manages a budget that supports events and services for students.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments ASG student leaders for their dedication to creating and maintaining an inclusive environment for students. These student leaders act as the voice of students and take their responsibility very seriously.

### c. Human Resources

LWTech maintains HR policies and college operational procedures that are approved by their Board of Trustees. The college is undertaking a review process to streamline policies and enhance access to its procedures. The college's assistant attorney general reviews policy updates to ensure compliance with the applicable laws prior to review by policies and procedures committee and college council. Recommendations are reviewed by executive

cabinet before being presented to the Board of Trustees for review and approval. The online policies and procedures manual is updated whenever changes are approved. Bargaining agreements are also available through the college's website. Executive cabinet maintains a calendar to ensure consistent review of policies and procedures to ensure they are fair and equitably applied to all employees.

Employees are properly notified of their work responsibilities and conditions of employment through the job announcement and position description, and kept up-to-date through assignments from supervisors and updated position descriptions. Employee rights and responsibilities, criteria for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination are shared through policies and procedures, supervisor feedback, evaluations, collective bargaining agreements, and applicable rules, regulations and laws. Bargaining agreements include clear language about termination.

The evaluation committee observed that documents are stored in locked, fireproof filing cabinets in the HR department. All records are confidential and restricted to appropriate HR personnel on a need-to-know basis. The Director of Human Resources confirmed that regular reviews are conducted of the audit file to ensure appropriate access to documents.

### d. Institutional Integrity

The Evaluation Committee examined official publications, websites, and a variety of different marketing materials. With the oversight and support of the Communications and Marketing Department, LWTech communicates clearly to its constituents and its broader public.

The Evaluation Committee found that LWTech operates openly and transparently. Faculty and staff consistently expressed appreciation for dialogue on campus, regular updates and the manner in which the administration encourages conversation. The president hosts a series of dialogues with constituents. Publications and websites provide clear information for requesting information and filing grievances and complaints.

The College adheres to clearly defined state and college policies regarding conflict of interest among college constituents. The Evaluation Committee was able to confirm related policies with respect to ownership, copyright and intellectual property. In all its documents, the College accurately represents its accreditation status.

The Evaluation Committee, in its review of appropriate documents, believes that the institution appropriately engages in external contract agreements that are consistent with the College's mission. It sets a clear process for review and approval of contractual agreements and commitments.

### e.  Academic Freedom

LWTech publishes and adheres to policies on academic freedom; policies affirming the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students are approved by the Board of Trustees and contained within the faculty collective bargaining agreement. Taken together, the Board policy and faculty bargained agreement demonstrate the importance the college places on faculty, staff, administrators, and students freely sharing their scholarship and engaging in independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

Conversations with faculty members from a variety of programs indicate that faculty are aware of the institutional policies and that they place a high value upon the environment of academic freedom promoted by the institution. The majority opinion of faculty and students, when asked in interviews, was the college was supportive of open and non-restrictive of thought. It is clear that LWTech faculty take their responsibilities to students very seriously and work to present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively.

### f.  Finance

The Evaluation Committee reviewed the written reports and information coming from the interviews to consider the financial resources that undergird the work of Lake Washington Institute of Technology. The findings were tested against the NWCCU Standards for financial resources given in Standard Two. The LWTech Board of Trustees have effective committee structures and policies that ensure the integrity of the financial management of the College. The Board members were aware of all financial matters, were actively involved in broad-based budget planning and were effectively engaged in future budget planning. The College operates on a three-year revenue and expense projection and has developed an effective system over time. Interviews with the chief financial officer indicated that the College also consistently examines its own systems to look for more effective models to measure both revenues and costs.

### 2B.  Human Resources

LWTech appears to provide for the employment of a sufficient number of qualified personnel, as evidenced by testimonials from the staff, faculty, Human Resources, and President, who all indicated staffing levels are commensurate with responsibilities and campus needs. This is an ongoing challenge because of state budget constraints, but essential functions are met.

Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for hire are clearly stated on the college jobs website, and job listings are available on additional employment sites such as higheredjobs.com and

sbctc.ctc.edu. All internal candidates who meet minimum requirements are interviewed. Job descriptions are updated when positions become vacant, and by request as department needs change or employee work falls outside of the initial description.

The evaluation committee heard from faculty and staff at open meetings that they receive regular evaluations of their work consistent with college policies and bargained agreements. Employees and supervisors review evaluations and develop professional development plans together. Evaluation forms are available in HR and on the website.

The Evaluation Committee found that LWTech provides regular institution-wide opportunities for professional growth and development for faculty and staff. Employees widely noted the many opportunities available to them for on-going professional development, which also serve as significant opportunities for the community to come together, thus serving a community development function as well. Despite limited resources as a result of state budget cuts, the college has been creative in investing in the professional development of faculty, staff, and administrators to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities. Some examples include all college in-service days, offerings through the engagement and learning center, 5 Star Consortium, and LEADS. HR shared many stories of employees who have moved into higher level positions after completing professional development opportunities, and employees in open forums echoed their satisfaction with access to opportunity at LWTech.

According to IPEDS data, in 2017-18 LWTech employed 81 full-time faculty and 163 adjunct faculty. The college maintains a student-faculty ratio of 15:1. Technical faculty are required to have at least two years of work experience in their field and a degree or certification specific to their occupation. Most faculty at LWTech exceed the state minimum requirement. The college has a total of 46 tenured faculty. Annual program review includes analysis of enrollment and staffing patterns, and recommendations for needed positions are forwarded to the dean and VP of Instruction.

Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations and the LWTech Federation of Teachers, Local 3533, which currently emphasizes teaching, advising, and institutional governance. The bargained agreement provides release time to faculty for program development, outcomes assessment, student retention, accreditation, and college service. Faculty performance is assessed in teaching, working with colleagues, service to the college, community, and industry. Professional development is focused on maintaining current industry certifications and staying current on advancements in the field.

The faculty evaluation process is detailed in the college bargaining agreement and is integrated with faculty professional development plans. Full-time faculty participate in a four year cycle

that uses supervisor evaluation, student surveys, and peer evaluations. Faculty maintain portfolios to highlight their teaching effectiveness, progress toward program and professional goals and accomplishments. Evaluations serve the purpose of continuous improvement of faculty performance and student learning. Where areas of concern are identified, the college assists the faculty member in implementing a plan to address areas of concern.

**Compliments:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech on their institution-wide commitment to conducting meaningful performance reviews on a regular basis.

The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech for offering a wide array of professional development and growth opportunities that contribute to pride in employment at the College. Most faculty and staff indicated that they participate in development and training activities to improve their professional practice.

## 2C. Education Resources

LWTech is committed to meeting the needs of the community through excellence in education and through a variety of options that include both transfer and occupational programs (including 8 Bachelor of Applied Science degrees). Admission and graduation requirements are clearly described in the college catalog and on the college web site and are consistent throughout the institution, regardless of location.

Course outcomes are published in approved course outlines and included in course syllabi. Program and degree outcomes are published in the college catalog and on the web site. LWTech has established policies concerning credit and degree policies and their degree and certificate programs have appropriate depth and breadth. All course and program outcomes are reviewed by the program dean, Curriculum Review Committee and the vice president of instruction.  Additionally, each certificate of 45 credits or more includes five courses that teach and assess the college's institution-wide student learning outcomes (Global Outcomes). Each degree path has ten courses that include the Global Outcomes. Course descriptions in the college catalog include Global Outcomes when assigned.

The Global Outcomes are faculty developed and are reviewed and revised by a subcommittee of Instructional Council. The Global Outcomes are:

• *Communication:* The ability to engage effectively in verbal, non-verbal, written, and/or symbolic expression.

• *Critical Thinking:* The ability to evaluate information, draw inferences, arrive at conclusions, and create solutions based on objective analysis of the evidence.

• *Intercultural Appreciation:* The ability to describe and demonstrate the value of cultural differences and commonalities among people and to recognize and respond to those differences and commonalities in the workplace and the learning environment.

• *Teamwork:* The ability to participate actively and cooperatively in a group to advance a common goal.

• *Information Literacy:* The ability to recognize when information is needed, to choose the appropriate tools to locate the required information, and to effectively gather and evaluate the information.

LWTech credits and degrees, regardless of location or modality, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with SBCTC and institutional practices. Course credit is earned by students who meet the course's student learning outcomes, and is awarded to students in the form of grades recorded on transcripts. Faculty members publish their criteria for grading within their course syllabi.

LWTech expectations and requirements for obtaining a certificate or degree are outlined in the General Degree Requirements section of the LWTech Catalog that is accessible online. In addition, by selecting a program's hyperlink in the online catalog, students can see all related certificates and degrees, descriptions of the curriculum sequence, requirements, and the related program outcomes. The SBCTC authorizes community and technical colleges to award various degrees and certificates as official indicators of postsecondary program completion, and to award a high school diploma as an indicator of high school-level completion. Colleges in Washington State are asked to identify each award in the common administrative system using exit codes and specific Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. In addition, the SBCTC requires that colleges identify completion of state apprentice programs, alternative certifications, and individually tailored workforce programs in the same common administrative system. LWTech complies with all SBCTC and NWCCU mandates and expectations in these areas*.*

All degrees and certificates are approved by the college's Instructional Council. Curriculum is approved by the faculty-led Curriculum Review Committee to assure appropriate breadth and depth, and receives final approval by the vice president of instruction. Degree programs in the professional-technical fields include a majority of credits in the technical core area as developed by faculty subject matter experts and industry representatives through advisory committee meetings.

As part of the Guided Pathways initiative, instructional programs include a quarter-by-quarter plan that connects the student learning process to the program outcomes. Students check in with their advisors three times over the course of their career at LWTech. All programs clearly

define graduation requirements in the catalog, including technical and general education classes and prerequisites, if required. Career maps list work and transfer opportunities available at each certificate and degree level.

The evaluation committee found evidence within provided exhibits and college publications and via direct interviews to support that the institution has a coherent design approach to degree programs that results in appropriate breadth, depth, integration, and sequencing of courses through the use of state guidelines, recognized academic and professional standards, and input from industry experts and professional-technical advisory committees. The Curriculum Review Committee is a faculty-driven body that oversees development of curriculum, reviews learning outcomes for courses and programs, and ensures student evaluation criteria are appropriate to the discipline. New program proposals are reviewed by the Deans of Instruction, Instructional Council, and Executive Cabinet. If approved to proceed, new program and course development occurs through the Curriculum Review Committee process. Faculty also play an integral role in the hiring of new instructors, staff, and administrators at LWTech.

Faculty lead the assessment of learning outcomes, including program outcomes and global outcomes. Faculty created the Global Outcomes Report and Program Outcomes Guide (POG) systems for assessment of learning outcomes at these levels.

Faculty work collegially with library staff and faculty librarians to ensure that information literacy, print and electronic collections, and other available library resources are fully integrated into the learning process. In addition to providing comprehensive support to department faculty, the Library Learning Commons assists eLearning with modules that support accessibility of learning resources and citation help. Library faculty are routinely embedded in online courses to provide research assistance and reference help. They are invited by department faculty to visit classrooms as well as regularly provide students with tours of services and spaces.

An approved policy and procedure exists to grant college credit for prior experiential learning. Prior knowledge and skills are evaluated by qualified faculty who translate competencies into course equivalencies, which are documented on an Assessment of Prior Learning form. There is no assurance that any credit may be granted until after the credit evaluation has been completed. Credit may only be granted for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement in curricular areas offered at LWTech, granted only on recommendation of qualified faculty, is identified on the student transcript, and may not exceed 25% of credits needed for the degree or certificate. The full process and required forms are published on LWTech's website.

Transfer credit policies are clearly spelled out in the College Catalog and conform to accepted standards for higher education. The Registrar maintains final authority on transfer of credit. LWTech adopted the Common Course Numbering system developed at the state level, and participates in the state's Reciprocity Agreement by applying courses in the distribution areas in which credit was earned at the original institution. LWTech maintains articulation agreements with colleges with programs that lead into its BAS degrees.

### a. Undergraduate Programs

LWTech offers certificates and degrees including bachelor of applied science and transfer associate degree programs which include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of humanities, mathematical and natural sciences, social sciences, and written communication. Certificate programs of at least 45 quarter hours include general education components through stand-alone courses or related instruction with identified outcomes in the areas of writing, mathematics and human relations (as a component of social science).

LW Tech identifies 5 Global outcomes: communication, critical thinking, Intercultural appreciation, teamwork, and information literacy. Two of these global outcomes, communication and critical thinking, provide alignment for English and mathematics general education breadth areas. Three other areas, humanities, social science, and natural science, are intended to have standalone outcomes or connections to other global outcomes-- for example, the social science area lists two unique outcomes as well as alignment with intercultural appreciation.

Outcomes for the general education areas can be found on the *General Education* page on the college website. In all cases, whether programs meet related instruction or standalone general education requirements, it appears the intent of the academic programs and courses is to provide students with an integrated course of study with sufficient breadth and depth consistent with the program goals and institutional mission.

Applied degree and certificate programs are equipped for the most part with standalone related instruction components (courses) rather than embedded instruction. As with the more traditional general education requirements, the institution has established identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support the program goals and institutional mission.

### Concern:
LWTech identifies the five general education 'distribution' areas as individual programs for the purposes of review and assessment. As such, the areas are expected to conduct annual

program review and biannual POG reports. The framework for this process is apparent in all the general education areas, however, it is unclear whether or not these programs engage in regular evaluation of student learning (see 4.A.3).

**b. Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs**

LWTech's 2016 agreement with Everett Community College details service area, continuing education non-credit offerings, and responsibilities. This has been previously approved by NWCCU on April 27, 2016. This agreement is active through June 30, 2020 and then extended until June 30, 2021 through an amendment signed on February 2019. In accordance with this agreement, LWTech offers no non-credit continuing education programs or other special programs. As such, standards 2.C.16, 17, 18, 19 are not applicable. Should the agreement end and LWTech return to CE non-credit offerings, LWTech may consider informing NWCCU before resuming operations to ensure compliance with all relevant standards.

**2.D.    Student Support Services**

The Evaluation Committee clearly heard from faculty, staff, and students about the collegial, supportive, and student success driven environment at LWTech, and within this community are specific programs and services that are conducive to supporting effective student learning. Instruction and Student Services work closely to monitor student success through an Early Alert system, where faculty and staff can submit information via web form about a student who is at-risk. A Student Success Team reviews the Early Alert data and responds appropriately, which likely contributes to LWTech's relatively strong retention rates. Additional support programs include Disability Support Services, wrap-around services for select populations including students enrolled BFET, Worker Retraining, and TRIO. Supplemental instruction, tutoring, and E-learning provide additional important services to support student needs. Additional services that support student success vis-a-vis completion of a degree or credential include the Employment Resources Center, Transfer advising for students who elect to pursue a baccalaureate level degree, and Student programs such as quarterly dean's and president's list receptions.

LWTech strives to provide a safe and secure campus and community for all students. In addition to a staff of four in the Security Department, off-duty officers from the Kirkland Police Department are on campus regularly. LWTech is compliant with federal and state regulations and provides an Annual Campus Security Report that appropriately conveys the College's crime statistics, security policies, disclosures, and other related resources. The Report is accessible on the Security webpage and is also available in the office. Evaluators' conversations with students affirmed what the Report suggests that the campus community is very safe, and students feel the Campus Safety Office is responsive and attentive to their daily needs. Students also

indicated that they have avenues to report concerns and submit requests to improve safety. Data shows that 92% of employee respondents to the 2019 annual satisfaction survey feel safe on campus, and 89% of students reported feeling safe on campus.

LW Tech is an open admission institution that offers some programs with clear entry requirements. The evaluation committee found the admission and placement policies in the online Catalog. Further, college recruiting is focused on prospective students in the local community, including high school students and community members who attend career and college fairs and information sessions hosted on the campus. Prospective students are provided with accurate and timely information related to placement, enrollment, and completion during the intake process with an admission coach. Students receive a personalized to-do list guiding them through the intake process. Finally, entering students participate in advising and a mandatory orientation program. Graduation and Transfer policies are clearly stated in the Catalog as well.

LW Tech has a procedure outlined in its catalog describing the protocol to serve students in the event of program elimination, inactivation, or a significant change in program requirements. The plan includes notifying students in a number of ways including email, class announcements, the college website, and the catalog.

LWTech publishes a College Catalog that contains all academic policies, and a Student Handbook that contains rules and regulations on student conduct, rights and responsibilities. All other information referenced in standard 2.D.5 are readily accessible on the College's website.

Programs that require national and or/state licensure have information available on the College website. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession are published in individual program handbooks.

LWTech staff follow policies and procedures that ensure the retention of student records in compliance with the General Retention Schedule for SBCTC. Nightly backups to the student information system ensure reliable and retrievable records in the event of a disaster.

The Registrar provides FERPA updates to all employees quarterly, and content is presented to new student services hires in the master advising course. All employees sign an acknowledgement and agreement form which includes FERPA compliance. Since 2018 all new hires must complete an online FERPA course. This was previously required only of student services staff and any employee seeking to use the college's data dashboards. FERPA information and training requirements are published in both the student and faculty handbooks.

LWTech provides an effective and accountable financial aid program consistent with its mission and according to Title IV, Higher Education Act. Financial Aid provided over $10 million in financial assistance to more than 1,500 students in 2018-19. The department measures student satisfaction of its services with annual surveys, and is proud of a level of service and processing time that compares favorably with its sister institutions within the state. Regular audits performed by the State of Washington have not revealed any discrepancies in the past seven years.

All information regarding scholarships, grants, and loans is clearly described, and published on LWTech's Financial Aid webpage, with specific information provided for undergraduate students, international students, and parents. Information is also widely available via the catalog, consumer information leaflet (found at the Financial Aid Office), and in the student handbook.

All students who borrow funds are required to complete the federal loan counseling prior to the Institution dispersing funds. The financial aid information leaflet, website, and award letters inform students about the potential of repayment obligations. Students identified as owing a repayment are notified by mail.

Financial Aid maintains compliance standards for processing and repayment.  LWTech's default rate is well within the federal requirements for continued participation in Title IV programs. The FY 15 cohort (last official) was 9.4% and has dropped over the past four consecutive years.

LWTech implemented Guided Pathways, and the advising process is focused on improving support to students. Upon entry students work with an admission coach who evaluates the student's academic history and creates a personalized entry plan. Advising, Instruction, and Student Programs collaborated to implement mandatory orientation. First quarter advising is provided by student success navigators, and faculty assume advising during the first quarter of technical and academic classes through graduation. Advising became mandatory in 2018. High touch service ensures students know what steps to take to access information and support.

LW Tech uses the CCSSE to survey students about the quality of advising. The VP of Student Services facilitates the master advising course in Canvas for new faculty advisors and staff within the department. The Director of student development coordinates a weekly meeting for staff advisors where faculty and deans present updates on program requirements, updates from Curriculum Review Committee, and staff work through challenging issues of the week.

LWTech co-curricular activities are largely developed by student leaders with guidance from the Student Programs department. ASG, campus life, RISE center and student club leaders support.

Activities are developed under a framework focused on community building, socialization, and/or academic development. Each activity is informed by the colleges equity, diversity, and inclusion plan. Some of the many activities related to achieving the college's mission, core themes, and strategic plan otomes include: ASG open meetings, RISE center affinity lunches (LatinX, Black, LGBTQIA+), Late Nights in the Library, and Student Leader Training.

LWTech provides a food service program (Avanti) and a bookstore. Both services align with the college's values of being student focused, providing service to constituents, operating with integrity, and working as part of the Administrative Services team. The bookstore is a joint operation between the college and Follett Higher Education Group. The bookstore offers a price match guarantee to ensure students get the lowest cost possible on course materials. The bookstore offers an online store for the convenience of students as well. LWTech contracted for a marketplace food service option that is open during regular college hours and provides service to the public. An on-campus restaurant and bakery is operated by the culinary arts instructional program. Suggestion boxes are provided for users to provide regular feedback on these services.

LWTech requires photo ID in order to register and students receive a unique identification number upon enrollment along with an email account. Students access course learning materials in Canvas with their single sign-on credentials. There are no charges associated with identity verification. In the case that a faculty member questions the submissions of a student as fraudulent, the college maintains tools to investigate. Canvas administrators have access to activity logs to verify pages accessed by a user as well as the browser and operating system used to access the pages. Instructors may restrict quizzes to a specific IP address, assign a quiz that requires the use of a webcam to verify identity visually. The student code of conduct is available online and includes policies regarding academic dishonesty, as do course syllabi.

**Compliments:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech's Instruction and Student Affairs division for the implementation of Hobsons Starfish (LEGEND). In the spirit of collaboration, the College is able  to track student progress and provide planned interventions in support of student success.

The Evaluation Committee commends the College's emergency planning and safety efforts, including campus-wide training and education. These efforts have made employees and students feel safe and confident on the campus.

The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech's Financial Aid department for the high satisfaction level rating from students for their service and timeliness .

The Evaluation Committee commends the College's efforts to reduce its student loan default rate. The rate has been in decline for the last four years, with the 3-year rate well below that of the national two-year institution average. The improvement is, at least in part, connected to the continued effort by Financial Aid in counseling students.

The Evaluation Committee compliments the College for including students in its work toward closing opportunity gaps through its equity, diversity, and inclusion plans.

### 2.E Library and Information Resources

LWTech's Library Learning Commons holds and provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. The library staff and faculty collaborate with department faculty to support a wide range of curriculum at the college.

The library has expanded its physical collection of materials to meet the changing needs of the student population, including a wide variety of books in languages to support the international program as well as ESL students learning the English language. The print reference collection has recently been integrated into the circulating collection for ease of use and findability. The library has access to a wide range of materials through InterLibrary Loan borrowing and lending. The collection directly supports the curriculum, and the physical collection is regularly weeded based on age, usage and faculty input as described by the library staff and posted on the library policy website.

Displays of popular materials and new materials exist throughout the library and care is taken to identify areas of interest, current events, celebrations and other ways to engage student users in the library resources available. Faculty and staff are encouraged to make requests for books, journals, audiovisual content, and online databases both in person and through an online form, which are then reviewed by library selectors.

The policies section of the library website prominently displays information for borrowing limits, collection development, copyright, patron behavior and expectations, room and building use, and interlibrary loans. Usage data, cost, and faculty and librarian input are regularly evaluated to inform acquisition, update, and removal of materials.

The Foundation has recently supplemented library collection funds to aid in the creation of an Indigenous People's Collection, the purchase of additional laptops, and an international collection that represents the diversity of ethnicities and countries of origin of the LWTech

student population.

The library has collaborated with the RISE center (Resources for Inclusion, Support and Empowerment) as well as the Digital Gaming and Interactive Media program to provide independent, circulating collections of materials in other spaces on campus to support students, faculty and staff.

The library routinely evaluates the effectiveness of their services, programs, and information resources by including feedback from all segments of their user population. They collect quantitative and qualitative data regarding the use of student spaces within the library, library instruction sessions, circulation, collection trends, and programming. The staff analyze requests and questions asked within the library to inform planning and make changes to services and programs.

Library faculty routinely consult with departmental faculty about library resources. Library staff use student surveys, feedback from library instruction sessions, and regular peer review to plan, assess, and modify library services and information resources. Library faculty and staff serve on committees and participate in shared governance in a robust and engaged manner.

LWTech's Library Learning Commons is open and available to students at appropriate times throughout the academic term. When students provided feedback regarding summer hours and requested an extension, the library staff adjusted their schedules to allow the library to remain open later for students with immediate impact. Library staff collaborate with ASG and other student services departments to offer a Late Nights in the Library program once per term. The library remains open until 10 p.m. for an entire week to serve students completing papers and final projects, with the help of ASG funds the library is able to provide food, games, access to massages, and other fun ways to destress during finals week.

LWTech's Library Learning Commons has an extensive and multimodal instruction program that provides appropriate support to students, faculty, staff, administrators and others. The library faculty teach information literacy courses both in the library instruction room and in classrooms across campus. They provide online modules for citation and research customizable for department use through Canvas.

The service model of the library is student learning and support. The desire to welcome and include all library users is incorporated into their planning and work, from helping students find their classrooms and course reserves, to helping them complete a complex research project. Feedback from students and faculty is collected before, during, and after individual instruction sessions and is then used to assess the success of information literacy learning outcomes (modified from ACRL standards) and to make changes to future instruction sessions as needed.

Library staff participate in new student orientation, they provide tours and orientations to library services, they visit classrooms to promote collections, they are active participants in collaboration with ASG staff including programing that supports diversity, equity and inclusion as well as Open Educational Resources. The library has sought out low cost or openly licensed materials to support instruction through state and national resources available and the library faculty have presented their OER work at the state and national level.

The library building is well maintained and provides an inviting, comfortable, and quiet location for research and study. Students feel that the library is open, engaging, and provides a positive energy. The librarians and staff are welcoming and interested in the success of students.

The library features a computer lab, laptops, cameras and other electronics for checkout and student use. The lab computers are continuously updated with software programs that are needed to support specific assignments and classroom technologies making them as useful as possible for the students.

The library recently migrated to ExLibris Alma ILS software, with Primo Discovery Service. Students described the ease of use to order and reserve library materials as well as the quality of resources available.

Key personnel changes have been made to support additional student access to services and library instruction. A part time faculty position has been added to increase the availability of instruction during evening hours, the student worker program has been expanded and now focuses on the specific strengths and academic interests of the student employees. The faculty librarian coordinator role continues to receive the support of the administration and other library staff.

The library utilizes a security system to protect the physical collections and equipment and takes adequate steps to prevent loss. Campus security routinely patrols the library spaces during all open hours.

**Compliments:**
The Evaluation Committee commends the faculty and staff of the LWTech Library Learning Commons for their provision of educational resources and outreach to college and community partners with minimal resources.

The Evaluation Committee commends the faculty and staff of the LWTech Library Learning Commons for their use of data, direct feedback and evaluation to adjust the services and resources of the library to effectively meet the needs of students and other library users.

The Evaluation Committee commends library personnel for developing and maintaining an inviting and welcoming atmosphere for student study and research, and for their comprehensive, extensive library instruction program including access to, and promotion of, Open Educational Resources.

The Evaluation Committee commends the LWTech Library Learning Commons faculty and staff for their extensive program of information literacy and outreach, and for consistently promoting and maintaining a welcoming and safe atmosphere for student learning and engagement.

## 2F. Financial Resources

LWTech effectively manages resources in support of academic programs, support and institutional services, and to achieve the mission and core themes. LWTech has an established reserve policy, which establishes a target of 15 percent of the general operating budget. Institutional financial stability is a priority of the institution and has been demonstrated by actions including the sale of a prior owned facility at Duvall and the rental of the Redmond facility to the City of Redmond.

Financial planning at LWTech is a comprehensive process that includes realistic development of revenue projections for the general operating budget which includes the state appropriation, tuition and fee projections based on actual enrollments, and other revenue sources that support college operations.

The Board of Trustees and College leadership have been committed to support institutional sustainability through fiscal management. For instance, it increased its reserve funds by $1,080,000 in 2018-19. Increases in reserves have been accompanied by investments in program development, including funding of support for additional Bachelor's of Applied Science fields to support the workforce development and student demands.

LWTech is part of the SBCTC and follows all policies, procedures, and processes as mandated by the SBCTC, the State of Washington, State of Washington Office of Financial Management, and State Legislature.

Budgets are based on a biennial structure. Funds are appropriated to the SBCTC by the Legislature which are then allocated to the respective community and technology colleges. Institutions have flexibility in the use of appropriations. In the development of the institutional operating budget the College focuses on the institutional mission, core themes, and priorities.

Budget development at LWTech is a comprehensive process and begins in January of each year. The Vice President for Administration and supporting team initiate the process with

development of realistic revenue projections based on anticipated enrollment levels by program area. Additional consideration for required expenditure increases, such as salary and benefit increases, are identified for development of the carryforward budget. LWTech utilizes an incremental budget development process, through identification of existing base budget expenditures adjusted for anticipated new expenditure commitment. Anticipated excess revenue over expenditures are identified and are available for resource allocation utilizing existing structures and systems. The College includes additional revenue streams, as available including the lease revenue from the Redmond facility.

Each institution division and unit may request additional funds through the College's established budget process. Divisions and the respective units develop budget requests and submit for consideration to the Finance and Budget Advisory Council. The Council includes representation from across the institution and is a broad based and engaged Council. Members include all employee groups, areas of the college and the Vice President for Administration serves as the Council administrator.

The request process is participatory in nature and provides opportunity for units to prioritize requests, present requests for consideration, and to communicate requests to the Council. The Council develops recommendations that are submitted to the Executive Cabinet. The Executive Council reviews and provides recommendations to the Board of Trustees for consideration. The Evaluation Committee noted that collaboration between units and divisions occur to maximize support for requests. Examples of cross-division support, Foundation support and assistance, and priority setting occurs to support requests that align with student needs.

The institution utilizes the Washington Community and Technical College Financial Management System (FMS) which is administered by the SBCTC Information Technology Department. Through the system the college reports on a monthly basis to the Board of Trustees. The Vice President of Administration provides a report of financial status to the Trustees at their regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Unit managers receive monthly reports on their respective budget(s).

Monthly reports are available to the College community through the LWTech Budget Services webpage. Revenue, expenditure by fund, and budget status for the general and self supporting fund are provided in addition to a quarterly income statement for the bookstore. An annual report is also provided to the College community and to the Board of Trustees. Budget reports are shared on the LWTech webpage and are readily available to all stakeholders.

The college is audited annually by the Washington State Auditor's Office. This audit also includes evaluation of internal controls and financial activities. Audit reports were provided and made available to the evaluation team, with the most recent statements for the year 2017-18.

The audit report stated the college's internal controls were adequate and there were no findings noted.

The College links not only the general operating budget to the mission and core themes but also capital budgets and budget requests. LWTech receives support for capital funding, new buildings and repairs and minor improvements from the State of Washington Legislative process. An integral part of capital budget development is consistency with the Capital Master Plan, which was updated in 2015.

During the 2019 capital budget process, the College requested design funding for a new facility the Center for Design. Funding was allocated for the design phase of the project development for the 2019-2021 period. The College anticipates receiving construction funding during the 2021 Legislative process. Additionally, the College received funding to support facility repairs and improvements. Repairs and improvements are anticipated for various areas including culinary arts, Human Resources Office, classrooms, and infrastructure improvements (HVAC, roofing, lighting, and site improvements).
The College clearly delineates its auxiliary enterprises and has appropriate policies that identify types of auxiliary services. Budgeting for these areas is separate from general operating funds. Transfers between funds are approved as part of the annual budget process.

The college is audited annually by the Washington State Auditor's Office. This audit also includes evaluation of internal controls and financial activities. Audit reports were provided and made available to the evaluation team, with the most recent statements for the year 2017-18. The audit report stated the college's internal controls were adequate and no findings were noted. The annual audit is presented to the Board of Trustees for their review and consideration. The Evaluation Committee also reviewed multiple prior year audits and found that there were no substantial findings in the past several years.

It is the Evaluation Committee's assessment that the finances of the College are in good order and good management practices are being used to plan and manage the operating budget and the College's long-term capital responsibilities.

LWTech and the LWTech Foundation have entered into an agreement by which the Foundation is the primary fundraising organization for the College. The agreement specifies the services that the college provides to the Foundation. The Foundation has established priorities for philanthropy which align with the priorities of the College. Student scholarships, program support, and an emergency fund for students were identified by the Executive Director. Faculty shared with the evaluation committee the significance of the contributions and leadership of the Foundation staff and board in assisting faculty with program support, professional

development and support in building external support. LWTech's advancement team clearly supports the educational mission and enhances the quality of the College.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments the LWTech Foundation team for their excellent work in supporting the educational mission and services of the College.

### 2G. Physical and Technological Infrastructure

#### a. Physical Infrastructure

LWTech has approximately 55 acres and 409,000 square feet of space of physical facilities that are attractive, accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution's mission, programs, and services. In 2011, a Health and Sciences Building was added to the College. A project was recently completed, supported by students, to renovate open student spaces in the East wing. This improvement added updated collaborative space and facility improvements that benefit students. During the recent 2019 Legislative session, the College was approved for design and planning funds for a Design Center, LWTech anticipates construction funding during the next cycle, 2021.

All LWTech campus facilities are compliant with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and related State of Washington code requirements. Campus facilities maintain access to individuals with disabilities and special needs. LWTech maintains an emergency management plan in support of the faculty, staff, students, and community. The campus community shared positive feedback on the increase in safety activities and resources throughout the college. Additional staff, increased cameras, and lighting in support of campus safety were highlighted.

The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to state and federal policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. The Vice President of Administrative Services (VPAS) is responsible for institutional compliance. The VPAS, Campus Safety and Security, and Facilities department work collectively with appropriate departments to maintain proper processes, documentation, and protocols for dealing with hazardous waste. Due to the nature of the programs offered at LWTech various waste and safety protocols are important. The College has a number of applied programs including welding, automotive and diesel technology, and allied health that require safety training and training on OSHA guidelines. Training includes hazardous materials, bloodborne pathogens, and general safety, including regulatory compliance training for universal waste, and spill prevention control and countermeasures.

LWTech has in place a comprehensive Master Plan. The Campus Master Plan was updated in 2015 and incorporates the College's mission, core theme and strategic plan alignment. The Master Plan is regularly updated and reflects the long-term building and planning needs for all locations. The campus master plan is inclusive of the institution's commitment to growth, sustainability, safety, and accessibility.

LWTech works collaboratively with academic departments on specific equipment for programs. Equipment upgrades and replacement are incorporated into the annual budget process. Due to the technical nature of programs, Facilities works hand in hand to ensure that the equipment is compatible with building capability.

### b. Technological Infrastructure

LWTech maintains adequate and appropriate technology in support of its mission, core themes, goals, programs and services. Information Technology Services (ITS) is organized under the leadership of the Chief Information Officer (CIO), who reports directly to the President. The CIO is a new position at LWTech and the individual recently joined the institution summer of 2019. The new CIO and the assignment to the President and member of the Cabinet, illustrates LWTech's commitment to the importance of the role of technology in the operations and support of students at the institution.

ITS is responsible for support in excess of 2,400 computers, 400 software applications, wireless technology, network, video conferencing, data center, and classroom technology (projectors, LED screens, etc); and appropriate applications for use by units including 25Live (scheduling), Campus Management (Radius), LEGEND (Starfish), on-line learning (Canvas), and integration with King County Library System. The department has existing policies and procedures in place to guide technology usage and ensure the integrity of the network and technology operations. Incremental back-ups are performed nightly and full-back of systems are completed weekly. Back-ups are stored in a separate physical location from the data center; additionally a full-back is maintained by AWS on a monthly basis remote (cloud). Employees are required to change passwords every 90 days and are required to conform to password convention (size, mix of characters and numbers).

LWTech, as part of the Washington SBCTC, utilizes the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) student information, human resource, and finance systems as managed by the SBCTC. A migration to PeopleSoft has been in the planning and implementation phase for several years throughout the state. College staff noted that an anticipated deployment/implementation is slated for several years from now, approximately 2021 or 2023. The CIO has experience in ERP systems and will be beneficial to the College during the migration.

A strong commitment to the development of a comprehensive approach to technology, which

includes technology planning, ERP migration, focus on cyber-security, appropriate use of technology, integration within new facilities, and support of programs was shared with the evaluation committee.

Technology training for faculty, staff, students and administrators is accomplished at LWTech in collaboration with the Professional Development Office. Training is accomplished on a routine basis including monthly, weekly, and monthly. Additional trainings are provided for users as requested and are consistent with the implementation of new training such as Canvas. The evaluation team received information through forums with faculty, staff, and students that training is appropriate and readily available.

ITS utilizes a committee structure to receive information from stakeholders, put forward requests for funding to meet goals, and engage with stakeholders. The evaluation team noted several committees exist at the institution as evidenced through review of the self-study, the LWTech web-site, on-site interviews with the CIO and Director of Technology, Vice President of Administrative Services, and the open forums with faculty, staff and students. The department noted the establishment of goals and objectives which are presented to the Vice President of Administrative Services. However, the evaluation committee noted that evidence of a comprehensive and systematic planning effort does not exist.

The CIO communicated a commitment to the development of a comprehensive approach to technology planning to include institutional stakeholders as a top priority. The development of a technology plan will assist in the guiding of strategic priorities, life cycle maintenance, assessment of services, identify budgetary/resource requirements, and guide necessary policy and/or procedure requirements.

The institution currently does not have a technology plan or replacement plan for technology infrastructure and equipment that supports the operations, programs, and services. The College has a rule of thumb strategy for a 5-year rotation cycle for computers and associated technology, with a goal to replace 20% per year. In interviews with ITS and the Vice President of Administrative Services it was noted that individual departments are responsible for request of equipment and software new and replacement needs through appropriate processes which include department budgets, grants, or the technology fee (TF). The TF, was implemented in 2016 and requires consideration of the Tech Fee Committee for recommendation. The TF is available to all units across the institution, however, requests from departments and units exceed the amount of available funding.

**<u>Concern</u>:**
LWTech does not have a systematic planning process within administrative units that guide the establishment of goals, assessment/evaluation of services, development of priorities, resource allocation and decision making

LWTech does not have a technology replacement plan that could guide currency of equipment and hardware that are integral for computer security, effectiveness of the learning environment, and business continuity. In the absence of a technology plan which includes a replacement plan, determination of priorities that support sustainability and continuity of equipment, hardware, and software cannot be assured.

## VIII.    Planning and Implementation

### 3A.  Institutional Planning

The NWCCU standard notes that an institution must engage in "ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. Its plans are implemented and made available to appropriate constituencies." In the Seven Year Self-Evaluation Report, Lake Washington Institute of Technology focuses much of its attention on the ongoing use of its mission statement and core themes that clearly outlines its objectives and measures. During this evaluation period, it also developed and implemented its strategic plan approved by the board on September 2017 while it strengthened the functions of its shared governance structure through councils, committees and task forces. The College developed numerous key performance indicators to help guide the direction and outcome for each core theme objectives and its strategic goals.

The Evaluation Committee verified that the shared governance councils and committees meet regularly and review progress on the performance indicators and in turn, reports are provided to the Board of Trustees. What has been clear to the Evaluation Committee is that this process has broad participation and has led to continuous improvements and tangible action plans. During forums with Board, faculty, staff or students, there was clear evidence of knowledge of the mission, core themes and strategic goals and the work to implement them for the success of the mission. The Evaluation Committee observed that the planning has fostered transparency concerning the current position of the College and where it is moving to create a sustainable future as a public institution of technology.

The College has also provided the administrative resources and staff to support the plan. The Office of Institutional Research collects data and manages data collection for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Council (IPEC). The data standards are clear and the work of the staff and committee coordinated well. The public data page and the Tableau dashboard make data readily accessible and relevant.

The College plans include a comprehensive emergency operations plan to respond and recover during catastrophic events. Given the increasing threats to cybersecurity, and in the absence of a comprehensive technology plan, the Evaluation Committee suggests that the College expands its emergency preparedness and business continuity efforts to include cyberattacks to ensure

adequate safeguards are in place to protect data and continuity of operations should a catastrophic event or data breach occur.

**Compliment:**

The Evaluation Committee compliments the comprehensiveness of this plan. This is both a result of the shared governance culture at LWTech as well as the strong commitment to the mission throughout the College. It is important to remember the context; the current planning effort and organization has been effective in a time of dislocation. The College experienced a significant enrollment and budget shortfall, but has continued to envision and invest in the future together. The entire College deserves a high commendation for their collective work in building a mission-driven high functioning culture.

### 3B. Core Theme Planning

Consistent with the mission, LWTech adopted four core themes in 2010:

PATHWAYS: Lake Washington Institute of Technology is accessible to the community by providing multiple entrance points and educational pathways. The college is a conduit for students to upgrade their skills, transition into new careers, or further their education and training.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: At Lake Washington Institute of Technology, students gain the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their educational goals and participate in the workforce.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT: Lake Washington Institute of Technology forms partnerships with governmental and community organizations, educational institutions, business, and labor in order to support the Institution's mission.

COLLEGE COMMUNITY: Lake Washington Institute of Technology provides a safe, supported, and engaging learning environment for students and work environment for faculty and staff.

An analysis of the core theme planning, assessment, and improvement efforts is provided below.

Core theme planning occurs as part of LWTech's overall planning process. The Accreditation Committee led the original development of the core themes with input from faculty, staff, advisory committees, and community forums. A core theme and mission fulfillment matrix was developed in response to a recommendation from the Fall 2011 comprehensive accreditation visit, which demonstrates how the college engaged in broad-based, comprehensive planning.

A task force was formed to review the core themes, outcomes, and indicators. Membership represented all areas of the college and specifically represented the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC), Accreditation Committee, and the Educational Assessment Committee. These groups clarified core theme language, developed meaningful outcomes and indicators, and identified existing measures and data sources.

Division specific planning occurs through individual Executive Cabinet members who determine how to obtain feedback from appropriate groups (committees, staff). However, the use of data to inform planning, assessment, and improvement efforts has not been systematic across the campus. The committee did not find an explicit or systematic alignment between the implementation and improvement of programs and services and the Core Theme objectives. Based upon on-site interviews with faculty, administrators and staff, as well as examination of additional documents, the overarching comprehensive institutional planning and assessment processes for divisions and departments were in the early stages.

Goals for the Instruction and Student Services Divisions were intentionally mapped to the core themes and strategic plan. Core theme planning for *Student Achievement* has led to the implementation of Hobsons Starfish software, as well as the adoption of The 4 Connections, which included funding adjunct faculty for paid office hours. Planning for both the *Pathways* and *Student Achievement* core themes included reallocation of resources to the admission coaching model and full implementation of the Collaborative Advising Model.

The Pathways and Student Achievement core themes are essential elements of the LWTech mission statement. The indicators of achievement for these core theme objectives are meaningful, assessable and verifiable and the rationale provided clearly establishes the basis for these performance metrics. Opportunities exist for students to transition between identifiable educational endpoints. Structures of educational pathways supports student persistence and progression that lead to outcomes relevant to today's careers.

Core theme planning for *External Engagement* is focused on ensuring supplementary resources to support the key mission fulfillment components within the first two core themes (*Pathways* and *Student Achievement*). As such, planning for *External Engagement* has led LWTech to seek: additional grant funding for new programs, scholarships and equipment; articulation and dual enrollment agreements to enhance pathways; and, additional advisory committees to support program review and development.

Core theme planning for *College Community* also supports key mission fulfillment components by aiming to enhance student and employee engagement. Planning for this theme has focused on creating a safe and welcoming educational and work environment, increasing academic and advising support for students, and supporting student engagement in services that are designed to increase retention and success.

The process of developing the core themes involved faculty and staff throughout the college, advisory committees, and community forums. The evaluation team observed through faculty, staff, and student forums that the college recognizes *External Engagement* and *College Community* not only as relevant to the purpose of the institution but as an integral component of the institution's success in mission fulfillment.

Outcomes and indicators under *External Engagement* and *College Community* guide the selection and development of programs, services, and division level goals/objectives across the college. In particular with respect to *College Community*, this is observed where programs and services are directly student-facing such as Instruction and Student Services. Changes or additions to the services offered in areas like advising or placement are clearly guided by core theme objectives and are in alignment with established measures. There is significant data available to help monitor progress resulting from current initiatives, however, it was less clear whether the personnel serving students in areas like these were aware of the data or the impact their work might have on indicator areas. Clearer feedback to faculty and staff working directly with students might serve to focus and motivate planning and improvement more continuously at all levels.

The self-study and site visit by the Evaluation Team provided the evaluators many examples of how LWTech plans, and directs resources and capacity to support the Guided Pathway initiative.

- Faculty and Advisory Committee Members designed and wrote the pathways for each professional technical department, which went live in the fall of 2019.
- Student intake has been simplified through "guided self-placement."
- Through the use of the "Legend" software, students are passed from the intake advisors to faculty advisors seamlessly.
- The Collaborative Advising Model (CAM)

The evaluation team determined through data provided by LWTech and faculty interviews appropriate data is collected, both at the institutional level and by individual professional technical faculty members.

- *Defined Data:* Staffing reports, student enrollment reports, catalog review, student persistence reports, regional employment data, and advising metrics.
- *Data Analysis and Evaluation:* Evaluation of the trends for this data uncovered several opportunities for impactful improvement. Examples include: evidence that advisor to student ratios were too high; the college did not have a mechanism for tracking advising meeting with faculty advisors; and, persistence rates were low.

## IX.  Effectiveness and Improvement

### 4A.  Assessment

LWTech's deep commitment to its mission has resulted in thoughtful and intentional analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data to evaluate accomplishment of its core theme objectives. The *Pathways* core theme data includes staffing reports, student enrollment reports, catalog review, student persistence reports, regional employment data, and advising

metrics. The *Student Achievement* core theme data includes state level student achievement initiative points, global outcome assessments, program outcome data, licensure data, student surveys, IPEDS data, and course pass rates. The *External Engagement* core theme data includes budget reports for Foundation and grants, articulation and dual enrollment agreement reports, and Perkins reports. The *College Community* core theme includes student surveys, employee surveys, and committee reports.

LWTech makes the strategic plan publicly available online and provides updates on progress at each Fall in-service. Additionally, the institution's ALO provides quarterly updates on core theme measures and progress to the college community by email. Direct communication between evaluators and constituent groups indicated the results of core theme assessments are made available in a timely manner.

LWTech's mission fulfillment matrix is reviewed annually by the Executive Cabinet to ensure other areas of planning are aligned in support of the college's core themes and mission. Council and committee work, along with division goals and objectives, support the strategic plan, core themes, and the college mission.

Conversations with administration revealed that some divisions have clearly defined procedures for the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives. However, such procedures have not been in place long, and have not been used to evaluate all programs and services on campus.

Through its executive leadership, work plans for each area are developed and implemented informing resource allocation and ensuring operational viability. Academic programs and a number of support services set goals and use a number of data points to inform division planning and resource requests. The Evaluation Committee verified the Master Instructional Plan is developed collaboratively and informed by program evaluations. Several of the College's service or non-instructional units, such as in Student Services and Institutional Research and Grants, have started planning with goals set in alignment to mission, core themes and strategic goals.

The college has developed a budget process through the Finance and Budget Advisory Council that allows divisions to identify and prioritize needs for their departments and programs. The council asks that budget requests address strategic plan and/or core theme goals. Since resource allocation requests for budget, and facility or reallocation decisions require alignment to the mission and an evidence of need, other non-instructional units in administrative services, information technology and institutional support are able to articulate its goals and assess effectiveness related only to said resource requests. Although, several data points are collected and analyzed to inform plans and capacity, a systematic, regular and purposeful assessment of non-instructional service units performance and outcome indicators could provide more

integrated planning, decision making and continuous improvement.

Review of assessment processes occurs within councils and committees. The evaluation team met with the Accreditation Committee and Institutional Research who described efforts to move the campus from data tracking to data analysis, with a focus on data that leads to thoughtful analysis and change. In support of this shift in thinking, recent revisions to the mission fulfillment matrix include modification of some measures in order to make them more useful, and space for leadership to record answers to questions about data usage and actions taken to reach targets.

The Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC) and Executive Cabinet oversee the assessment of the strategic plan. IPEC monitors established measures quarterly to assess the impact of the plan. Executive Cabinet conducts mid-point and end-of-year check-in on the tactics and strategies supporting each goal.

Assessment frameworks are in place for course, program, and global outcomes, and there is evidence of systematic processes and regular cycles of assessment in some areas. These are particularly established in the professional/technical program areas. Faculty are familiar with the regular processes and expectations with regard to program review, which is focused on student achievement data (enrollment, completion, retention), and Program Outcome Guides (POG) which occur for each program every two years and focuses on student learning with respect to program outcomes. Faculty indicated there is strong support and effective communication from administration providing training and clear expectations with program review and POG processes.

LWTech regularly gathers data on institutionally identified indicators to assess programs and services and to inform planning and allocation of resources. Data and analysis are available through dashboards and institutionally accessible websites to the college community. LWTech assesses student learning and analyzes student achievement through assessment of program outcomes and global outcomes. Conversations with faculty in professional/technical areas indicated that while faculty may design course curriculum in alignment with course outcomes, there is no expectation or mechanism for reporting on course level assessments of student learning.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech on providing effective support for faculty in developing and improving their assessments of student learning.

**Concerns:**

The *Program Outcome Guide (POG)* reports for professional/technical areas have consistently assessed student achievement of outcomes specific to the area of concentration. However, the general education distribution areas (which are included in POG reports as a final "Program Student Learning Outcome") referenced are not contributing to a holistic evaluation of student achievement of all program goals.

While the general education areas are equipped with assessable learning outcomes, the POG process does not consistently include evaluation of student achievement in all general education areas. In most cases, considering the "measurable criteria" as listed, it is unclear how student achievement may be measured or how incorporating new types of lessons or assignments might be a logical result of evaluating the criteria. Some POG reports imply consideration of student artifacts, but there is no evidence of systematic evaluation of student work.

While faculty anecdotally described their own personal processes for analysis, reflection, planning, and improvement in their courses, there is a concern that student learning at the course level is not being regularly assessed in a way that might lead to enhancement of student learning achievements

The evaluators found a lack of evidence for a holistic and ongoing system of evaluation of non-instructional programs and services aligned with its core theme objectives.

## 4B. Improvements

### a. Core Theme One: Pathways

LW Tech has identified Pathways as the first core theme. "Lake Washington Institute of Technology is accessible to the community by providing multiple entrance points and educational pathways. The college is a conduit for students to upgrade their skills, transition into new careers, or further their education and training."

The pathway core theme includes two outcomes: 1) LWTech is accessible to the community via multiple entrance points, 2) LWTech provides multiple educational pathways relevant to the college mission, in order for students to upgrade their skills, transition to new careers, or further their education.

Indicators were identified for each objective for the Pathway Core Theme:

Outcome 1: LWTech is accessible to the community via multiple entrance points

    1A: LWTech uses intake systems, each of which has adequate support services to make multiple entrance points

1.B: All programs have accessible, published degree and/or certificate maps aligned with other, related career programs in shared "meta-majors"; maps indicate default classes to be taken each quarter with very few options among electives.

Outcome 2: LWTech provides multiple educational pathways relevant to the college mission, in order for students to upgrade their skills, transition to new careers, or to further their education.

2A: Multiple educational pathways exist at LWTech.

2B: Opportunities for transitions exist between identifiable educational endpoints.

2C: The structure of educational pathways supports student persistence and progression.

2D: Pathways lead to outcomes relevant to today's careers and tomorrow's opportunities.

2E: All students select a degree or certificate program OR enroll in a meta-major on-boarding class paired with 1 on 1 advising in their first quarter and receive faculty advising by the end of their second quarter.

2F: All syllabi indicate course outcomes, as well as which program outcomes are supported by work in that course; all program paths indicate which program outcomes are supported by which courses are on the default map.

Results from assessments of the Pathways Core theme are based upon staffing reports, student enrollment reports, catalog review, student persistence reports, regional employment data, and advising metrics. There are indications that LWTech used this data to find several opportunities for impactful improvement. Examples include: evidence that advisor to student ratios were too high; the college did not have a mechanism for tracking advising meeting with faculty advisors; and, persistence rates were low. This led to robust conversations around choices the college could make around program mix, completion strategies, consolidation of intake services and new student support software.

Results from assessments of the Pathway Core theme are beginning to be used to inform academic and advising support planning and practices. Evidence from the self-study, examined documents and interviews with faculty, staff and administrators indicate that Core Theme pathway results are being used to enhance student advising. The college engaged in several changes over the past several years:

- Redesigned the website with pathways and meta-majors at top-level navigation pages, with explanations of what these pathways are and how a student can enter the college
- Designed program maps, available on the college website and in the college catalog, for all professional-technical and transfer degree programs, each of which includes recommendations for specific general education courses to be taken at designated points along the student's educational pathway
- Improved the student intake process by creating the Smart Start process, a new assessment and student-led placement system; launched a new student orientation

open to all students
- Developed admissions coaching positions that assist new students in navigating the initial stages of their college onboarding process.
- Launched the Collaborative Advising Model (CAM), a mandatory process that requires orientation, completion of academic plans by the second quarter of enrollment, and meetings with assigned advisors at designated points on the pathway.
- Enhanced support for underrepresented populations through opening of the Resources for Inclusion, Support, and Empowerment (RISE)

### b. Core Theme Two: Student Achievement

At Lake Washington Institute of Technology, students gain the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their educational goals and participate in the workforce. Through a review of the provided documents and interviews, it is clear that administrators, faculty, staff, and students at LWTech understand that student achievement is an integral part of the LWTech mission.

The student achievement core theme includes three outcomes: 1) Students demonstrate gains in skills and knowledge, 2) Students achieve educational goals, and 3) Students demonstrate the potential to participate in the workforce.

Indicators were identified for each objective for the Student Achievement Core Theme:

Outcome 1: Students demonstrate gains in skills and knowledge

Indicator 1.A: Students demonstrate year-to-year increases in achievement of threshold steps in progressing toward academic goals

Indicator 1.B: Students demonstrate satisfactory results on college-recognized formative assessments

Outcome 2: Students achieve educational goals

Indicator 2.A: Students demonstrate year to year increases in achievement of academic goals

Indicator 2.B: Students complete certificates and/or degrees at a rate comparable to state and national averages for similar colleges

Outcome 3: Students demonstrate the potential to participate in the workforce.

Indicator 3.A: At completion, students perceive they are well-prepared to enter the profession for which they have studied

Indicator 3.B: Students pass licensing and industry examinations at rates indicating preparedness for the workforce and meeting accreditation standards when applicable

Indicator 3.C: Faculty and/or industry representatives assess students as meeting workplace

expectations on internship and/or clinical placements

Indicator 3.D: State workforce or locally-generated employment data indicates that graduates obtain employment in their field of study

Results from assessments of the Student Achievement Core theme are based upon state level student achievement initiative points, global outcome assessments, program outcome data, licensure data, student surveys, IPEDS data, and course pass rates for all courses with an internship, externship, job preparation, capstone projects, co-op work experience, and final clinical rotations. These have been identified as useful indicators of achievement and supported in the self-study and mission fulfillment matrix with appropriate rationale. Assessment results are reviewed by the Strategic Enrollment Management committee, faculty, deans, the Office of Engagement & Learning, and the Vice President of Instruction.

Evaluation of Student Achievement core theme data showed that student achievement initiative points were lower than expected given decreasing enrollment. It also revealed non-compliance in programs related to outcome data, and highlighted low completion rates. This led to campus wide discussions about instructional pedagogy and the important role of faculty in program assessment and student success.

Improvement efforts related to student achievement include organization of all programs into meta-majors, expansion of the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program, creation of degree and career maps that show work and transfer opportunities for all certificates and degrees, implementation of block scheduling, addition of admissions coaches, implementation of a collaborative advising model, use of Starfish by Hobsons, guided Self-Placement in Math and English, supplemental instruction, and The 4 Connections student engagement project.

The college's focus on increasing the completion rate was based on a common understanding that earning credentials as opposed to just technical training, better prepares students for career advancement. Student achievement initiatives had a substantive impact on college graduation rates, leading to recognition by the Aspen Institute as one of the top 150 two-year colleges in the nation and for being among the schools with the highest increase in year-to-year performance over time.

Results from assessments of the Student Achievement Core theme are used to inform academic and learning support planning and practices. The two initiatives discussed during the evaluation visit as the most impactful to student achievement were the 4 Connections student engagement project, and the collaborative advising model.  A focus on proven strategies that aid in student retention and completion provides students with the support they need to reach goal completion.

c.  **Core Theme Three: External Engagement**

The external engagement core theme includes one outcome: LWTech forms partnerships with governmental, community, educational, business, and labor organizations in order to effectively support the Institution's mission.

Indicators were identified for external engagement objective:

Outcome EE-1: LWTech forms partnerships with governmental, community, educational, business, and labor organizations in order to effectively support the Institution's mission.

Indicator 1: Governmental Grant Partnerships

Indicator 2: Community Partnerships and LWTech Foundation

Indicator 3: Articulation agreements and collaborations with other institutions

Indicator 4: High School Program partnerships

Indicator 5: Business Partnerships

Core theme External Engagement is measured against one outcome (objective) consisting of six measures related to relevant institutionally identified indicators of achievement. Results are used to improve institutional outcomes under the core theme; for example, LWTech has instituted new processes including auditing of advisory committee membership and meeting dates and assigning a lead position to monitor Perkins compliance.

### d. Core Theme Four: Campus Community

The campus community core theme captures LW Tech's efforts to provide a safe, supported and engaging learning environment for students and work environment for faculty and staff. This core theme includes two outcomes: 1) LWTech is a safe, supported, and engaging learning environment for students and 2) LWTech is a safe, supported, and engaging learning environment for faculty and staff.

Indicators were identified for campus community objective:

Outcome 1: LWTech is a safe, supported, and engaging learning environment for students

Indicator 1.A: LWTech is a safe learning environment for students

Indicator 1.B: LWTech is a supported learning environment for students.

Indicator 1.C: LWTech is an engaging learning environment for students

Outcome 2: LWTech is a safe, supported, and engaging learning environment for faculty and staff

Indicator 2.A: LWTech is a safe learning environment for faculty and staff

Indicator 2.B: LWTech is a supported learning environment for faculty and staff

Indicator 2.C: LWTech is an engaging learning environment for faculty and staff

Core theme College Community includes two primary outcomes (objectives) consisting of six indicators focused on student surveys which are regularly administered and employee feedback from the 'Employee Satisfaction Survey.' Results are used to improve institutional outcomes under the core theme; for example, changes in staffing in campus public safety department, software investments, and a focus on the college developing its first set of core values.

**Compliment:**
The Evaluation Committee compliments LWTech faculty and administrators for their commitment to student achievement. The intentional and long-standing collaboration among Instruction and Student Services has resulted in nationally recognized gains in completion.

**Concerns:**
While there is data available to inform planning at all levels, there is a concern that specific feedback and analysis support may not be made available to all constituencies in time to effectively inform planning and improvement cycles. In particular this was observed through conversations with faculty and staff who provide guidance directly to students regarding initial placement into math or English courses.

While the assessment of student learning in the professional/technical programs is established and regular, there is little to no evidence of assessment of student learning in general education areas. LWTech has offered at least one BAS degree for approximately ten years and there is little to no evidence of general education assessment in any of the breadth areas.

Due to gaps in the general education framework and assessment processes, it will be difficult for the institution to use the results of student learning assessment to inform planning or enhance student learning achievements.

## X.  Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability

### 5A.  Mission Fulfillment

LWTech community, board members, administrators, faculty and staff, and students can articulate the College's mission. With its defined threshold of mission fulfillment, it has over time progressively achieved and most recently exceeded this threshold. Plans (strategic, facilities, unit, assessment, etc.) provide evidence that the College engages in regular, systematic, participatory, and self-reflective planning.

However, the evaluation committee found little evidence the College engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment with respect to non-instructional units.

### 5B. Adaptation and Sustainability

LWTech has implemented effective processes for ensuring adequacy of resources in support of the college operations. The College has a dedicated and committed Board of Trustees and campus leadership team that demonstrate fiscal management. The College employs a planning model and reporting cycle that analyze and document its resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations for sufficiency to fulfill its mission and achieve the objectives of its core themes.

LWTech has an established planning process for its academic units which includes assessment and resource allocation, to facilitate continuous improvement. The evaluation committee observed that the administrative units are in various phases of planning, goal development, assessment and evaluation, which was a challenge to observe outcomes from evaluation for use in resource allocation and decision making. As the institution continues to build on systematic planning processes, application of assessment and evaluation will support the existing inclusive resource allocation structure. The College has a comprehensive structure of institutional committees, with broad based participation from faculty, staff, and students that receive requests, evaluate the requests, and provide recommendations to the Executive Council for consideration of the Board. Building upon these practices with comprehensive planning and assessment/evaluation of programs and all service areas will strengthen the cycle of planning and continuous improvement.

LWTech has instituted a robust process for scanning its external environment and informing its planning. It has established a strong partnership in the community that informs its strategies as a polytechnic institution. In response to budgetary challenges and enrollment decline that has impacted institutional finances and capacity, the College continued to institute initiatives to diversify its funding sources and has realigned its mix of programmatic offerings and services in fulfilling its mission. Its strategic investment of resources to build bachelors of applied science programs has so far proven to support long term institutional stability.

**<u>Compliments</u>:**
The Evaluation Committee commends LWTech Board of Trustees and Leadership for a purposeful and strategic approach in transforming the institution to operate within its resources and maintain a prudent level of reserves while investing in the future.

**<u>Concerns</u>:**
Clearly articulated, measurable, and appropriate evaluation metrics done consistently in a regular cycle will serve to ensure mission fulfillment and the engagement of all parties in appropriate performance improvement efforts. The team was not able to find consistent evidence, particularly on non-academic units of regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment to performance improvements in achieving unit

goals towards mission fulfillment.

## XI.   Summary

Our team of seven individuals from various accredited institutions arrived on your campus ready to listen, observe and assess the work of Lake Washington Institute of Technology. We spoke with hundreds of people all of whom were passionate about the mission of LWTech. We found the students, faculty and staff of the College gracious, thoughtful and engaged around its mission and core themes. We were impressed, in particular, with the widespread support of the mission of the College. There was a unanimous and harmonious expression of the mission in all meetings. The Seven Year Self-Evaluation Report was well written and we believe it accurately represented the work of the College. We want to formally thank the President and the entire community of Lake Washington Institute of Technology for hosting us and providing us with the materials necessary to complete our assessment. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Dr. Ruby Hayden, ALO chair who coordinated the visit and who hosted the team well.

## XII.   COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Commendations

1. The Evaluation Committee commends the College's adaptability to effectively transform the institution into a mission-driven high functioning system, as manifested through strong leadership support from the Board of Trustees, President and administrators and the "can do" attitude of faculty and staff.

2. The Evaluation Committee commends the College for its commitment to close opportunity gaps among its students by developing and implementing a comprehensive equity, diversity and inclusion plan.

3. The Evaluation Committee commends the LWTech Library Learning Commons faculty and staff for their extensive program of information literacy and outreach, and for consistently promoting and maintaining a welcoming and safe atmosphere for student learning and engagement.

4. The Evaluation Committee commends the institution for fostering engagement within the College and with community partners, exemplified by a common dedication to the institutional mission, collaborative approach to campus safety, and for strengthening advisory committee activities to support students and programs.

5. The Evaluation Committee commends the College on providing faculty and staff with opportunities for professional growth and development to enhance their

effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.

**Recommendations**

1. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College establish a technology replacement plan in support of planning and resource allocation for institutional operations, programs and services.  (2.G.8)

2. The evaluation committee recommends the institution fully implement the system of program assessment to evaluate achievement of all established general education learning outcomes as appropriate for the various certificate or degree pathways. (4.A.2, 4.A.3, 4.B.2)

3. The Evaluation Committee recommends the College's non-instructional units engage in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. (4.A.2, 4.A.4, 4.A.5,4.A.6, 4.B.1,5.A.1)

## XIII.    Evaluation Committee Process

In an effort to assess Lake Washington Institute of Technology's compliance with the standards and eligibility requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the Evaluation Committee carefully read the Seven Year Self-Evaluation Report and consulted various documents presented by the College. The Evaluation Committee interviewed all senior administrators and numerous additional administrative and executive personnel at the College, as well as various committees and faculty members. The Chair of the Evaluation Committee conducted open meetings of faculty, staff and students. The Evaluation Committee also met with members of the Board of Trustees. We believe that the written material and the personal and informal meetings of College personnel and students provided excellent insight into the work of the College.

## XIV.    Retention and Graduation at LWTech

LWTech continues to focus on student achievement, which it has identified as a Core Theme and dedicated significant resources to improve. As one indicator for the outcome that students achieve their educational goals, LWTech tracks student completion of certificates and/or degrees at a rate comparable to state and national averages for similar colleges. Student IPEDS completion rates in comparison to specific benchmark colleges are tracked and shared through a mission fulfillment matrix, which is reviewed annually to gauge effectiveness of college completion strategies.

LWTech student completion rates generally meet or exceed other comparable colleges.

Improvement efforts related to student achievement include organization of all programs into meta majors, expansion of the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program, creation of degree and career maps that show work and transfer opportunities for all certificates and degrees, implementation of block scheduling, addition of admissions coaches, implementation of a collaborative advising model, guided self-placement in Math and English, supplemental instruction, and the 4 Connections student engagement project.

The college fully implemented Starfish by Hobsons software, which features a formal early alert system in order to identify struggling students, a common repository for academic plans, and a shared notes system across Instruction and Student Services. Such tools have been shown to increase student completion because students have an identified educational path, and employees in Instruction and Student Services can more easily identify students needing additional support.

LWTech's improvements to retention and graduation earned the college recognition as one of the top 150 colleges by the Aspen Institute in 2019. LWTech was tied with three other nominees showing the highest increase in year-to-year performance over time, and showed the highest increases among nominees from the state of Washington.

The Evaluation Committee compliments the institution for its work in retention and completion and encourages the College to feature their progress in its next NWCCU report.