REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

ACCREDITATION REVIEW

Cogswell Polytechnical College

March 10-12, 2015

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 WSCUC Senior College and University Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission.

The formal action concerning the institution’s status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.
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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

Cogswell Polytechnical College was founded in San Francisco in 1887 as a co-educational vocational high school. Cogswell became a two-year college in 1931, approved to grant degrees at the associate-level from 1951, and a four-year institution in 1971. The College moved to Silicon Valley in 1985 and has been located in Sunnyvale, California since 1994.

Cogswell College's mission is to be a leader in providing practical education in the combined disciplines of technology and entrepreneurship with an emphasis on leadership, and a strong focus on new technologies and business models to prepare graduates for careers in the global economy. (http://www.cogswell.edu/about/about.php)

In Fall 2010, following a number of years of declining enrollment and negative financial performance that threatened its ability to continue operation, Cogswell College was purchased by Palm Ventures LLC and experienced a change of control. The College transitioned from non-profit to for-profit status. In concert with this change, the governing board for the College was reconstituted and changes were made to the executive administration. Since these changes, the College has added academic programs, including a masters degree, and phased out the online program in Fire Science. In the years leading up to the purchase of the College, enrollment had dropped to 130 students for three consecutive years and the institution was losing $4 million per year. Since the change of control Cogswell has experienced a marked turnaround in enrollment and its financial position is significantly improved.

Cogswell currently offers Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in Digital Arts and Animation, Digital Audio Technology, Game Development and Design, Software Engineering and Digital Arts Engineering. On September 30, 2010, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) approved Cogswell to award Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts
degrees in Entrepreneurship and Innovation with an optional Specialization in Digital Media. This bachelor degree transitioned to a Bachelor of Science in Digital Media Management and the College continues to offer the Master of Arts degree. The College is authorized to provide instructional delivery both on-site and online.

**Recent Accreditation History**

As reported from the institution’s IR:

- The WASC Senior Commission approved Cogswell’s independence from the Foundation for Educational Achievement in June 2008 and the College was scheduled for a Special Visit in Spring 2010 to evaluate the following issues: a) a change in governance related to the structural change, b) financial sustainability, c) strategic planning, and 4) an assessment of student learning and program review.
- In concert with an application for Change of Ownership, the Spring 2010 Special Visit was rescheduled to Fall 2010 when the ownership change was formally considered, and in November 2010, WASC approved the new ownership of Cogswell by Palm Ventures, LLC.
- In November 2010, WASC conducted a Special Visit of Cogswell College. Based on this visit, the Commission issued an action letter which stated, “Some of the necessary and important changes still in progress at the time of the visit [would] require some time before progress and improvement [could] be evaluated” and “it [is] too early to observe the implementation of the change of ownership during the visit.”
- In concert with all the activity moving the College forward, the Commission received the College’s Fall 2010 Special Visit Report, removed a formal Notice of Concern on issues identified with the 2010 Team Visit and Report, requested a progress report by May 1,
2011 to provide final documentation related to the change of ownership, and scheduled a Special Visit for Spring 2012.

- As mentioned previously, the College had struggled financially for the past decade prior to the change of ownership. By 2013, with an infusion of capital and managerial expertise from Palm Ventures, the College had grown to 421 students (341 on-ground and 80 in on-line Fire Science Program), its annual deficit had been halved, and with the combined leadership of faculty and administration executed on a plan projected to financially break-even in 2015.

The Commission accepted the Fall 2012 Interim Report, and in a March 13, 2013 communication, WSCUC Liaison, Dr. Christopher Oberg, reported that after deliberation, the WASC panel acted to:

Accept the institution’s Interim Report; and b) Request the institution provide a Progress Report to WASC staff no later than November 1, 2013. The College was also advised that completion of the activities identified above were expected by the time of the next Off-Site Review, scheduled for Spring 2014.

**Progress Report to WSCUC**

In a communication from WSCUC Liaison, Dr. Christopher Oberg, on March 12, 2013, the College was also charged with providing an update on progress in addressing four outstanding issues:

1. Explain the process for creating a policy governing Board Chair compensation, the research on which it relied in its creation, the timing of its implementation, and the manner by which the amount of compensation was determined. This includes a request that CPC create a process by which the full Board reviews this compensation on a periodic basis and document that process.
2. Document the level of campus engagement of the Board Chair and explain the relation of those duties to the role of the new President/CEO.

3. Report the status of the search for a new President and, if the search is continuing, explain the reasons that it has not concluded successfully.


**2014-2015 Comprehensive Evaluation**

**Off-Site Review**

The team conducted a thorough review of the documents submitted by the institution including the Institutional Report and supporting documents. The team had initially determined who would focus on which aspects of the review/report (Components and Standards), conducted a review of documents submitted by the institution, and completed the “Team Worksheet Offsite Review.” The team held team conference calls to review materials, and then met at the WSCUC offices on November 13, 2014, to conduct the offsite review. The product of the offsite review was the “Lines of Inquiry” document designed to identify for Cogswell the issues the team would like to focus on during the site visit. A brief teleconference was held with the College’s leadership and additional staff members of WSCUC steering committee. The Team Chair also visited the institution prior to the formal visit to assist the President and her staff in understanding the lines of inquiry and establishing an agenda for the on-site review.

From the Off-site Review, six Lines of Inquiry were developed and shared with the institution:

- Monitoring and Responding to External Environment
- From Planning to Execution
- Governance, Administration and Sustainability
• Faculty (how is Cogswell giving them a meaningful voice in the future of the institution?)

• Student Experience and Success

• Educational Effectiveness

The team also requested that several additional documents be available at the team visit, many of which included updates on projects the institution had noted were still in progress.

On-Site Review

The on-site review occurred March 10-12, 2015. The following groups and individuals were interviewed:

a. Board members including the Chair, independent members, internal members, and the principal of Palm Ventures LLC.
b. President/CEO
c. WSCUC Steering Committee
d. Faculty, including adjuncts
e. Students
f. Executive leadership
g. Student Success Specialist
h. Dean of the College
i. Director of Career Services
j. Marketing and admissions representatives
k. Director of regulatory and student affairs
l. CFO
m. Director Institutional Research and Quality Assurance
n. Program Directors
o. Dean of Students
p. Faculty Senate Leadership
q. Registrar
r. Online development representatives
s. Alumni

Prior to the visit, the institution uploaded additional documents the team had identified during the off-site review. A complete set of materials, as well as electronic access to materials, was available in the team room during the on-site review.
The institution provided numerous documents; the team concentrated on the following documents/items:

a. Lists of Committees, with membership requirements, and brief descriptions of the organizational structures and decision-making processes.
   i. Sample review of Meeting minutes including Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Program Advisory Committees, and other relevant formal committees
b. Faculty CVs (full time and adjunct, broken into sections: full-time, adjuncts, lecturers)
c. “DIRE” (Institutional Research) CV
d. Course Syllabi
e. Eight Online Courses
f. Updated Organizational Chart
g. Update on implementation of Strategic Plan
h. Academic Program Reviews
   a. Examples of action items that have come from program reviews
i. Update on assessment plan for Written Communication ILO:
j. Learning Outcomes Assessment documents: descriptions, instruments, rubrics, reports
k. Recruiting, admissions, and marketing collateral, and training documents for admissions/recruiting staff
l. Employment data for graduates (how are placements being tracked, etc)
m. Key performance indicators (targets for success) in relation to program outcomes
n. Material related to faculty recruiting, onboarding/training, development, rank and promotion, teaching load for each rank, evaluation process/documents
o. List of current faculty scholarship
p. Any documents that disseminate achievements of faculty, students, alumni (newsletters, PR)
q. Graduation and retention data disaggregated (based on ethnicity, gender, etc)
r. Articulation agreement
s. Degree audits (samples of transcripts)
t. Fact Book
u. Program Portfolio (enrollments and faculty by program)
v. Financial and Enrollment projections
w. Marketing plan
x. Online course development documents (process and procedures)
There were two emails in the confidential email account; both were inconsequential to the overall determination of the team.

**Off Campus and Online/Distance Programs**

N/A--all current programs are taught on campus; there are no online/distance programs although individual courses within programs may be offered in the online modality.

**B. Institution’s Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor**

Cogswell Polytechnical College created a WSCUC Steering Committee. This working group managed the process of organizing and gathering information from various stakeholder groups. It also drafted the institutional report. The institution’s IR was generally well organized and presented in a professional and logical matter. While the report delivered a transparent narrative, in order to reach the expected detail and in-depth analysis readers had to follow links to disaggregated documents. These were relatively easy to find but required extra steps to navigate. The institution noted that the process of self-review itself led to numerous insights and resulted in institutional changes even prior to the visit. This became apparent as the team visited and this insight further supports the team’s conclusion about the level of intentionality and the seriousness with which the College approached this review.

The team’s requests for additional information were satisfied at the visit.

**C. Response to Issues Raised in Prior Reviews**

Faculty involvement in governance (CFR 3.10) was a concern during the 2012 Special Visit, and was not fully addressed in Component 1. The underlying issues were perhaps addressed in the 2012 Interim Report. The team performed an in-depth review of this subject. The documentation (Attachment 1.4) together with meetings and interviews, led the team to conclude that faculty membership on the Academic Affairs Committee, and of the membership and functioning of Academic Senate (including Senate’s charge and how often Senate meets)
demonstrates an improving picture of faculty involvement. This was particularly true regarding increased levels of involvement of the Faculty Senate’s Leadership in planning and decision-making. Additionally, faculty members generally agreed that there are now increased opportunities for their voices to be heard and have an impact.

The Special Visit report references a Faculty Handbook under review at the time of that visit. During this visit, some faculty members said they felt that the Handbook was “not being followed.” President Snyder indicated that her elevation to the CEO from the CAO role had delayed finalization and publication of the updated Handbook but that it was in process and moving toward completion, approval, and full implementation.

The Special Visit Team recommended the establishment of a standing Finance Committee, separate from the existing Audit Committee within the Board of Trustees (CFR 1.7). Based on the documentation submitted (Attachment 3a), as well as interviews with the Chair and members of the Board of Trustees the team concluded that the College is fully compliant with Commission’s Policy on Independent Governing Boards.

Cogswell will vacate its current campus location prior to August 2015. Information regarding the status of the search for a relocation site was provided to the team, including updates regarding the pending move to students, faculty, and staff. Some faculty members commented during the visit that they felt they have not been fully updated on the status but given the fluid nature of the negotiations, this did not raise undue concerns. Finalizing the plans for a new home for the College is a top priority of administration.

In the first half of calendar 2014 the CEO position turned over for the third time since Palm Ventures purchased the College. In-depth discussions with the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the principal of Palm Ventures helped to explain and place these changes in context and allayed concerns of a systemic root cause. The appointment of President Deborah Snyder has
brought needed stability and the executive team indicates that it has become stronger and more cohesive under her leadership. Maintaining stability at the executive level will be a critical element for the institution to achieve its long-term vision and to continue to accomplish its mission.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

Component 3: Defining the meaning of degrees and ensuring their integrity, quality and rigor

Cogswell’s degree programs are appropriate in content, performance standards, and rigor for the degree level awarded (CFR 2.1). The programs are staffed by sufficient numbers of faculty qualified for the type of degree programs offered. The College encourages scholarly activities that enable faculty members maintain currency in their disciplines and professional fields. In light of projected enrollment growth, however, the College is encouraged to develop a more detailed faculty capacity plan based on enrollment projections and type of programs offered (see also Component 7). Further strengthening the planned faculty development process will help ensure that all new faculty members participate in a thorough onboarding and orientation experience and, further, to support the development of pedagogical skills critical for the success of an institution focused primarily on teaching.

Degree programs offered by Cogswell are clearly described in terms of program and graduation requirements (CFR 2.2). The institution mission and vision provides a foundation for the content and design of degree programs and guides development of processes that ensure the quality and integrity of its degrees. All undergraduate degree requirements, including general education and core competencies, are clearly defined. Graduate degree requirements are clearly stated and appropriate. Expectations for student learning are evident in the objectives and content of the curricula, programs, policies and academic advising.
Cogswell’s ILOs, are included in, and PLOs and CLOs developed for, all degree granting programs, policies, and curriculum, and aligned with academic advising and student support services (CFR 2.3). Involvement of faculty members either as committee members or SMEs is central to the development of CLOs. Representatives of the faculty body contribute directly to the development of PLOs and ILOs and all faculty members have the opportunity to provide feedback involved in curriculum development matters. The team noted that at present no distinction is made between undergraduate and graduate ILOs, despite recognition in the IR that undergraduate and graduate programs differ in “complexity” (CFRs 2.2a, 2.2b). However, this is not particularly problematic because Cogswell offers only one graduate program; thus, the program learning outcomes for this program – which are distinct from the undergraduate PLOs – serve as de facto graduate ILOs. If additional graduate programs are contemplated, the Faculty of the College will benefit from considering a conceptual framework based on selected learning taxonomies or other tools (such as the Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile).

At Cogswell Polytechnical College, there was clear evidence that students are actively involved in a very rich learning experience and challenged (CFR 2.5). Faculty members engage students in applying theoretical concepts to real-world projects through such vehicles as the design studios that bring students together with faculty members who represent the disparate fields of engineering and art. These projects allow students to apply their classroom learning to real world professional experiences in ways that foster creativity and produce synergies. The team reviewed student projects and spoke with students who reinforced this conclusion. Students commented positively on the degree to which their faculty members are committed to providing regular feedback to students on their performance.

Well-developed evaluation protocols for program reviews are in place, and clear assessment and program review schedules are in place. Each degree program is supported by a
Program Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of industry leaders who provide guidance on the evolution of rapidly changing fields in order to maintain the currency of content and outcomes. These PAC groups regularly meet and provide guidance to respective Program Directors on curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular enhancements. Degree programs are well aligned with industry needs and the faculty continuously modifies course content to in light of the evolving technological landscape.

The team found that the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness does an exemplary job in collecting, analyzing and interpreting data on student progress and success (including retention and graduation rates) (CFR 4.2). These data are analyzed, interpreted, synthesized and disseminated among key stakeholders that lead to actionable strategies in respective areas (CFR 4.3).

Students produce high quality work in the form of collaborative projects, portfolios and individual assignments, which are highlighted on the institution’s website. On-campus project studios offer students real-world experience working with industry clients while working cross-functionally with peers from all programs (CFR 2.3). Supervised by faculty and industry advisors, these projects teach students a team-centered approach that mirrors real development teams of artists, animators, game designers, audio specialists and management.

Cogswell should be commended for its comprehensive set of CLO-PLO-ILO maps (CFRs 2.3, 2.4). The adoption of the LEAP learning outcomes in conjunction with the AAC&U VALUE rubrics, and the requirement for students in each program to complete a project-based capstone assignment, speak to a robust system for monitoring student progress on institutional outcomes. Using ongoing program assessments to generate data for institution-wide purposes is efficient and easier to sustain than utilizing a separate process that is devoted solely to institutional assessment (CFR 2.5). The institution intends for all programs go through complete
assessment cycles and implement evidence-based interventions that will lead to improved student learning (CFR 2.7). Additionally, the college is encouraged to continue its current development of a standardized set of assessment instruments and rubrics to help ensure the validity and reliability of learning outcomes data (CFR 2.6).

**Component 4: Achieving core competencies**

Cogswell has taken a deliberate, thoughtful approach to ensuring that students graduate with a high level of mastery in the five core competencies (and a sixth competency, creative thinking, that is central to their mission). (CFR 2.2a) Development of these competencies begins in lower division general education courses. As students progress through their majors, the competencies are increasingly integrated into upper division, program-specific coursework. Cogswell’s approach helps reinforce the notion that the competencies are *integral* to success in each discipline (CFR 2.2). A good example of this is found in the ILO related to student writing: “Cogswell graduates will be able to write correctly, accurately, and persuasively.” Students who are taking courses in sculpting, mixing music, or coding may fail to recognize the centrality of writing if it receives little or no emphasis in those courses. However, students who write *about* their sculpting, or their music mixing, or their coding, are much more likely to value writing. This, in turn, help make students more desirable to employers, who recognize that good writing skills are essential for success in the business world, regardless of the industry or job title.

Cogswell incorporates capstone experiences (often in the form of portfolios or collaborative projects), and is increasingly adopting signature assignments that can be readily assessed with rubrics (CFR 2.4). Implementing these measures helps determine the achievement of expected levels of mastery. Evidence of student competence emerged comes both from discussions with PAC members and from the professional recognition that graduates of the College receive
The team found that the College has created a solid assessment framework/foundation that includes mechanisms to demonstrate achievement of student learning outcomes and performance standards (CFR 2.6). Cogswell’s recent assessment results, have led to the following closing loop actions: adjusted curriculum, enhanced syllabi of capstone and portfolio courses, integrated co-curricular activities and revised assessment methods/tools (CFR 4.3). The institution should continue refining its system to document program and curricular improvements resulting from assessment data, and to track the impact of these changes in improving student learning.

Cogswell has a program review calendar in place that clearly states when each program is scheduled for review (CFR 2.7). These program reviews help to reveal potential areas of enhancements that lead to programmatic and/or curricular changes.

An Assessment Committee is in place and includes the Dean of the College, Program Directors, General Education discipline chairs, Librarian and Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (CFRs 2.5, 2.6). This committee meets regularly and discusses the assessment results, determines the areas in need of improvement and prepares annual assessment reports that include action plans with deadlines and responsible parties (CFR 2.7). In addition, it informs the institutional community about assessment results and data-driven changes.

The College has put processes in place to ensure that students make satisfactory academic progress toward completion of their degrees The institution continuously tracks and analyzes predictive success data to identify students at-risk of dropping or stopping out. Other measures of student success, including retention and graduation rates (including by gender, ethnic groups and other demographics). This is primarily accomplished through the work of the Student Retention Committee, which engages different units on campus for actionable results. A detailed retention plan is in place (CFR 2.10).
Component 5: Defining and promoting student success

Cogswell has developed well-defined educational objectives that are disseminated throughout the institution and are consistent with stated purposes (CFR 1.2). The College systematically collects and analyzes data on students at risk, predictive success indicators, retention and graduation rates (by gender, ethnic groups and other demographics) and Assessment and Student Success Committees meet regularly to discuss options for students who may need assistance meeting their academic goals (CFR 2.7).

Cogswell is transparent in the representation of its mission, vision, academic goals, programs, services and costs to students and the external community (CFRs 1.2, 1.6). It clearly describes the requirements for program completion (CFR 2.10). Cogswell treats students fairly and equitably by closely adhering to the established policies and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook (e.g. student conduct, grievances, disability, financial issues and many other areas) (CFR 2.13).

Cogswell also offers innovative co-curricular and extra-curricular programs that are aligned with its academic goals, integrated with academic programs and support student personal and professional development (CFR 2.11). Some of these include: team projects, portfolios, student clubs and internships. The institution also offers appropriate student support in the form of tutoring, disabilities, financial aid, student life (residential and housing), student involvement and leadership, academic advising, career guidance and counseling services (CFR 2.13). The institution also provides appropriate information to, and treatment of, transfer students. All transfer students have access to a comprehensive set of support services (CFR 2.14).

The team found evidence that the College is using data not just as a tool to ensure better student learning, but also as a means of facilitating student retention and graduation success (CFR 2.10). Application packages from first-year students (both freshmen and transfers) are
scrutinized by a committee prior to the entry of these students in part to identify students who appear to be at risk. Students with three or more risk factors are further subdivided into a “high risk” group and a “low risk” group. The high-risk students have regular meetings with advisers added to their class schedules. Furthermore, all students are flagged by a system that examines grades across the semester (instead of just at the end). Students who appear to be struggling are referred to trained peer tutors, who provide assistance with individual classes. These two “early warning” systems appear to have increased student retention and academic success (CFRs 2.10, 2.13). Further refinements will likely improve the ability of the system to identify those students who could benefit most from services, thus helping to allocate the college’s resources more efficiently.

The institution has been experiencing increased enrollments in some degree programs. It has relatively high retention rates for transfer students (CFRs 2.13, 2.14). Because the institution recognizes that increased enrollments do not translate directly to retention and graduation rates Cogswell has a very detailed retention plan in place that is closely followed (CFR 4.7). As the College continues to build on its current excellent IR program it can increase its in-depth analyses to determine additional methods to increasing retention and graduation rates for seniors (overall and for each degree program) (CFRs 3.3, 4.2). The strategic plan includes specific operational initiatives that should continue to close gaps between targets and actual for retention, graduation and time-to-graduation rates overall and for each degree program (CFR 2.10). Specific retention and completion rate targets, with a detailed list of related strategies and tactics to achieve these targets should help the College continue the progress it has made.

The team recognizes that Cogswell has made improvements in student support; the team further encourages the institution to increase the quality and impact of academic advising on student experience and success (CFRs 2.12, 2.13).
Cogswell boasts an impressive alumni population with strong ties to the high-tech community (CFR 2.4). The team believes the College will benefit from increased outreach to that will further strengthen alumni relations and that could lead to greater engagement of alumni in different capacities (e.g. serve as guest speakers, offer internships as well as provide mentoring and shadowing opportunities for current students). This could also provide opportunities to capture student and alumni success stories and showcase them to current and prospective students (CFR 4.5).

**Component 6: Quality assurance and improvement**

Cogswell Polytechnical College is an institution committed to quality assurance, institutional learning, and improvement. This was readily demonstrated in discussions with faculty members who were asked to explain how they helped to ensure that Cogswell – with its strong commitment to hands-on training in technologically sophisticated areas – remained an institution of higher education, rather than a “training facility for high-tech employers” (CFR 2.4). The resulting comments demonstrated a clear appreciation of Cogswell’s mission, the importance of the general education curriculum and institutional outcomes (including those embedded within each program’s learning outcomes), as well as the need to help fit students for futures that include jobs that do not yet exist (CFRs 2.4, 4.4). Similarly, administrators and Board members took great pride in Cogswell’s students and the skill-sets they exhibit upon graduation; there is a clear recognition that Cogswell has a reputation to uphold and enhance (CFR 4.6). The sense imparted by all stakeholders is that the institution seeks to build on its existing strengths, and that the motivation for this desire is not purely an artifact of external pressures generated by the reaccreditation process; it stems from a genuine, internal belief in the primacy of educational quality (CFRs 4.3, 4.6).
Cogswell provided evidence of its commitment to building a culture of continuous improvement. It monitors a variety of key indicators areas for further enhancement including programs and curriculum (program reviews and assessments); faculty (teaching evaluations); students (satisfaction surveys, student performance indicators, and assessments) (CFR 4.3). Additionally, the institution, with program directors and faculty involvement, engages in ongoing analysis into the processes of teaching and learning (CFR 4.4). The institution may wish to consider adopting peer review process and classroom observations as part of its continuous improvement process as it relates to teaching effectiveness. In addition, a more systematic annual faculty evaluation process (for both full-time and part-time faculty) is recommended.

Cogswell engages appropriate stakeholders involved in regular assessment of institutional effectiveness. Some of these include PAC advisory committees, Board of Trustees, alumni, Associated Students group and employers. These groups of stakeholders assist Cogswell in ensuring that it has the most appropriate portfolio of academic programs, adequate student support and meaningful career paths for its graduates (CFRs 4.5, 4.6). The institution also considers changes that are taking place and engages in internal and external environmental scanning to identify areas of enhancement as they relate to new program developments, budget projections and enrollment forecasts (CFR 4.7).

Cogswell has a program review calendar in place that clearly states when each program is scheduled for review. These program reviews help to reveal potential areas of enhancements that lead to programmatic and/or curricular changes (CFR 2.7). The institution has an impressively detailed assessment system, with Course Learning Outcomes mapped onto Program Learning Outcomes, which in turn are mapped onto Institutional Learning Outcomes. Cogswell has developed a standardized syllabi format for all courses and CLOs are imbedded in each course syllabi (CFRs 2.4, 2.6). Student learning outcomes from co-curricular activities, and outcomes
for the undergraduate curriculum’s general education component, are also mapped onto the ILOs (CFR 2.11). Direct assessment data are obtained from various sources, including signature assignments and (increasingly) embedded assessments. These are supplemented with indirect measures – including course evaluations and focus groups and self-evaluations completed by students at co-curricular events – to generate profiles of student learning for each program, and across the institution as a whole. Benchmarks have been established for acceptable and desired levels of mastery (CFR 2.10).

Some elements of this assessment system are still under development. For example, the mapping process revealed gaps in the general education curriculum that were addressed by making coursework revisions. The institution recently adopted TaskStream and is still transitioning towards implementing the features it offers. This tool will greatly facilitate data management and report generation for data analytics and quality improvement purposes (CFRs 4.2, 4.4). TaskStream may also enable Cogswell to implement an e-Portfolio system, which seems especially useful for an institution like Cogswell. (Portfolios are already integrated into many programs, so the adoption of e-portfolios is more of a data management issue than an assessment issue.) However, even in its current implementation, the assessment system that is in place at Cogswell complies with CFR 4.1.

Programs are reviewed using a four-year review cycle. Each program has six learning outcomes and is expected to assess two different outcomes each year. Thus, all six PLOs are assessed over a three-year span. This is followed by a yearlong review of the program, after which the four-year cycle is repeated (CFR 2.7). Assessment data have triggered discussions regarding incremental program changes, such as possible as revisions to course prerequisites. Assessment data have also identified resource gaps that may have negatively impacted student learning, such as software and professional development needs (CFR 4.3). Findings to date
appear to have focus more often on refining assessment instruments than on making substantive changes to programs and to the institution itself, though it has resulted in some specific interventions based on the data produced. The team sees the focus on instruments as a necessary calibration exercise to a fully-functioning LOA program and even in its early stages, Cogswell’s LOA structures and processes place it ahead of many, if not most, institutions. Two program review cycles have been completed to date. The results of these have been useful to the programs involved and as the College continues to review other programs according to its schedule, using the insights gained so far, the result will be an APR review process that yields the full range expected benefits to the institution (CFRs 4.3, 4.4).

Since PLOs map directly onto ILOs, the four-year program review cycle automatically results in the assessment of all six institutional-level outcomes on a regular basis. This information is supplemented with ILO assessments from general education courses and with student learning outcomes data from co-curricular activities (the collection of which is in its infancy) (CFRs 2.7, 4.4). Cogswell intends to examine one ILO each year, beginning with the writing proficiency ILO, which is currently in the process of review (CFR 4.4).

The institution has put solid quality-assurance processes in place to collect, analyze, and interpret data. Data are disseminated among vice presidents, dean, program directors, chairs, faculty and other key administrators for further analysis and action. Cogswell is tracking results over time, and uses comparative data that had led to improvements in operational processes, especially as they relate to student experience and success (CFR 4.1).

A standardized set of data (e.g. assessments, program reviews, student progression, student retention and graduation) is gathered, analyzed, interpreted and disseminated to appropriate stakeholders, which guides their decision making process on further enhancing the quality of academic programs as well as student success (CFR 4.2).
The Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness oversees the assessment system. This individual exhibits considerable knowledge of the assessment process and is appreciative of its importance (CFR 4.2). She is a strong advocate for assessment, but also recognizes that assessment systems are unlikely to be sustained if they are implemented in a top-down manner; instead, they require buy-in at the faculty level (CFR 4.3). At present, training faculty in assessment has largely been accomplished by sending program directors to external workshops.

It is noteworthy that program directors have begun to assist adjunct faculty in conducting assessment. Furthermore, when programs attempted to assess signature assignments using just one rater, the challenges of this approach were quickly recognized and resulted in the formation of small teams of assessment raters. These developments suggest that an culture of assessment is beginning to grow within the College. It should also be noted that pushback from reluctant staff and/or faculty, which is common on many campuses, does not seem to be a problem at Cogswell. Faculty members generally recognize the need for assessment and many are fully engaged in the process. More faculty will undoubtedly embrace assessment as the institution moves towards greater reliance upon embedded assessments (CFRs 4.2, 4.3).

Program-level data are reviewed primarily by program directors, while institutional-level outcomes are reviewed by an Assessment Committee that includes program directors, general education faculty, and the librarian (who provides a link with Student Services) (CFRs 4.3, 4.4). The Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is perhaps the most vocal committee member, as her office coordinates data collection and analysis. The Assessment Committee enjoys direct input to the President. Student services staff would similarly benefit from a better understanding of expectations that students have placed upon them in the classroom (CFR 4.6).

Discussions have begun on the campus on how to increase student involvement in the institutional review process, which is a laudable goal (CFR 4.5). As noted, program advisory
committees also play a significant role in institutional review, primarily by identifying emerging
trends and marketplace needs, and by providing feedback on the performance of Cogswell graduates in the workplace. External membership on the PACs is impressive, ensuring that Cogswell has a direct line of communication with the field/industry (CFRs 4.5, 4.6).

Discussions are currently taking place at various levels within the institution from the Board of Trustees to the faculty level regarding strategic plans, particularly regarding the possible addition of new undergraduate programs (CFRs 4.6, 4.7). These discussions appear to engage a broad range of stakeholders and are often grounded in institutional data (CFR 4.5).

Cogswell’s shift of its organizational structure from non-profit to for-profit status creates an additional challenge because it is subject to increased regulation from the Department of Education and California’s higher education regulations. The institution is focused on regulatory compliance but will needs to insure that it is fully cognizant of the regulations and potential impacts of such requirements as those taking effect July 1, 2015, regarding the so-called “gainful employment” regulation. (CFR 4.7).

As noted above, Cogswell has established a detailed, thorough system for assessing students at the course, program, and institutional levels. The system includes direct and indirect measures, bolstered by rubrics. Calendars have been established for reviewing each program on a regular basis. In short, an assessment infrastructure is in place (CFR 2.7). However, this infrastructure has only been in place for a few years, and insufficient time has elapsed since its establishment to complete reviews of all programs, and then to put action items in place, thus, closing the loop. An “Assess the Assessment” phase might ensue at that point, to help the institution determine if the right assessment measure and tools are in place (CFRs 2.7, 4.1).

This should not be interpreted as a failure to collect outcomes evidence. To the contrary, data have been gathered and have already triggered change. Most of this change has been
focused on making adjustments to the assessment infrastructure itself, as is commonly the case when assessment is still in its infancy. However, some pedagogical and curricular changes have been motivated by assessment findings. These include making key changes to syllabi, which is especially important for programs that rely heavily on adjunct faculty (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

**Component 7: Sustaining financial viability and planning for the changing environment for higher education**

During this comprehensive evaluation of Cogswell, the institution’s long-term sustainability was of particular moment. The team for this 2014-2015 review closely examined Cogswell’s progress in relation to the factors identified by previous teams as relating directly to the sustainability and viability of the institution. Based on both the documentary evidence, as well as in interviews with key stakeholders, the institution has made noteworthy progress in most areas.

During the last several years, Cogswell’s viability has been a subject of focused concern on the part of WSCUC. Leading up to 2009, the institution’s enrollment had been in steady decline. Being a tuition-supported institution, the concomitant and predictable fall in revenues called into serious question the institution’s ability to continue operating. In the face of those risks, an investment group, Palm Ventures, stepped forward to provide an infusion of capital, along with expertise in financial management, the creation of a strategic vision to position the institution for the future, strong support for the academic enterprise, and enhanced capabilities in marketing and admissions. The WASC oversight process since that time has identified specific issues that relate to this component and that the team reviewed in depth and the findings are discussed below.

The independence, committee structure, and operational functioning of the College’s governing Board of Trustees have been of past concern because the proper functioning and
engagement of the institution’s governing body is critical in ensuring its sustainability. The team believes that any concerns related to the Board’s independence, engagement, or structure has been resolved (CFRs 1.5, 3.7, 3.9, 4.3, 4.6). The Board Chair, Dr. Charles Cook, was drawn from among the independent/private members. Dr. White is a highly experienced educator who understands the mission of the institution, is himself an expert on accreditation, and who by his long experience is able to give proper direction and guidance to the President. The independent/private members comprise a majority of members.

The Board functions in compliance with WSCUC’s policies on governance and its bylaws and committee structures have been closely modeled on AGB’s recommendations. Any issues related to the structure of committees have been resolved (CFR 3.9).

The Board is comprised of an impressive group of eminently qualified scholars (e.g. Dr. John Seely Brown), entrepreneurs, and business leaders who bring knowledge and experience in program areas offered by the institution. A review of meeting minutes provided evidence that the Board functions independently. This conclusion was further validated in discussions with the membership in which private board members indicated that they were actively engaged in oversight of the institutions, received appropriate communication regarding the institution’s results and plans, and were consulted regarding the strategic direction and key decisions (CFRs 3.7, 3.9). None felt that Palm Ventures, the entity that owns the institution, had ever compromised their independence or inappropriately attempted to influence the Board’s deliberations.

An in-depth discussion with the principal of Palm Ventures, Bradley Palmer, provided a high level of confidence that the company has a long-term commitment to the institution and is committed to providing the managerial support and financial resources necessary to support Cogswell as it pursues the agreed-upon vision of the Institution’s future. This frank exchange
covered the concerns of previous visiting teams and reports and provided an additional context through which to make an appropriate judgment regarding both the progress that has been made and the commitment to sustain and support the viability of the institution.

Past visits indicated the need for the College to demonstrate that it has a long-term vision that accounts for the changing higher education environment. Prompt implementation of the then newly adopted strategic planning process around that vision was encouraged. Further evidence was sought that longer-term financial and operational plans have been created and measured progress toward achievement the vision and the execution of the plan (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7).

The Cogswell community now shares a vision for the future that focuses on rebuilding the Institution around programs that are responsive to the technological, entrepreneurial environment in which they are geographically situated (CFR 4.6). The Institution’s vision relates to bringing together engineers and artists to create a synthesis that will uniquely prepare their students to succeed. Cogswell graduates are and will be employed in organizations, fill roles, and work with products that require both highly technical and highly creative skills. The Board and executive leadership believe that with proper strategic and operational planning and execution this vision can be realized, leading to a higher level of confidence in the long-term sustainability of the Institution (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

Significant progress has been made in operationalizing the five-year strategic plan approved by the Board of Trustees in 2012 and designed to give structure to achieving the vision discussed above. The Institution has now created specific initiatives around each of the goals, which were broadly concerned with the areas of expanding enrollment, focusing on financial stability, enhancing the student learning environment, program review and creation, faculty and staff support and development, and regulatory compliance. In each case, these initiatives have
been defined with specific actions, measures of success/achievement, accountabilities, and timelines. It will be incumbent upon the leadership of the institution to maintain a determined and unrelenting focus on the execution of these initiatives (CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

One area of the plan and planning process the team believes should be strengthened relates to establishing metrics-based responses to the expected growth in enrollment. For example, the institution is encouraged to create specific plans for adding specified faculty and staff positions as predetermined enrollment milestones have been achieved. The same is true of other institutional resources and systems that will require investment with student growth (CFRs 3.1, 3.7, 4.7). This will further help ensure the continued viability of the model by increasing the likelihood of student retention and success.

The organizational structure of the College has been of past concern. Particular emphasis has been focused on ensuring the staffing of key executive positions, and establishment of clear lines of authority and accountability across the executive staff and faculty (CFRs 3.1, 3.8, 3.10). While there has been some instability in executive staffing since the change of control in 2010, the team believes that the institution now has in place a strong President who can provide maturity and consistency in leadership. Dr. Deborah Snyder, who took over leadership of the institution just less than a year ago has, in a very short time earned the confidence and respect of the faculty, staff, and students (CFR 3.8). The President has created an environment that is more open and consensus-based and the college community has responded to this. Previously, she served as the VP for Academic Affairs and CAO. She retains the CAO role for the present time. In the context of the faculty-related challenges the institution faced, this decision has been supportable. In the near-term, however, Dr. Snyder has indicated that finding a qualified full-time CAO who can carry on her work on the academic side will be a key imperative.
In 2014 a highly qualified CFO joined Cogswell and his staff has been augmented with a new Controller with appropriate experience (CFR 3.8). These appointments have helped bring greater stability to the financial operations and the institution has seen marked improvement in its internal management and control processes. Cogswell’s last financial audit was for the 2013 fiscal year (which coincides with the calendar year), with no adverse findings. Auditors were beginning the process for last year (CFR 3.4).

In addition, the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is a highly qualified, experienced individual whose skills have resulted in improvements in institutional processes and the building of a learning outcomes assessment infrastructure that provides and will bring further benefits (CFR 4.2).

The institution has seen impressive results responding to entering students who need additional academic support services. Using both basic data analytics and faculty referrals, the institution has created an enhanced tutoring corps (CFR 2.13). The team commends this action and encourages the institution to continue strong support of this initiative in the belief that it will result in a significant improvement in student retention and success.

Areas of staffing that the team believes are in need of refocused support and attention relate to career services and academic counseling (CFR 2.13). Both are critical elements in the student life cycle and contribute to institutional sustainability. Academic counseling is currently a faculty responsibility. Based on feedback from students and student services data, the results of this structure are widely variable. The team believes that students will be better served if the Cogswell were to bifurcate the student advisement role. Faculty members should continue to mentor and guide students regarding their professional aspirations and program choices but course scheduling and graduation counseling may better be situated in student service staff trained specifically for that role. The institution has already made a foray into this with the
creation of a first-year advisor. Early reports were very positive but the indication is that staffing of the role is inadequate. Again, this kind of initiative can help move the institution further along the path of long-term sustainability by improving retention and graduation (CFRs 2.12, 2.13).

WSCUC teams and staff have indicated the need to see evidence of marked improvement in the institution’s financial stability, with a particular focus on reversing downward enrollment trends and increasing revenues. Additionally, added attention to internal business controls and systems was called for. Evidence of improvement would be found in budgets, audits, and financial statements (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8).

By the time the change of control took place in 2010, enrollment at the institution had dropped to 130 students and the institution was losing $4 million per year. Since that time a reversal of the downward trend has begun to occur and current indications are that this trend will continue into the next academic year (CFR 4.7). The institution has begun accomplishing this with the existing student population through a focus on improving its academic product, increasing levels of student service, using data to predict students who need additional support, and providing those students additional help (CFRs 2.13, 4.7). In terms of bolstering new student growth, the institution has redirected a significant portion of its marketing budget away from seeking B2C web-based marketing inquiries in favor of staffing an aggressive high school outreach effort, and also to investing more in building alliances with local high-tech organizations who employ or could employ Cogswell graduates. These personal outreach efforts have produced significant improvements. The institution now has a student body of 600+ students and is anticipating that it will break by the end of the 2014-2015 academic year.

The institution has not accomplished this by overspending on marketing relative to instruction-related resources—those ratios remain at levels considered appropriate compared to other like institutions (CFRs 1.6, 1.7, 1.8). It has also not been accomplished by relaxing
admission standards. The leadership of the admissions/enrollment function exhibits a strong commitment to helping prospective students explore whether or not the school is a good fit with their needs, interests, and abilities. Additionally, the team found that the admission department complies with both the spirit and letter of the “Program Integrity” regulations intended to ensure the transparency and integrity of the student admissions process (CFR 1.7).

The result of this turnaround in enrollment is, of course, an expected significant improvement in revenues and an improvement in the financial position of the institution. As mentioned previously in this section, the institution has also increased the level of professional staffing in the finance and financial services functions. This, in turn, has provided greater confidence in the integrity of Cogswell’s business processes and internal controls.

There is evidence that the faculty’s voice in the institution has become stronger with the arrival Dr. Snyder in the CAO (and now the President) role. The faculty does exercise control over the program content and the learning objectives at all levels. Academic departments were involved in developing the assessment framework that the institution is implementing and in participation in Program Reviews. The role of the faculty at Cogswell is becoming stronger (CFR 3.9). Care should be taken as the institution realizes its enrollment goals to make concrete the commitment of resources to add faculty members in disciplines that are growing.

Additional strong focus by the institution’s leadership is indicated in the area of formalizing and codifying faculty policies, development, and evaluation. This is one holdover from previous reports that continues to require attention. The team recommends that attention be focused on improving the processes that will lead to an even stronger adjunct faculty (CFRs 3.2, 3.3). This will be critical because of the competition for qualified candidates in a very competitive employment market and who represent rapidly evolving fields of professional study. The institution’s focus should include recruitment, assessment, selection, onboarding and
training, evaluation, and inclusion in learning outcomes assessment (CFR 3.2). While adjunct faculty members the team met with feel that their voices are welcomed and that, to the extent of their time available, they have opportunities to have them heard, the institution may consider further formalizing their representation in the governance structure (CFR 3.3).

The conclusion of visiting team members is that Cogswell Polytechnic College continues to move toward a more sustainable position and has made notable progress in most areas. Continuing to execute its strategic plan, to monitor and rapidly adapt to a quickly evolving external environment, and to increase the visibility of the institution will increase the likelihood that Cogswell will remain a viable institution that continues to contribute to the public good and prepare students for meaningful lives and work.

SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

Commendations

1. Cogswell Polytechnic College has demonstrated noteworthy progress in reversing past downward enrollment trends and in strengthening financial stability. The institution has developed a strategic vision and plan that call for achievable long-term growth in programs and student enrollment. Fully executing this plan will support and enhance the sustainability of the institution as it pursues its unique mission.

2. The institution’s Board of Trustees is comprised of noted thought leaders, scholars, and entrepreneurs in the fields of study taught by the institution. Its members are fully engaged in their oversight of Cogswell and willingly lend their knowledge and expertise to defining the vision, mission, and values in support of the public good. The owner of the institution recognizes and supports the independence of the Board of Trustees and is committed to providing the long-term resources that will support achievement of the mission.
3. Under the direction of President Snyder, an organizational culture characterized by openness and consensus building has emerged. This positive culture is in evidence among the faculty, staff, and student population and is helping to drive improvement in academic quality and student service. The staff of the institution shares a common vision and demonstrates passion in helping student succeed.

4. The institution offers academic programs that respond to market needs in rapidly evolving fields. Representatives from the technology sector staff Program Advisory Committees in order to help the institution maintain currency in its program offerings.

5. The full-time faculty of the institution is dedicated and passionate. Faculty members are recognized contributors in their fields and bring a wealth of industry expertise.

6. The team recognizes the distinctive focus in the institution on integrating the disciplines of engineering and art and on bringing faculty members from those disciplines together with students who collaborate to produce meaningful, relevant projects. Student projects—studio products and portfolios—give evidence of the rich synthesis of this education experience. Cogswell graduates are represented in top technology organizations.

7. The institution is fostering a culture of assessment. It has developed and is implementing a comprehensive and well-designed learning outcomes assessment infrastructure that integrates learning outcomes measurement at the institutional, program, and course levels. The institution is reminded to continue implementing assessment cycles (“closing the loop”) that yield meaningful data-driven actions and lead to continuous improvement of student learning and achievement.

8. Cogswell has implemented data-analytic processes to identify and monitor at-risk students and provide appropriate interventions intended to increase student retention and success. The institution will further benefit by introducing more sophisticated automation to this process.
9. The institution’s admission and enrollment strategy and practices demonstrate integrity, as well as a sincere focus on helping educate prospective students to make rational decisions about reaching their educational goals.

**Recommendations**

1. As enrollment levels rise in accordance with the strategic plan, the institution should create specific plans and processes for the provision of human and financial resources including facilities, academic leadership, organizational staffing, information systems, and process infrastructure to help ensure and advance the viability of the Institution.

2. The team recommends a thorough and collaborative review of faculty policies, processes, and practices to ensure that these are aligned and consistently applied.

3. The institution employs a number of seasoned and passionate adjunct faculty members who feel a sense of investment in the institution. The team recognizes the unique staffing challenge related to competition for qualified, current instructors in the local market and the rapidly evolving fields Cogswell teaches. As the institution grows, however, special attention should be paid to developing policies and systematic practices that formalize the selection, onboarding, scheduling, training, and evaluation of adjunct faculty members. Members of the adjunct faculty need to be integrated into learning outcomes assessment practices. Policies should include attention to appropriate time frames for course scheduling and teaching loads.

4. At the present time, online course offerings represent a small proportion of total courses taught. As the emphasis on online offerings increases, the institution should focus on best practice when designing online content and on implementing course requirements that will produce equivalence in student effort and learning outcomes.
5. Career services now represent a more important part of the institution’s responsibility to students. The institution should place an increased focus on career services that reach larger numbers of students and should look for means by which to integrate career services into academic advisement. The pool of accomplished alumni provides an excellent resource for mentoring, internships, and shadowing opportunities that will enrich the student experience and student success, as well as contributing to their career prospects. Enhanced data gathering efforts on student placement will be critical in order to satisfy regulatory requirements.

APPENDICES

See attached Federal Compliance Forms.
OVERVIEW

There are four forms thatWSCUC uses to address institutional compliance with some of the federal regulations affecting institutions and accrediting agencies:

1 – Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form
2 – Marketing and Recruitment Review Form
3 – Student Complaints Form
4 – Transfer Credit Policy Form

During the Accreditation Visit, teams complete these four forms and add them as an appendix to the Team Report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about any of the matters in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

Credit Hour - §602.24(f)

The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution’s assignment of credit hours.

(1) The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-
   (i) It reviews the institution's-
       (A) Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution
           awards for courses and programs; and
       (B) The application of the institution’s policies and procedures to its programs and coursework; and
       (ii) Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution’s assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly
           accepted practice in higher education.

(2) In reviewing and evaluating an institution’s policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments, an accrediting agency may use sampling or other methods in the evaluation.

Credit hour is defined by the Department of Education as follows:
A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Credit Hour Policy.

Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)

Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor’s degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master’s degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

Rev 12/2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy on credit hour</td>
<td>Is this policy easily accessible?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where is the policy located? Catalogue</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour</td>
<td>Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution adhere to this procedure?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet</td>
<td>Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses</td>
<td>How many syllabi were reviewed? 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</td>
<td>What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Online and hybrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? Bachelor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)? GE, DAT, DAA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments: Reviewed all of the 8 courses that college gave access to; 3 syllabi uploaded in courses; only 15 sections, total, running currently in an online format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</td>
<td>How many syllabi were reviewed? 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What kinds of courses? Digital animation, sketching</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? Bachelor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)? DAT, DAA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)</td>
<td>How many programs were reviewed? 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What kinds of programs were reviewed? DAT, GDD, Engineering, DAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? Bachelor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)? Digital Animation, Game development, digital audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length?  x YES  ☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM
Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaterialReviewed</th>
<th>Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal regulations</strong></td>
<td>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? Comments: • Admission requirements and statement of nondiscrimination are clearly stated on the website and listed in the Catalog. • Admission requirements for transfer students are clearly stated (print and online). • Financial aid related information is clearly stated and presented (print and online). • A very detailed digital marketing plan is in place (including social media outreach).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree completion and cost</td>
<td>Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree? Comments: • The institution provides information about the overall cost of each degree program (print and online). • The institution provides information about the typical length of time to degree (online).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers and employment</td>
<td>Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? Comments: • The institution may consider strengthening the information presented on the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified. • The institution provides information about the employment of its graduates. It could further strengthen the richness of employment information gathered by capturing information found on LinkedIn and administering First Destination Survey.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Larisa Genin
Date: 3-18-15
3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy on student complaints</td>
<td>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The institution has a clear policy and formal procedure for dealing with student complaints, which is presented in the Catalog and the Student Handbook.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dean of Students is responsible for adhering to the policy and formal procedure on handling student complaints.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process(es)/procedure</td>
<td>Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students complaints are addressed by the Dean of Students who engages appropriate individuals based on the complaint (e.g. the Dean of the College is engaged in academic related complaints).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dean of Students reviews the complaints, determines action plans, convenes appropriate taskforce/committee and follows up with the student to reach final decision.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Associated Student Body meets with the President on monthly basis to voice student concerns on different matters. Then, the President follows up on how raised concerns have been addressed or planned to be resolved.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution adhere to this procedure?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records</td>
<td>Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? Where?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)
See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Larisa Genin
Date: 3-18-15
4 – TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Credit Policy(s)</td>
<td>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? Is the policy publically available? If so, where? Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education?</td>
<td>Yes, website, catalog Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Cogswell has established policies for awarding students with credit for courses taken at other institutions, and thus complies with the federal transfer credit requirements. Information regarding the process for evaluating transfer credits from other institutions is detailed in the catalog and on the Cogswell website, but some of this information is outdated. Searching for the term “articulation” on the Cogswell website yields pages for the Fire Science program, which has been discontinued. Similarly, the Cogswell website and catalog list Cogswell equivalents for various CLEP subjects. However, the Cogswell course listed as equivalent to the CLEP Chemistry subject is CHEM 112 (Hazardous Materials), which is not currently offered. Furthermore, Cogswell has – or is in the process of establishing – articulation agreements with several community colleges in the area. At present, only one such agreement (with Olone College) is listed on the Cogswell website; updating the website with a full list of all articulation agreements would undoubtedly be very helpful to potential transfer students.

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

(1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and

(2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Harold Stanislaw
Date: 3-11-15