

# CLARK COLLEGE ACADEMIC PLAN



April 2016

While Clark College's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan describes an institutional vision and a shared destination for our collective work, the Academic Plan describes the path, within the guided pathway framework, to that destination for our educational programs.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While Clark College's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan describes an institutional vision and a shared destination for our collective work, the Academic Plan describes the path to guiding individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals, in service to the community. The Academic Plan interprets the college mission literally, adopting guided pathways as the framework for our educational programs.

A "program" refers to any sequence of study that culminates in a degree and certificate. In some cases, programs are organized entirely within particular departments, such as the Certificate of Proficiency in Automotive Technology. In many others, however, a program represents an aggregate of student learning, one to which many departments contribute. An example of this is the Associate of Arts degree, which requires students to demonstrate their learning across a host of different disciplines.

Organizationally, instruction at Clark is divided into units, divisions, and departments. In terms of its impact on student lives, however, the college's instructional efforts are best understood, and most effectively pursued, as a collective, collaborative endeavor. In establishing programs as a base unit of our institutional effectiveness, we acknowledge the shared enterprise of our work as educators.

The Academic Plan, then, is most often expressed in relation to program-level learning. The Plan itself consists of six goals, with 13 intended results. Collectively, these goals and results articulate a set of college-wide priorities in the delivery of instructional programs within the framework of guided pathways. Clark's progress in attaining each result will be tracked via the Program Improvement Process as well as annual assessment of mission fulfillment, with annual updates circulated to the college community. Throughout the plan, partnerships are identified to assist in the attainment of each intended result.

Those goals and results are as follows:

### **Goal 1: Establish well-defined pathways for all degree and certificate programs.**

INTENDED RESULT: All degree and certificate programs have identified entry pathways, such as from pre-college coursework – including transitional studies, K-12, credit for prior learning, corrections, and transfer from other institutions of higher education.

INTENDED RESULT: All degrees and certificates are arranged into a partially- or fully-guided pathway.

These pathways are defined as follows:

- Fully-guided pathway – Students are admitted to the program as a cohort and proceed through the same sequence of courses until program completion.
- Partially-guided pathway – Students enter program and complete the same sequence of courses with a limited number of elective courses allowed in combination with required courses.

INTENDED RESULT: All degrees and certificates have identified pathway destinations upon successful completion of the program, such as employment and articulation agreements with transfer institutions.

Whether internal or external, transfer or employment, all programs will articulate pathway destinations as the ultimate outcome of the student learning they provide.

## **Goal 2: Align program offerings with regional workforce and community needs.**

INTENDED RESULT: Create and maintain a viable mix of programs, including emerging programs.

A viable mix of programs consists of:

- What the community needs as determined by labor market analysis, job and gainful employment potential, transfer potential, and competition analysis (considering whether other programs are offered locally).
- What the college can afford as determined by calculating direct program costs, such as equipment and faculty and space. This requires a balance of incurring emerging program costs and cutting the equivalent costs of programs.

To determine and create such a mix, the Instructional Planning Team (IPT) will take a leadership role in instructional planning. This planning involves conducting an annual analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of programs informed by workforce information (qualitative and quantitative), student success, educational competitors, funding trends, and existing program viability data.

Once the data has been gathered, IPT will convene a subgroup(s) to further assess the potential emerging programs and develop recommendations regarding whether to offer them. Part of the subcommittee's recommendation to IPT will be based on staying at an established break-even point for educational program costs. A viable program mix that

includes emerging programs will be based on a combination of both community need and program cost.

INTENDED RESULT: Improve existing programs.

The Program Improvement Process (PIP) will be revised as a system of checks and balances in the implementation of the academic plan. These revisions will ensure the following:

- Faculty is well-represented.
- Programs will be reviewed over a three-year period based on student enrollment, student learning, student outcomes such as employment or transfer related information, labor market outlook, guided pathways including sequenced courses, identification of entry pathways and pathway destinations, utilization of active learning strategies, partnerships within the community, and degree-seeking students' ability to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity.

INTENDED RESULT: All programs implement at least one action to improve student learning based on the results of outcomes assessment.

To achieve this intended result, each degree and certificate must:

- Maintain assessable program learning outcomes,
- Complete the assessment cycle for each of its program learning outcomes,
- Map assignments and courses to program learning outcomes, and
- Base curricular improvements on assessment results.

The Outcomes Assessment Committee, in partnership with PIP, will ensure, assist and support this work.

### **Goal 3: Improve student preparedness.**

INTENDED RESULT: Increase the proportion of students prepared to succeed in college-level work by engaging in the following evidence-based practices:

- Evaluate and improve placement procedures.
- Expand I-BEST.

- Expand enrollment in College 101.
- Increase the number of students entering college-level math courses and decrease the time needed to attain preparedness for college-level math.
- Assess and improve technology preparedness.
- Expand and Redesign College in the High School and Tech Prep offerings.

**Goal 4: Develop physical and virtual spaces that engage and inspire all learners.**

INTENDED RESULT: Create and sustain physical and virtual learning spaces that accommodate, facilitate, and inspire individual and group learning.

This intended result links to the Social Equity Plan in identifying characteristics and best practices of universal design for common physical spaces, physical classroom design, virtual spaces, and virtual class design.

INTENDED RESULT: Offer at least one transfer program and at least one career and technical program that can be completed in eLearning modalities.

This intended result calls for two degrees to be fully offered in eLearning: AA-DTA and AAT NTEC.

**Goal 5: Integrate active learning strategies.**

INTENDED RESULT: All programs ensure that those courses that support student mastery of program-level learning outcomes integrate one or more active learning strategies.

This intended result defines active learning strategies as experiential learning, collaborative learning, interdisciplinary approaches, project-based learning, and problem-based learning. The Program Improvement Process will assess through faculty self-report that the teaching and learning in courses that support program outcomes use active learning strategies.

INTENDED RESULT: Offer at least one competency-based education degree or certificate.

Competency Based Education (CBE) is an outcomes-based approach that defines the competencies that a student should master by the end of a course or program and awards credit based on the students' demonstration of the learning outcomes. This

approach differs from traditional models of higher education because it is not tied to a required amount of contact hours or student seat time. Automotive Technology will be the first competency-based program that Clark will consider offering.

INTENDED RESULT: Establish a college-wide theme to promote integrative and active learning.

This intended result calls for the college to establish a common theme for the whole college. The theme is expected to be the same for the duration of the academic plan. Activities will need to be supported, such as a common book/read, dedicated website with materials, and a planning team of the Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee.

**Goal 6: Infuse the study of power, privilege, and inequity throughout the curriculum.**

INTENDED RESULT: All Clark College degree programs prepare students to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity.

This intended result calls for the creation of a temporary (two year) faculty liaison to work with program faculty to revise their curricula as needed. Assessment of this result will be embedded into the Program Improvement Process review criteria.



## INTRODUCTION

For two and a half years, Clark College has been involved in the development of its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. The process has involved the entire college community, engaging stakeholders, collecting feedback, and conducting research to determine how the college will best meet the needs of its community and its students in the years ahead.

The adoption of the Strategic Plan in the spring of 2015 is the end result of thoughtful, sustained reflection on who we are as an institution and the focus of our work. Simply put, the mission of our work shifted from preparing students to be college-ready to transforming the college to be student-ready. We recognize, for example, that our students are increasingly diverse (a 10% increase in students of color over the past eight years). Many are the first in their families to attend college (70% first generation). Two in five (40%) identify as low-income, with household income below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, and one in twenty self-identify as living with a disability. Among first-term students, four in five students identify with one or more systemically non-dominant groups, with almost half (46%) identifying with two or more groups.

Our increasingly diverse students also possess an urgent need for educational attainment. Within Clark College's service district (Clark, Skamania and Western Klickitat Counties), only one-third of adults 25 years or older have an associate's degree or higher. That figure compares to just 28% of workers with postsecondary education nationally in 1973. At the same time, it is projected that 65% of the jobs in the workforce will require some type of post-secondary higher education by 2020 (American Association of Community Colleges, 2014).

At the same time, academic transfer students who seek to pursue their studies at 4-year institutions fall frequently short of their goals. Nationally, 80% of community college students declare an intention to pursue a bachelor's degree, yet only 25% of these students successfully transfer (Community College Resource Center, 2015). Moreover, students' goal to transfer is often driven by their interests in careers, leading directly into the workforce.

The needs that the college must meet, then, are set to increase dramatically in the next five years. Clark will attempt to meet such a challenge at a time of unprecedented reform in higher education. In the past twenty years, colleges and universities have been subjected to increased scrutiny. Graduation and retention rates, student debt, demonstrable evidence of attained knowledge and skills – these and related measures are the focal points as calls for accountability mount from both consumers and government regulators.

In short, Clark – like other community colleges – is being asked to provide more, for more, and to do so with better efficiency. In light of these related social, economic, and regulatory pressures, it becomes clear that the mission, core themes, objectives, and values of the new Strategic Plan represent not a culmination of the college's work, but merely a new beginning. The challenges before us are clear. Thanks to the Strategic Plan, so are the principles that will guide our path ahead. Just one question remains: "How do we move forward?"

This is where the Academic Plan comes in. If the Strategic Plan answers the question "*What* will Clark look like as an institution in five years?", the Academic Plan answers "*How* will we transform ourselves in order to make Vision 2020 a reality?" In other words, the Strategic Plan gives us a destination, but the Academic Plan describes the path to reach it.

The Plan itself consists of six Goals:

1. Establish well-defined pathways for all degree and certificate programs,
2. Align program offerings with regional workforce and community needs,
3. Improve student preparedness,
4. Develop physical and virtual spaces that engage and inspire all learners,
5. Integrate active learning strategies, and
6. Infuse the study of power, privilege, and inequity throughout the curriculum.

While these goals are not placed in order of priority, it should be noted that the college's achievement of Goals 2-6 will support the work of guiding our students successfully through well-defined pathways. Regardless of their circumstance, every degree- and certificate-seeking student who enrolls at Clark declares their pursuit of an educational goal. Our contract with these students is to ensure that, collectively, we have done everything possible to make this educational attainment a reality.

Further, each goal is associated with one or more Intended Results. The broad and inclusive vision articulated by the Strategic Plan finds a deliberate and specific expression through each of these objectives.

The Academic Plan remains closely linked to the Strategic Plan, in many cases borrowing the exact wording. The same input that created the Strategic Plan – combined with the results of the college's Environmental Scan, Workforce Gap Analysis, and Academic Planning forums – provided the Academic Planning Team with the material necessary to assemble this blueprint for action. Put simply, this is *everyone's* Academic Plan. The combined contributions of the college community shaped it, just as the community's combined energy and effort will make it a reality.

Ultimately, the collective effort of the college-wide conversations that produced Clark's Strategic and Academic Plans provide us now with the only means to achieve that vision. In isolation, it's been shown that even the most dynamic initiatives and impactful practices soon wither and fade. Through sustained collaborative effort, however, community colleges are transforming their practices – and the lives of their students – for the better. Joint ownership, constant review, and continuous improvement will be required to make the Academic Plan a reality. Its success will allow the college to fulfill our commitment to our students and enhance their learning in the years ahead.

*“The first, as well as the most important thing I’ll be taking away from this class is the first time in my adult life that I feel as though I have some sort of direction as far as any career path. With all of the things I’ve learned about myself, skills, interests, and values, I finally have somewhere to start.”*

## GOAL 1: Establish well-defined pathways for all degree and certificate programs.

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan describes Clark College's mission in the following way: "Clark College, in service to the community, guides individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals." The first goal of the Academic Plan focuses on a crucial word in that statement: "guides."

Creating pathways, and engaging students within pathways, is the most direct, effective, and efficient strategy to provide such guidance and fulfill our institutional mission. Pathways are sequential, intentionally integrated learning experiences that lead students to meet program learning outcomes and achieve their educational and professional goals. They exist as a partnership between the college and its students, with clearly defined expectations for both (American Association of Community Colleges, 2014).

Historically, community colleges have overlooked student guidance in favor of student choice. With a primary focus on access to large numbers of students with diverse needs and goals, they have offered students a wealth of choices and opportunities to pursue their education. Another philosophy motivating this practice is one that upholds the value of exploration in a student's education.

However, in the last few years the national dialogue about community colleges has honed in on a paradox. This "cafeteria" model of education, which is intended to increase opportunity and access, has the contrary effect of hindering student learning and success. The glut of choices without clear guidance causes students to experience confusion, miss out on critical student services, and make costly decisions that can impact their financial aid standing. As a result, they experience frustration and drop out before their educational goals are met.

As a result, Clark is not unique in the fact that, among first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students, only about 25% complete a degree within three years. However, pathways offer a remedy. A growing number of colleges are responding to the challenge of student completion by redesigning degree programs with a clear path to completion at their heart. These pathways map out integrated sequences of courses and support services, and are grounded in clear learning outcomes that are aligned with next steps in students' education or careers.

*"I have learned that I am not lost in my career choices. I am now more driven to finish my schooling so I can jump into my new career."*

Faculty collaboratively design engaging, learning-focused educational plans for students, using their expertise in both subject matter and student learning to scaffold and integrate learning throughout the degree program. For academic transfer degrees, these guided pathways do not involve separate or distinct program learning outcomes, but rather a directive method to achieve those same learning goals. Just as with any program, faculty will have the authority to structure and assess these sequences of study.

*"I started at the dealer just parking cars, now I'm getting to work on them; diagnosing and repairing. It's helped me grow."*

At the same time, the college will need to work collaboratively together and with external organizations, particularly social services agencies, to ensure comprehensive wraparound support is provided as students enter, progress through, and exit these pathways. To that end, faculty will be supported in this work by advising, career services, and other service providers in order to embed appropriate supports, as well as include the additional training for the greater need of faculty advisors. As all of the degrees and certificates are arranged in pathways – with a deliberate set of sequenced courses – the advising and career services models will need to be different. Career exploration as students enter the college will be necessary for students to choose the right pathways. Advising services will need support students within the pathway as well as help transition students to another pathway if they change their minds. Fundamentally, the pathway model rests on the premise that educational professionals are better equipped to plan learning experiences at the college than are its students, and that students deserve the best possible opportunity to achieve meaningful degree completions.

A guided pathway does not necessarily mean eliminating all elements of choice from a student's educational experience. It does, however, recognize that providing more directive guidance for students results in a variety of benefits. The advantages of the pathway model are many, including increased completion rates and reduced cost per completion. Early research on the pathway model, in fact, has shown large increases in degree completion rates. For example, ASAP (Accelerated Study in Associate Programs) at City University of New York nearly doubled the percentage of developmental education students who completed an associate's degree: 40% of a study's program group, compared with 22% of the control group. Another example of astonishing results is the Tennessee Technology Center model. These Centers are highly structured and student choice is very limited; students' credit load and schedules are prescribed. Coursework is integrated and students receive embedded support such as advising. These Centers have achieved a completion rate of 80%. A pioneer in pathways, Florida State University, which began using program maps and required advising in the early 2000s, achieved a completion rate gain of 15 percentage points after implementing this model (Jenkins and Cho, 2014).

Of course, the costs are not negligible. A CCRC study acknowledges a significant up-front cost and increased overall operating costs. However, the same study concludes that pathways increase efficiency by reducing colleges' cost per degree completion. (Belfield, Crosta, & Jenkins, 2013) Evidence supports that the accompanying gains in enrollment (through retention) and performance (learning, retention, and completion) are worth the costs. This much has been demonstrated by those Clark programs that have already instituted a guided pathway for students, such as the nursing and pharmacy technology programs. Implementing pathways has been proven to increase student completion rates and decrease the cost of attainment.

The remainder of this section, then, provides a framework for planning and implementing the pathway model at Clark College. The pathways appear here in their three-part structure: entry pathways, which lead into Clark; college pathways, which are made up of the degree and certificate programs a student takes here at the college; and pathway destinations, those "next steps" for a student once he or she has completed the educational opportunities offered here. Attending to each of these pathways will allow us to simplify students' choices and shift the focus to meaningful, high-quality completions. As a whole, pathways provide a promising opportunity for Clark to fulfill its mission of guiding individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals.

**INTENDED RESULT: All degree and certificate programs have identified entry pathways, such as from pre-college coursework – including transitional studies, K-12, credit for prior learning, corrections, and transfer from other institutions of higher education.**

### *Description*

Students come to Clark from many places: high school, the workforce, adult basic education, other colleges, social services, etc. Each population has a unique frame of reference that may influence their expectation of how to navigate the college system. By identifying entry pathways for our students, we ensure that they experience a meaningful transition into the college that fully prepares them for success.

*"When I signed up for this class, I knew who I was, what I loved to do, some of my skills, and some skills I definitely lack. After completing this course, I am now able to understand why I do/prefer certain things, how others view me (how I come across) and, most importantly, what to do with my prior knowledge. This class gave me the push I needed to start down a career path."*

### *Process & Resources*

To increase success, each degree and certificate program group will create a pathway into the program. This academic plan calls for each degree and certificate program group to create the following six entry pathways: transitional studies, precollege, K-12, credit for prior learning, veterans, and Department of Corrections.

#### *Transitional Studies*

The purpose of Transitional Education (traditionally referred to as ABE/GED/ESL) is to prepare adult learners to transition to college programs, so they earn a certificate or degree to obtain a family-wage job. Our HS21 program provides our students the opportunity to earn a high school diploma, pass the GED exam, and improve reading/writing/math skills for college transition. Our ESL program now requires that all ESL students be on a pathway to college. Even at our beginning ESL levels, curriculum is contextualized in the content areas of career and higher education. Our IBEST cohorts are the ideal transition to college classes because the successful team-teaching model provides students the much-needed support in reading, writing, and math while they are taking their first college courses.

To achieve the intended result of an entry pathway into Clark from Transitional Studies, the Transitional Studies division will partner with departments throughout the college to provide evidence-based pathways from literacy to college and career readiness. It will provide a gateway course to enhance student success and expand Credit for Prior Learning/Experience to provide HS21 credit for native languages, physical education, work experience, etc. For current students, the department will increase technology access and develop flexible ESL/CAP offerings, which may include on-line, hybrid or weekend classes.

The department will revise curriculum and program regularly based on research, state mandates, and job demand and workforce trends. It will support professional development in the areas of team-teaching, Reading Apprenticeship, Career and Readiness Standards, and other SBCTC initiatives. It will expand learning communities, as well as research and develop appropriate Academic IBEST and Professional-Technical IBEST cohorts and formalize the process to select and train faculty, select content courses, and build schedules.

Transitional Studies will continue to collaborate with internal partners, vertically aligning HS21+ Integrated English and math courses with English and Math Department outcomes and the Washington State College and Career Readiness Standards. In addition, Transitional Studies will continue to work closely with Student Affairs and strengthen community partnerships with local providers to assist with students' life issues.

For the Intensive English Language Program (IELP), which welcomes international students of all English proficiency levels, college readiness skills are key components of the curriculum, especially the integrated classes. Upon successful completion of the IELP Upper Advanced Writing class, students transition directly into English 101 and other college courses.

### *Pre-College*

Pre-college faculty and staff will define and promote college-level pathways tailored to students' academic majors and/or career and technical program requirements and align pre-college curriculum to those pathways. They will improve and expand academic and career pathway advising to help students choose pathways that support their goals and achieve even higher goals. Clearly-defined metrics must be developed and used to measure student progress and faculty and staff will engage in sustained work to bring improvements in success to scale. The Math department will extend reforms to improve opportunities for students interested in a path from professional and technical programs to baccalaureate programs.

### *K-12*

The Clark College service district includes more than 15 public school districts, and more than 60% of Clark's new students annually come directly from high schools. Many of these students experience what amounts to a guided pathway through the course of their K-12 careers, even if they don't realize it. Ensuring entry pathways for these students will provide consistency and smooth their transition to the college level. High school as an entry point for an educational pathway throughout college will require alignment of high school and college curriculum, clearly stated and aligned program learning outcomes, as well as sustained partnerships in all levels of the organizations, e.g., staff, faculty, administrators, and governing boards.

Currently, Clark College has begun work on partnering with K-12 to help increase the proportion of students placing into college-level classes. To effect a smooth transition, faculty, administration (primarily the Vice President of Instruction and the college President), as well as the governing boards meet on a regular basis. There are many components of a transition, but the experience in total has yet to be addressed holistically. The following recommendations will help align students matriculating from high school following a pathway into enrollment at Clark.

- Clark will instill a community culture that emphasizes college readiness. This entails reaching out to all levels of K-12 education through, for example, K-12/community college faculty summits. It also involves expanding early



counseling on college options, financial aid, and opportunities to earn college credit while in high school.

- Clark will align expectations and curricula. Specific expectations for college and career readiness will be communicated to middle and high school counselors in order to provide clear options for students seeking college entry. Clark will work with K-12 systems to create seamless pathways with aligned standards and learning outcomes.
- Clark will support professional development by aligning teacher preparation and development programs with Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Cross-sector professional development opportunities will be made available to board members, faculty, and counselors.
- Clark will implement early intervention by supporting early assessment (e.g., college placement assessments in sophomore or junior year of high school). Clark will also support interventions (e.g., academic skill building and student success courses for high school students) and inform middle and high school faculty about college readiness predictors.
- Clark will expand dual/concurrent enrollment and early college high school programs, as well as promote strategies that enable students to earn college credit and even associate degrees while still in high school.
- Clark will establish a K-12 office that centralizes and integrates Running Start, Tech Prep, College in the High School, and other K-12 partnerships. In particular, this office will ensure that guided pathways align with Running Start requirements.
- Clark will provide assistance to K-12 educators to develop predictive models of persistence through K-12. Clark will establish institutional research partnerships and share methods for evaluating programs.
- Clark will organize K-12 and community college faculty discussions that link research and data to program design. This will allow the college to share new models and tools, such as competency-based credentials and learning analytics.
- Clark will strengthen uses of data to track success. This will involve defining and tracking metrics, creating data systems that facilitate longitudinal data analysis, and working with high schools to identify and track college readiness predictors.
- Clark will assess postsecondary readiness. This work will require that the college identify and assess predictors of postsecondary progress and success, using Voluntary Framework of Accountability metrics, and working with secondary schools to benchmark, evaluate, monitor, and share disaggregated data on college readiness.
- Clark will reimagine and reallocate resources, assessing the cost and efficacy of interventions to support data-informed allocation and reallocation of resources.

### *Credit for Prior Learning*

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, “By 2018, nearly two-thirds of all American jobs will require a postsecondary certificate or degree, and that means adding 15-20 million educated employees to the workforce by 2025.” In order to effectively serve the Clark College service district, the college will need to partner with community organizations in a variety of ways to create targeted access points into a pathway for college completion.

These targeted access points will focus on partnerships with community organizations serving disadvantaged populations (e.g., social service agencies), as well as organizations likely to benefit from the educational program pathway clusters offered by the college. The partnerships will result in a clear path for entry, with explicit expectations and opportunities that balance the anticipated needs and experience of potential students. Examples of these may include credit for prior learning, accessibility for incumbent workers, regulations of public assistance, etc.

Credit for Prior Learning is instrumental in recruiting adult students and adding momentum to their progress, boosting their commitment, and decreasing their time to degree completion. Awarding credit for the knowledge they bring to Clark College is not only validating, but allows them to use learning acquired in the workplace, through military experience, or through life experience to reduce the expense of college and to expedite their progress through college. As a bridge from community organizations, businesses, and military experience to Clark College programs, Credit for Prior Learning substantiates the learning students bring with them, providing a means to translate industry certifications into direct course equivalents and allowing adult learners an opportunity to demonstrate their learning through course challenges.

To enhance and promote its Credit for Prior Learning entry points, Clark will collaborate with community and business partners to identify additional industry certification crosswalks for awarding direct equivalency credit. The college will also review and expand CLEP test direct equivalency credit outcomes, as well as review and develop additional direct equivalencies for military experience by utilizing the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations. Additional marketing for Credit for Prior Learning must be undertaken, including outreach in adult student recruitment.

### *Veterans*

Veteran populations come to Clark College with specific needs as well as a wide range of skills and education that are not credentialed. This population also comes to Clark College with specialized financial assistance. Clark College’s Veterans Resource Center supports

students from their entry throughout their completion at Clark in a variety of ways. The U.S. Veterans Administration is a potential entry pathway into programs at Clark College.

### *Department of Corrections*

Clark College offers programs of study at the Larch Correction Facility. Offenders can earn short-term certificates in business and automotive, as well as transitional studies coursework. In addition, Clark College has partnered with the Department of Corrections to offer offenders a college readiness course that was co-created by the education departments within the Department of Corrections. In addition, the college is working to develop a plan for the 2016-2017 academic year that would allow the college to start offering either an English or Math pathway for offenders as well as revise the Business pathway as a more direct entry to Clark once the offender is released. The college has a lot of opportunity to develop direct entry pathways into Clark's college programs for released offenders.

### *Economic and Community Development*

Economic and Community Development (ECD) engages unemployed and incumbent workers in corporate education opportunities and offerings. The offerings serve a variety of purposes, such as but not limited to providing up-to-date skill-sets, real-time education aligned with changes in industry, and educational opportunities to support promotions and upward mobility in careers. Therefore, ECD provides a clear opportunity as an entry pathway to get students acclimated to Clark College, boosting the confidence of individuals to become a degree-seeking college students, and preparing students for the college experience.

The development and success of these various efforts to identify entry pathways into the certificate and degree programs offered by Clark will be monitored by the college's Instructional Planning Team, through the Program Improvement Process subcommittee.

### *Partnerships*

- **Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges:** The State Board sponsors conferences and promotes state-wide sharing of best practices related to developing entry pathways.
- **K-12 Stakeholders:** Clark will collaborate with local K-12 groups to align curriculum and enhance academic preparation for college.
- **Student Affairs, Assessment Center:** Given the variations in student preparation prior to enrolling at Clark, the Assessment Center will play a key role in applying multiple measures to collect evidence for appropriate student placement.

- **Clark Instructional Departments:** In particular, entry pathways will be established in part through the ongoing coordination of Transitional Studies, IELP, English, and Math department initiatives.
- **Public and Non-Profit Organizations:** Partnerships with public organizations, such as WorkSource, and non-profit organizations, such as Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council, are key to providing access into the entry pathways to increase the educational attainment and employment rate of the community, particularly among the unemployed and underemployed labor force. These organizations also offer support services that are necessary for students to be successful.
- **Department of Corrections:** Partner to create effective entry pathways for offenders to be transition to a college program once offenders are released.
- **U.S. Veterans Affairs:** Partner with the U.S. Veterans Affairs to ensure veterans seamlessly transition into a college-level program.
- **Workforce Education Services:** Support students entering the pathway – especially supporting students within transitional studies – to remove both internal and external barriers for students (such as funding, childcare, and food); provide alternative funding sources; and ensure compliance with outside agencies (e.g., Department of Social and Health Services and Employment Security).
- **Economic and Community Development:** Work with ECD to reach out to community members and incumbent workers enrolled in ECD offerings to make the option of a degree program real, i.e., help community members and incumbent workers see themselves as college students.

**INTENDED RESULT: All degrees and certificates are arranged into a partially- or fully-guided pathway.**

### *Description*

All instructional certificate and degree programs will be organized into an intentionally integrated sequence of learning experiences that lead students to achieve their educational and professional goals. All programs will institute either of the following organizational models:

- Fully-guided pathway – Students are admitted to the program as a cohort and proceed through the same sequence of courses until program completion.
- Partially-guided pathway – Students admitted to the program complete the same sequence of courses with a limited number of elective courses offered in combination with required courses

Whether fully- or partially-guided, these pathways may include traditional, online, and/or hybrid courses (see Academic Plan Goal 4).

### *Process & Resources*

Pathways for certificate and degree attainment have been established at Clark for some time. Many of the college's career and technical education programs employ either a partially- or fully-guided pathway. In 2016-17, the college will develop a detailed plan of transforming all degrees and certificates within guided pathways. The plan will include identifying the pathways it will offer, establish clear criteria for both partially and fully guided pathways, design the required wrap-around support services, and a detailed timeline for all degrees and certificates to be offered within guided pathway no later than 2019-2020.

In addition, all degree and certificate-seeking students at Clark will develop an ePortfolio. This will allow them to document their mastery of relevant program learning outcomes and, at the same time, chart their progress as they proceed along their pathway of study. It will also provide prospective employers or transfer institutions with examples of the skills and knowledge gained at Clark. College 101 will provide the venue for the development of this ePortfolio.

The achievement of this intended result will be monitored by the college's Instructional Planning Team, through the Program Improvement Process subcommittee. In the course of program review, every program will be asked to identify its pathway (partially- or fully-guided), as well as its sequence of courses and services.

### *Partnerships*

- **Office of Instruction:** This office will ensure that class scheduling allows students to progress through established program pathways in a continuous and progressive fashion.
- **Baccalaureate Institutions:** Faculty and staff will collaborate with a variety of 4-year schools in order to develop successful pathways for transfer.
- **Employers:** Career and technical programs will consult with area employers to determine pathways which will instill the skills and knowledge needed for success in the workplace.
- **Advisory Committees:** Advisory committees will provide expertise and resources to programs as they develop and implement guided pathways.
- **Advising Department:** The advising department will play a crucial role, preparing and mentoring students as they progress through their chosen programs along these guided pathways.

- **K-12 Stakeholders:** These groups will provide vital information about student preparedness to enter established pathways. As well, Clark faculty and staff must collaborate with them to ensure that dual credit courses are appropriate for both high school requirements and these pathways.
- **Clark Instructional Departments:** Interdepartmental collaboration will allow faculty to share resources and best practices as they revise and develop guided pathways.
- **Library and Tutoring Services:** In their progression through guided pathways, students will require academic support from both librarians and tutors.
- **IPT and Curriculum Committees:** These bodies will be responsible for overseeing curricular revisions as guided pathways are put into place.
- **Information Technology Services and eLearning:** These departments will play a crucial role, integrating technology solutions that enhance teaching and learning as students progress through their chosen programs along these guided pathways.
- **Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee and Teaching and Learning Center:** Support college faculty, staff, and administrators to align work with guided pathways.
- **Student Affairs:** Instruction and Students Affairs will work in partnership to ensure the guided pathways are developed with both a coherent sequence of courses and the appropriate supportive and wrap-around services.
- **Workforce Education Services:** Support students within the pathway to remove both internal and external barriers for students (such as funding, childcare, and food); provide alternative funding sources; and ensure compliance with outside agencies (e.g., Department of Social and Health Services and Employment Security).
- **Economic and Community Development:** Work with instructional programs to develop a process to align and recognize ECD's education opportunities as it relates to credit programs. For example, when the learning outcomes of corporate education offerings align with an instructional program's learning outcomes, develop an articulation agreement that would automatically recognize those learning outcomes within the program's guided pathway.

**INTENDED RESULT: All degrees and certificates have identified pathway destinations upon successful completion of the program, such as employment and articulation agreements with transfer institutions.**

### *Description*

The degrees and certificates offered by Clark College are not ends in and of themselves, but rather means to other ends. Historically, program completion was seen in terms of “student success,” but that success is more specifically either transfer to baccalaureate programs or employment. This intended result acknowledges that Clark’s programs play a particular role in the achievement of our students’ goals as well as provide the soft skills for students to actively participate in society. It also ensures that – just as students will be guided in the entry into, and progression through, Clark’s programs – successful completion will result in the attainment of clearly-articulated destinations.

*“I now have an acute awareness of my interests and values. I also have new ideas of how to align my occupational choice with my personal preferences and combined attributes.”*

### *Process & Resources*

The college must confirm or develop agreements with employers and articulation agreements with transfer institutions, as well as develop internal pathways for current students. The new Bachelor’s of Applied Science of Applied Management degree represents, for example, an internal pathway destination for Clark’s Business Management students. Whether internal or external, transfer or employment, all programs will articulate pathway destinations as the ultimate outcome of the student learning they provide.

The achievement of this intended result will be monitored by the college’s Instructional Planning Team, through the Program Improvement Process subcommittee. In the course of program review, every program will be asked to identify its pathway destination(s).

### *Partnerships*

- **Baccalaureate Institutions:** Faculty and staff will collaborate with a variety of 4-year schools in order to maintain, revise, or develop articulation agreements for transfer. Articulation agreements with Washington State University at Vancouver, in particular, will be strengthened.
- **Other Community Colleges:** Coordination with other community colleges provides necessary insight on the suitability of various program pathway destinations, as well as best practices for developing or revising them.

- **Industry and Business Groups:** Career and technical programs will consult with relevant groups of employers to determine how best to transition students into the workplace.
- **Advisory Committees:** Advisory committees will provide expertise and resources to programs in developing or revising pathway destinations.
- **Government Agencies:** Government agencies provide vital data concerning demographic and employment trends and forecasts. These will inform programs as they develop or revise pathway destinations.
- **Community Organizations:** Relevant community organizations will provide insights concerning employment, which will inform programs in developing or revising pathway destinations.
- **Labor Unions:** Labor unions will provide insights into workplace relations and employment, which will inform programs in developing or revising pathway destinations.



## GOAL 2: Align Program Offerings with Regional Workforce and Community Needs

The mission statement of the Clark College 2015-2020 Strategic Plan reads, “Clark College, in service to the community, guides individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals.” The emphasis on "service to the community" can be found throughout the plan's themes, values, and objectives. It recognizes that the college is more than a local resource. It is a vital part of the economic engine that sustains its community.

To ensure its meaningful role in the lives of community members, the strategic plan's core theme of Economic Vitality directs the college to “align program offerings with regional workforce needs to include technical and work-readiness skills." This objective charges the college to be deliberate in aligning programs – degrees and certificates, both transfer and career and technical – with the economic needs of individuals and groups that comprise the regional workforce.

In order to truly align these program offerings, the college will need to assess and monitor precisely what the community needs are specifically. Successfully meeting this objective will require two strategies:

1. The college must understand the labor market trends and projected trends.
2. Clark must partner with business and industry to match its education and training with jobs for graduates.

Employing these strategies are especially necessary due to the changing nature of the workforce. By 2020, 65% of the jobs in the workforce nationally will require some type of post-secondary higher education (MacAllum, Yoder, & Rogers Poliakoff, 2004; Zeidenerg & Bailey, 2010; American Association of Community Colleges, 2014; Brunell, 2014). Preparing students for this changing reality will require the college to continuously evaluate regional workforce needs with clear and consistent criteria.

*“From this class I am taking away a high level of confidence in the major I have chosen. I have confirmed my interest in research and the outdoors. This confirmation has led me to pursue a degree in Environmental Science. In pursuing this degree, I feel like I have opened many doors to careers I find interesting.”*

At the same time, Clark must maintain and expand its relationships with baccalaureate institutions in order to support academic transfer-seeking students, representing about 60% of the credit student population (see Academic Plan Goal 1). National research has concluded that only 25% of community college students successfully transfer to 4-year

institutions, compared to 80% of the student population who declare in intent to pursue a bachelor's degree.

Data and research, however, play just a part in this endeavor. In keeping with Clark's values of shared governance, and building on the vast resources of the college's collective expertise, employees from disciplines and departments throughout the college will contribute to achieving this goal. Close collaboration with a representative body of collegiate professionals will be necessary in order to effectively align Clark's program offerings and enhance the college's contributions to the welfare of its community members.

**INTENDED RESULT: Create and maintain a viable mix of programs, including emerging programs.**

*Description*

Clark College plays a critical role in the community's economic development by providing a variety of educational opportunities to improve the community's workforce. Currently, Clark College offers more than 150 degree and certificate programs. At the same time, no process exists to ensure that the college has a deliberate and viable mix of programs that serve the community's needs. This inhibits the college's ability to proactively contribute to the economic well-being of its service district.

To address this shortcoming, a process will be developed that allows Clark to anticipate community need and offering emerging programs of study.

Ensuring a viable mix depends upon two primary factors:

- What the community needs as determined by labor market analysis, job and gainful employment potential, transfer potential, and competition analysis (considering whether other programs are offered locally).
- What the college can afford as determined by calculating direct program costs, such as equipment and faculty and space. Emerging program costs must be balanced by equivalent cost cuts.

These determinations are considered along with factors of enrollment and existing college resources to establish the college's mix of programs – including certificates, associate degrees, and Bachelor's of Applied Science degrees, as well as associate degree pathways that lead to a bachelor's degree or higher.

*“One thing I’m taking away from this class is a clearer direction for my future career. Coming into this class, I wasn’t sure if I wanted to continue becoming a nurse. But after really looking into this job and others I’ve been interested in, now I have a clearer direction in where I want to be in the future.”*

The effort will be led by the Instructional Planning Team in its renewed capacities to establish curricular priorities (see above). This IPT process will be based on 1) community and industry feedback and 2) labor market data and projections to anticipate and prioritize programs that may be needed.

### ***Process & Resources***

The primary responsibility for ensuring the attainment of this intended result falls to the Instructional Planning Team (IPT), detailed as follows:

#### *The Role of Instructional Planning Team*

Having established the need for more intentional instructional planning and having presented a guiding philosophy for aligning instructional programs with industry/community sectors, we must have a robust process to operationalize this planning. Decisions regarding the expansion of existing programs or the development of new programs must include holistic consideration of the impact such change would have on overall alignment with community needs and on the strain that would be placed on college resources. Decisions to close programs are harder, but may be necessary to align college programs with community need. In all cases, representation from across Instruction is necessary to insure that decision making is deliberate and diligent.

The body responsible for assessing program alignment and for recommending new program development, program expansion or reduction, and program closure is the Instructional Planning Team (IPT). This responsibility is specified in the agreement between the Association for Higher Education (AHE) and the college (page 9):

*The Instructional Planning Team is responsible for instituting and overseeing the instructional planning process; making recommendations to the Vice President of instruction regarding academic policy such as distribution, transfer and degree requirements; developing and revising program review procedure, monitoring the scope of program review, resolving disputes related to program review activities; and making recommendations to the Vice President of Instruction regarding the approval of new programs and changes to and deletions of current programs.*

The membership of IPT (as specified in the AHE Agreement) includes all Instructional units and is more heavily weighted toward faculty (12) than administrators (7). This

distribution of power helps insure that programmatic decision-making is reflective of the collective voices from across Instruction.

#### *Existing Program Development Processes and the Role of IPT*

The existing process for program expansion and new program development has a bottom-up structure. It relies on the enthusiasm and perseverance of individuals and their abilities to identify and gain the support of other key individuals at the college. By the time this program development reaches college evaluation bodies (such as IPT), the likelihood of approval is based largely on how well the key individuals are able to sell their pitch. While this process usually results in the refinement and improvement of those individual proposals, it does not provide opportunity to weigh the relative merits of one potential program against another. This results in an assemblage of college offerings whose alignment with community needs is piecemeal at best but which is never truly assessed.

The process for program reduction/closure is even less defined. While IPT oversees these program reduction/closure decisions, no formal process is established. Decisions about program reduction/closure tend to be lengthy and opportunities for the redistribution of resources, to support the development of new programs, are rare.

#### *New Proactive, Directive Role of IPT*

As a recommending body to the Vice President of Instruction, IPT has a direct line of communication to the college's Executive Cabinet. A primary responsibility of IPT should be to help set the instructional direction of the college. The Instructional Planning Team will still provide program approval functionality (as it historically has), but will now also be more central in the instructional planning process (befitting of its name). This proactive planning will help to create a culture where the college controls its own identity, rather than scrambling to be everything for everyone (and falling short of resources to fully serve any of those needs).

IPT will undertake regular evaluation of regional labor-market gap analysis coupled with information from community partners such as the Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC) and the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), educational partners along the K-20 continuum, and information from members of the college community. Based on this evaluation, IPT will develop a work plan that prescribes the major programmatic changes that Instruction will enact. Thus, IPT will become a more directive body, providing recommendations about programs to expand, new programs to develop, programs that should be closed, and timelines for these changes.

To assume this new proactive and directive role, IPT will begin to conduct analysis of current programs annually during fall quarter, based on an annual SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) report produced by the Office of Planning and Effectiveness and the Office of Instruction for the six county region: Clark County, Skamania County, Klickitat County, Multnomah County, Washington County, and Clackamas County. These SWOT reports will include information from the labor-market gap analysis between community need and college service, a mapping of college programs to community/industry sectors, and an overlay of program costs/revenues on this mapping. They will be conducted using Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) data, as well as identification of priority areas from the CREDC, advisory committees, strategic plans of regional partners, instructional program faculty, and the Clark College Foundation. As well, these reports will help identify emerging programs. IPT will convene subgroups with associated faculty to further assess themes that emerged from the SWOT analysis. The subgroups will either assess the viability of potential new programs or changes in workforce and higher education institutions that impact the college's current educational programs.

IPT will analyze the following information as the foundation of the SWOT analysis:

- Strengths will identify current programs that match the following:
  - The number of jobs expected in next ten years > 250, and
  - The % change > current growth rate (17%), and
  - Current wages > \$27,000/year, and/or
  - The location quotient is larger than 1.2 or is expected to grow by 20% over the next ten years. (A location quotient refers to the concentration of a particular industry in a particular location, what a region may be "known" for.)
  - Alignment with Columbia River Economic Development Council and Greater Portland Incorporated growth sectors
  - Alignment with local transfer institutions
  - Adherence to the three primary components of Environmental Sustainability: social equity (see Academic Plan Goal 6), economic vitality (see above), and environmental integrity (demonstrating responsible stewardship of environmental resources).
- Weaknesses will identify programs that have labor market, enrollment, and/or completion indicators identified for further review and action by the Program Improvement Process.
- Opportunities will identify sectors for 1) short-term education/training, 2) 2-year associate education/training, and 3) baccalaureate education/training that match the following, where Clark has no programs:

- The number of jobs expected in next ten years > 250, and
- The % change > current growth rate (17%), and
- Current wages > \$27,000/year, and/or
- The location quotient is larger than 1.2 or is expected to grow by 20% over the next ten years.
- Support of CREDC and/or Greater Portland Incorporated (GPI) priorities
- Preparation of students to transfer to local transfer institutions
- Threats will identify the regional educational competitors of those current (see Strengths) and potential (see Opportunities) programs, as well as decreasing funding trends that could change the break-even point (e.g., state funding).

IPT's SWOT analysis work will develop in accordance with the following timeline:

- *September and October: SWOT Analysis of Workforce and Community Needs*
  - IPT will conduct the SWOT analysis.
  - The SWOT information will be made public for review and the college community will be invited to add or revise the SWOT findings to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.
  - In conjunction with this input, IPT will assure that its program mix is responsive to community needs by 1) identifying emerging workforce needs at short-term, associate, and baccalaureate levels and 2) identifying changes in the regional workforce and higher education institutions that impact the college's current educational programs. It will also use the program cost database to assure there is a balanced budget of program costs.
- *October through March: Feasibility Assessment of Potential New Program or Current Program Changes*
  - Once IPT has completed the SWOT analysis and potential programs or areas of study have been identified, IPT will do the following:
    - Define, in writing, each potential program or area of study to be assessed for feasibility as well as key factors or questions to be considered.
    - Based on the definition and key factors of the potential program or area of study, convene subgroup(s) (which will include non-IPT members) to conduct the following activities:
      - ✓ Assess, in depth, community need of potential program or area of study
      - ✓ Determine whether needs are short-term or long-term
      - ✓ Determine college resources required, including cost
      - ✓ Identify grant funding possibilities for program start-up
      - ✓ Assess current faculty interest and capacity

- ✓ Assess external organizational interest, including potential partnerships
  - ✓ Assess any differences of the educational attainment requirements between Oregon and Washington
  - ✓ Recommend whether the college should proceed with a program to meet unmet needs including identifying the role of Economic and Community Development
  - ✓ If the recommendation is to proceed with a program, develop a plan of next steps, such as identifying the department that should develop the curriculum, what role ECD will play – if any, potential funding opportunities for program start-up costs, etc.
- *May – Recommendation of Subgroups*
    - IPT will re-review the SWOT analysis in light of this additional information.
    - Based on subgroups' recommendations/findings, IPT will then determine program mix. Should IPT decide to incur emerging program costs, it will also determine where to cut the equivalent costs.

If a potential program or area of study emerges outside of this timeline and it requires an immediate response, the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) will take the request for a feasibility assessment to IPT. IPT with the support of the VPI will define, in writing, the potential program or area of study to be assessed for feasibility as well as key factors or questions to be considered. Based on IPT's interest and the definition and key factors of the potential program or area of study, IPT will convene the subgroup (which will include non-IPT members) that will assess the feasibility of the potential program.

As is evident, the work undertaken by IPT will be substantial. This will be particularly the case if, as has historically been the model, participation on IPT is concentrated among a relatively small number of faculty members who often carry additional responsibilities in other departmental and college-wide work.

Wherever possible, however, the members of IPT should divide responsibilities into equitable work assignments. These are to be completed by both its members as well as non-IPT faculty. Revising the college's committee structure, reallocating existing human resources, and re-prioritizing faculty responsibilities will all be necessary to ensure the fair and timely completion of this work, which is required to establish a viable program mix based on both community need and program cost. The following table summarizes the steps necessary to achieve this intended result:

**Figure 1: Instructional Planning Meeting Agenda Calendar**

**SUMMER** – (Caveat: work related to IPT, but not occurring during meetings)

- Conduct Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats (SWOT) report
- Based on identification of potential emerging programs identified from the previous academic year, begin development of programs

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER**

- Review SWOT report
- Analyze SWOT
  - Identify potential emerging programs and programs with changing demand
  - Convene subgroups based on the results of the SWOT Analysis specific to current or potential programs

**NOVEMBER - MARCH** (Reminder: November deadline submission for subsequent year catalog)

- Review and Determine
  - Program revisions
  - Program deactivations
  - New programs (based on previous years SWOT analysis and subgroup findings)

**APRIL**

- Review memo from Program Improvement Process subcommittee
- Review findings of previous year from Program Action Teams
- Follow-up with Program Action Teams from previous two years
- Review SWOT subgroups findings and recommendations (see September/October above)

**MAY**

- Identify and invite new IPT members for the next year – upcoming and current IPT members will attend both meetings in May
- Based on recommendations of SWOT subgroups, informed by PIP, determine the college’s educational program mix based on the established criteria.
- Based on identification of emerging or changing programs, determine which emerging programs will be commissioned to be developed over the summer.



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## *Partnerships*

- **Planning and Effectiveness:** The Office of Planning and Effectiveness will support IPT's work by producing the SWOT report, based on industry data and regional workforce priorities.
- **Office of Instruction:** The Office of Instruction will work with Planning and Effectiveness (P&E) in terms of identifying the qualitative trends from local economic and workforce development groups as well as advisory committees.
- **Advisory Committees:** Advisory committees will support IPT's SWOT analysis with current and credible industry resources and insights.
- **Instructional Departments:** Instructional faculty and staff will provide insights and expertise in the production and review of IPT's SWOT analysis.
- **Community Businesses and Industry:** These groups will support IPT's work by informing the subgroups' determination of viability for potential emerging programs.
- **Columbia River Economic Development Council:** CREDC will provide insight to southwest Washington economic development strategies that will inform the SWOT analysis of IPT, as well as provide needed detail for the subcommittee work assessing the viability of potential emerging programs.
- **Greater Portland Incorporated:** GPI will provide insight to the Portland-Vancouver economic development strategies that will inform the SWOT analysis of IPT as well as provide needed detail for the subcommittee work assessing the viability of potential emerging programs.
- **Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council:** SWWDC will provide insight to southwest Washington workforce development strategies that will inform the SWOT analysis of IPT as well as provide needed detail for the subcommittee work assessing the viability of potential emerging programs. This partnership will also inform and position the college to be able to receive grant funding for start-up costs of emerging programs, as well as partner with other educational institutions throughout the Portland-Vancouver region to offer needed programs.
- **Regional Baccalaureate Institutions:** If the IPT subgroups determine that there is a regional need for a baccalaureate degree or higher, Clark College will work with the universities that offer more advanced degrees in the programs demanded by the workforce to develop clear articulation agreements and pathways.
- **Other Community Colleges:** Clark College will partner with other community colleges throughout the region, state, and nation to maximize potential to receive grant funds, share curriculum, and leverage resources.
- **Clark College Foundation:** The Foundation will support IPT's SWOT analysis with community business and development resources and insights.

- Economic and Community Development:** The Economic and Community Development staff will support IPT's work with insights and resources relating to community and industry need and capacity. ECD should also be utilized to pilot and incubate programs directly aligned with industry need that emerge from the SWOT analysis due to the department's agility. Moreover, ECD may also be an option a SWOT subgroup might recommend to offer an emerging program or education around a specific skillset. In addition, ECD may offer educational opportunities on a focused skill-set, e.g., rigging or forklifts, which enhances the employability of current degree and certificate seeking students.

### INTENDED RESULT: Improve existing programs.

#### *Description*

The program improvement process at Clark College improves and enhances student learning through continuous improvement of instructional programs. Program improvement ensures that Clark's programs achieve the college's vision to inspire learners to excel, transforms lives, and strengthens an increasingly diverse community. Further, the program improvement process is the method by which Clark College practices academic excellence by ensuring the conditions for student learning and intellectual growth.

*"The one thing I'm taking out of this class is knowing my plan for college to achieve the career I choose, because of this class. I now fully understand the way to become what I want and how I can live the way I want with that career."*

The members of Clark College's faculty bear the primary responsibility for reviewing existing programs to ensure their effectiveness and responsiveness to community need. This is not only in keeping with their discipline and curricular expertise, it also fulfills a host of policies related to shared governance.

Specifically, the college's accreditation body, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), sets forth the following in Standard 4.1.2: "The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services." In addition, Standard 4.1.2 requires that "The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning

outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes."

Further, the Association of Higher Education (AHE) negotiated agreement has identified in the faculty job description that faculty "participate in program improvement and outcomes assessment activities that impact student success."

In keeping with these mandates, as well as established best practices, the college's program improvement process requires sustained faculty involvement. Together with the contributions of appropriate college staff and administrators, program faculty must continue to assume principal responsibility for the effectiveness of program improvement.

To date, the program improvement process has been the responsibility of the Instructional Planning Team (IPT), a standing college committee. Currently, a faculty member chairs IPT, which also includes 10 tenured faculty members who serve for a three-year rotating term. The specific logistics of program improvement are coordinated by members of an IPT subcommittee, the Program Improvement Process Screening subcommittee (PIP).

The program improvement process requires regular review of multiple aspects of enrollment, teaching, learning, and alignment with regional need of each educational program. However, PIP has previously employed a specific dataset in its program review that has little overlap with outcomes assessment and teaching and learning strategies. The purpose of an enhanced improvement process is to take a more comprehensive and actionable approach to improving the college's existing programs, specifically to improve student learning and meet labor market and industry needs.

To achieve these improvements, the revised purpose and required activities of PIP will be:

#### PURPOSE

- Establish a systematic, ongoing process of review and improvement for each for-credit program group (credentials related by discipline); and
- Establish a clear communication process to IPT, program faculty, and other college stakeholders the holistic health and vitality of a program group

#### REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

- Evaluate and improve processes to result in compliance with accreditation standards.
- Establish a systematic, ongoing process of educational program review and improvement.
- Ensure that faculty members engage in all phases of the review process.
- Link vitality indicators, outcomes assessment, and best practices in teaching and

learning.

- Assess the health, vitality, and student learning of/ within the program group.
- Provide a process that will assist and support faculty who request a program improvement review.
- Establish clear communication processes to IPT, program faculty and other college stakeholders regarding the outcomes and program improvement results.

### *Process & Resources*

For the reasons detailed above, faculty will continue to hold the primary responsibility for program review. The Instructional Planning Team will continue to oversee program review through the work of its PIP subcommittee, ensuring faculty representation on PIP as well as in leading all program review efforts. The program review process will begin in the spring term of each academic year, when IPT identifies the Program Improvement Screening subcommittee membership. Members of this committee serve for a two-year term and do not have to be members of IPT. In all, the Program Improvement Process Screening subcommittee consists of:

- Four faculty members (2 CTE faculty, 2 transfer). One faculty member must be a designated AHE representative.
- Faculty outcomes assessment liaison (ex-officio member),
- Power, Privilege, and Inequity faculty liaison member on a temporary basis – see Goal 6 (ex-officio member),
- TLC advisory committee member (ex-officio member),
- Institutional Research representative (ex-officio member),
- Associate Dean of Instructional Operations (ex-officio member), and
- Two instructional deans.

Note: Two new members to this PIP subcommittee have been added. The TLC advisory committee will serve as a resource to ensure the alignment between faculty development opportunities and the evaluation results of programs through the PIP process, such as integrating active learning strategies (see Academic Plan Goal 5). The Power, Privilege, and Inequity faculty liaison member will serve during the two-year term of appointment as a resource to ensure that all degree programs infuse the study of power, privilege, and inequity in their curricula (see Academic Plan Goal 6).

Once the Program Improvement Process Screening subcommittee members have been identified, an announcement made at IPT and publicized college-wide, the PIP subcommittee will identify the programs that will be reviewed beginning the upcoming fall term. Programs desiring a program improvement review that are not on the current

schedule, or that want to coordinate with third-party accreditation cycles, can make the request directly to the PIP subcommittee.

In conducting program reviews, the PIP subcommittee will review the following existing indicators of program effectiveness:

- Enrollment
- Completion
- Student course success rate
- Retention
- Employment rate of leavers/completers
- Wage of former students (leavers/completers)
- Labor market outlook – based on confirmation of SOC codes
  - Projected positions
  - Salary

In addition, program reviews will also include the following new indicators:

- Identification of entry (including pre-college) paths (see Academic Plan Goal 1)
- Organization of program curriculum within a guided pathway
  - CTE programs identify General Education requirements in the pathway (see Academic Plan Goal 1)
- Identified and implemented exit pathways to transfer and/or employment (per program, see Academic Plan Goal 1)
- Mapping of courses and assignments to program outcomes (see intended result below)
- Self-reported active learning strategies to support each program outcome and embedded global perspective (see Academic Plan Goal 5)
- Evidence that students have learned program and course outcomes (see intended result below)
- Evidence of students' ability to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity (degree programs only, see Academic Plan Goal 6)
- Evidence that the appropriate advisory committee has reviewed the program improvement process indicators (see intended results above)
- Identification of program improvement strategies, especially since last review (see intended result below)
- Identify active partnerships of program faculty with actual businesses, educational institutions, and others (see Partnerships for all Academic Plan goals)

### *Partnerships*

- **Planning and Effectiveness:** The Office of Planning and Effectiveness will support faculty involved in the program review process by supplying current and credible data related to the review of program indicators. As needed, department staff will also interpret data and trends for faculty.
- **Advisory Committees:** Advisory committees will support the program review process with current and credible industry resources and insights.
- **Instructional Departments:** To maintain shared governance and in keeping with best practices, staff and faculty from every instructional department must be actively involved in the program review process, both in preparing for review and in implementing recommended enhancements.
- **Outcomes Assessment Committee:** The Outcomes Assessment Committee, a subcommittee of IPT, will work with PIP to help define the criteria by which to evaluate that students have met both course and program outcomes. The committee will also work with program faculty, when necessary to improve the assessment process.

**INTENDED RESULT: All programs implement at least one action to improve student learning based on the results of outcomes assessment.**

### *Description*

One of the core values of Clark College's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is Continuous Improvement, which calls for the "Evaluation and enhancement of all college operations based on data-informed planning and resource allocation." The importance of continuous improvement also informs the strategic plan's theme of Academic Excellence, directing the college to "Align curriculum with learning outcomes and apply outcomes assessment evidence to continually advance student learning."

In order to ensure the continuous improvement of student learning, then, the college must create and sustain a culture of outcomes assessment. One question – "How can we best enhance student learning?" – underlies all outcomes assessment work. The purpose of outcomes assessment is to use the information in a meaningful and substantive way to improve programs and student learning. It's that explicit focus on student learning which makes outcomes assessment vital to any commitment to continuous improvement and a tool with many uses.

Primarily, outcomes assessment produces reliable information that allows faculty to have meaningful conversations about how students are learning in their classes, then make informed decisions about how to better produce such learning in the future. By

documenting student learning, outcomes assessment projects also provide a picture of how that learning can be impacted by areas outside of instruction: staffing, facilities, scheduling, advising, etc. In this way, administrators and staff are able to see how their support of instruction impacts student learning and can make similarly informed decisions about how best to continue that support.

*“One reason working together actively supports my learning (everyone’s) is the opportunity for face to face (even online) brainstorming and forming ideas, interacting, and changing things that don’t work. With the instructor along with you, guiding and learning a thing or two as well! It’s an absolutely amazing learning experience.”*

For this reason, outcomes assessment provides valuable evidence to external accreditors that the college is engaged in meaningful reflections that place student learning at the heart of its purpose. The broader community benefits from outcomes assessment in this same way: through explicit evidence of the knowledge and skills that the college is producing to the benefit of its surroundings.

Of course, outcomes assessment also benefits students. After all, their learning is the focus of outcomes assessment work. The enhancement of student learning is the engine that drives all outcomes assessment projects, ensuring that students’ experiences are given absolute priority in the daily work of the college.

Perhaps the most important benefit to participating in outcomes assessment is that it sponsors meaningful, valid conversations among faculty about their teaching practices. A great deal of faculty development, however, is framed as “teaching improvement.” While this is undeniably a vital element to maintaining qualified and effective practitioners, by focusing on student learning, outcomes assessment offers a subtle, but critical, shift in thinking.

Generally, this shift in thinking moves our attention away from the means (teaching) and toward the end (learning). While a faculty member might walk away from a lesson fully confident in the effectiveness of her pedagogical approach, outcomes assessment instead focuses on the students’ experience of that lesson. Teaching and learning are, admittedly, intrinsically-linked sides of a single coin. However, the learning-centered approach made possible by outcomes assessment allows faculty to look past the strategies they employ in the classroom and to think more concretely about the effects of those strategies on their students.

### *Process & Resources*

As detailed in the previous intended result, the primary responsibility for enhancing student learning rests with faculty. Specifically, the faculty members who make up the Instructional Planning Team (IPT) coordinate the program improvement process through its Program Improvement Process Screening subcommittee (PIP). PIP, in turn, will review degree and certificate program indicators to ensure that every degree and certificate program:

- Maintains assessable program learning outcomes,
- Completes the assessment cycle for each of its program learning outcomes,
- Maps assignments and courses to program learning outcomes, and
- Bases curricular improvements on assessment results.

To assist faculty with this work, IPT oversees its subcommittee, the Outcomes Assessment Committee, charging that body to engage in the following activities:

- Clearly define standards for program and course learning outcomes;
- Consult on assessment methodology of program learning outcomes, including course challenges and credit for prior learning;
- Ensure that courses are mapped to/aligned with program level outcomes and that specific assignments are identified;
- Help improve programs' assessment cycles, based on findings from PIP.

The Outcomes Assessment Committee will, in addition, provide support and resources for program faculty to fulfill its annual charge:

- Assess at least one program-level (i.e., degree or certificate) outcome annually (all program outcomes will be assessed within three years).
- Implement at least one action to improve student learning, based on the results of the assessment project.
- Align course-level outcomes with program-level outcomes.
- Ensure that all learning outcomes are current and assessable.
- Ensure that all program level outcomes go through the full cycle of assessment within 3 years.



The table below describes the expected calendar for outcomes assessment activities to occur. (Programs can modify the calendar, though doing so may limit their access to college resources that would be otherwise available.)

<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>
<b>Assessment Planning &amp; Sampling</b>	<b>Data/Student Work Preparation</b>	<b>Assessment &amp; Analysis</b>	<b>Interpretation &amp; Action Planning</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an assessment plan</li> <li>• Assign duties for next year</li> <li>• Gather student work, if applicable</li> <li>• Compile data of embedded assessments, if applicable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare/arrange logistics for fall assessment (OA team)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess student work during Fall OA Work Day, if not yet assessed</li> <li>• Compile and analyze data previously collected from embedded assessments during Fall OA Work Day, if already assessed</li> <li>• Coordinate data analysis with Planning &amp; Effectiveness, if applicable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share assessment data with program faculty</li> <li>• Interpret assessment data</li> <li>• Plan curricular changes</li> <li>• Select/ design assessment tool (or embedded assignment) for next cycle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement curricular changes to complete previous cycle</li> <li>• Complete annual reporting</li> </ul>

Table 1. Outcomes Assessment Activities Calendar

*Partnerships*

- **Instructional Planning Team:** Through its Program Improvement Process Screening subcommittee and the Outcomes Assessment Committee, IPT will ensure both the systematic review of outcomes assessment work among its programs, as well as the resources needed to participate in this work.
- **Program Improvement Process Screening Subcommittee:** The PIP will review indicators to ensure that each degree and certificate program is implementing at least one action to improve student learning, based on the results of outcomes assessment.
- **Outcomes Assessment Committee:** This group will provide the needed resources and support to enable degree and certificate programs to improve student learning, based on the results of outcomes assessment.

### GOAL 3: Improve Student Preparedness

Each of the four core themes of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan directs the college to “facilitate student learning by providing” specific conditions and services to support and enhance that learning. Student learning is at the heart of the core themes and values of the strategic plan, and college-level learning remains the ultimate measure of our effectiveness as an institution.

At the same time, approximately 80% of Clark’s entering students who are not Running Start place below college-level math, reading, and/or writing. Of those, about 25% test into at least one area of basic education. Students who are unprepared for college-level coursework are less likely to persist, with less than half retained to the next academic year (45%). Retention and course success are important indicators of student learning, and a primary factor in student retention and course success is preparedness.

We also know that students’ educational careers have many predictive critical milestones for success. A few of these milestones are successful completion of the first quarter, successful completion of pre-college coursework, and successful navigation through, and use of, academic support services. Armed with a clearly-identified problem and a wealth of proven best practices, the college will intensify its efforts to support our under-prepared students in order to achieve the objectives, fulfill the mission, and attain the vision set forth in our strategic plan.

**INTENDED RESULT: Increase the proportion of students prepared to succeed in college-level work by engaging in the following evidence-based practices:**

#### 1. Evaluate and improve placement procedures.

##### *Description, Process, & Resources*

Accurate placement is vital to ensuring a student’s future success, and this is particularly true for first-time students. At the same time, the shortcomings of the instrument previously used for student placement – the COMPASS test – are well-known among faculty and staff. However, the impending obsolescence of this test presents the college with an opportunity. Staff in Student Affairs and Instruction have already partnered to develop a plan to effect comprehensive improvements in our placement procedures.

Going forward, this work will involve gathering a workgroup, establishing timelines, evaluating research, forming an implementation plan, and developing evaluations of new placement options. This deadline for this placement revision process is June 30, 2016. While Transitional Studies will continue to rely on the CASAS exam for placement, this

work will most directly affect placement in Clark’s Intensive English Language Program (IELP), as well as Math and English (both comprehension and writing).

### *Partnerships*

- **Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges:** The SBCTC will provide informational resources to the placement revision workgroup.
- **Student Affairs:** The workgroup will collaborate with the Assessment Center and Enrollment Services in order improve the accuracy and efficiency of the college’s existing placement procedures.
- **Office of Instruction, Instructional Deans, Department Chairs, and Division Heads:** Instructional administrators will coordinate the work and faculty input required to review and revise placement procedures.

## 2. Expand I-BEST.

### *Description, Process, & Resources*

Just as it does elsewhere, the Academic I-BEST model continues to support student success at Clark College. Expanding I-BEST offerings will broaden the model’s impact by preparing greater numbers of students for college-level work. Clark will maintain its current offerings of two to three sections of academic I-BEST per quarter. Doing so will continue to increase the number of Transitional Studies students who are retained and transition to college-level courses.

*“Attending I-BEST classes was one of the best decisions I’ve made as a student, especially since I had not been in school for a decade. I have received much needed help, so that I will be able to succeed in my college courses. I have attended three I-BEST cohorts for the last three quarters... Not only do you gain a more in depth understanding of the course context by writing about it, you can relate it throughout the other courses. I have made connections from Environmental Biology concepts, to subjects studied in Human Geography, then I also saw the Human Geography concepts in the communication course. Being able to see all these connections are enhancing my education further. Lastly, one of the exciting features of the I-BEST model is having three instructors in class learning right along with us, making the experience truly unique.”*

To build upon these successes, an Academic I-BEST review team will be convened in winter 2016. This group will focus on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the college-level English pathway. It will also investigate the appropriateness of including Math as a component of the Academic I-BEST model to prepare students to enter MATH

107. If this is found to be a feasible strategy, the workgroup will also develop a plan for implementation.

In addition to these Academic I-BEST strategies, Clark will convene at least one I-BEST offering for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. A study will be conducted to determine which programs are best suited to this model of instruction, with the goal of offering CTE I-BEST sections beginning in 2016-2017.

Expanding I-BEST at Clark will require commitments of both personnel and funding. I-BEST offerings are admittedly resource-intensive, but their proven impact in propelling students through entry pathways to college-level coursework more than justifies these investments.

### *Partnerships*

- **Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges:** The SBCTC will provide best practices in developing CTE I-BEST courses, as well as scaling up I-BEST offerings to improve students' transition to college level courses.
- **Advisory Committees:** CTE advisory committees will provide industry insights and resources to determine which programs are most suited to adopting the I-BEST model.

## **3. Expand enrollment in College 101.**

### *Description, Process, & Resources*

As a course that prepares students for a successful transition to college life, College 101 (COLL 101) has a proven record of increasing student preparedness. The course curriculum exposes students to the variety of support services available on campus, detailing explicitly how these resources empower students in the pursuit of their academic and personal goals. In addition, the course instills in students skills related to career readiness; financial literacy; technology use; and power, privilege, and inequity – all of which support the successful completion of college-level work.

Consequently, research has revealed COLL 101 to have a statistically significant impact in improving student retention rates, even after factoring self-selection bias. In addition, student surveys have revealed near-unanimous agreement that, “As a result of taking this course, I am better able to find and use resources and services at Clark College.” Further research revealed that students who took COLL 101 were more likely to utilize Student Tutoring Services on campus during their first-term, compared to students who did not take the class.

Given the impact described above, expanding enrollment in COLL 101 is a crucial step toward achieving the college's intentions to increase the proportion of students prepared to succeed in college-level work. The course has been shown to improve first to second quarter retention rates, general completion rates, and transition rates for Transitional Studies students progressing through entry pathways. COLL 101 has also reduced the proportion of students who change majors.

For these reasons, all degree-seeking students will be required to demonstrate the course learning outcomes for COLL 101. This requirement will be initially applied the AA-DTA program. Those students who wish not to take the actual course will have the option to demonstrate their attainment of COLL 101 learning outcomes.

### *Partnerships*

- **Student Affairs:** Student Affairs staff will coordinate new student entry processes that include this COLL 101 requirement for all degree-seeking students.
- **Library:** Library orientation and information literacy instruction is a crucial component of COLL 101.
- **Transfer and CTE Program Faculty:** The cooperation and participation of faculty will be necessary to fully integrate COLL 101 into program curricula, to pass along the course's documented benefits to our students, and to contribute to a culture of college-readiness at Clark.

## **4. Increase the number of students entering college-level math courses and decrease the time needed to attain preparedness for college-level math.**

### *Description, Process, & Resources*

Across the country, college-level math is a well-established obstacle to student completion. While steps have been taken to support pre-college math students at Clark, students who place into pre-college math remain less likely to be retained to the second year (50.2%), compared to students placing at college-level math (62.7%). And among students who place at pre-college math, only 9.2% complete a degree or certificate within three years, compared to 24.7% of students placing into college-level math. To address these disparities, Clark will take steps to create clear, directive, and supportive entry pathways to college-level math courses (see Academic Plan Goal 1).

To achieve this intended result, the college will model its precollege math pathways on existing research. In 2015, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges developed and adopted the "Strategic Plan for Improving Student Math Success in Washington Community and Technical Colleges." The plan identifies six strategies to improve student preparation for success in college level math. These six strategies are:

1. Define and promote college level math pathways tailored to students' academic majors and/or professional and technical program requirements, and align pre-college curriculum to those pathways.
2. Improve and expand academic and career pathway advising to help students choose math pathways that support their goals, while leaving the door open to reach even higher goals.
3. Extend math reforms to improve opportunities for students interested in a path from professional and technical programs to baccalaureate programs.
4. Engage faculty and staff in sustained work to bring improvements in math success to scale.
5. Expand the MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) program.
6. Clearly define and use metrics for measuring progress.

Clark College will use the first three strategies outlined by the SBCTC to increase the number of students entering college-level math course and decrease the time needed to attain preparedness for college-level math.

The new precollege math entry pathways will focus on preparing students for Liberal Arts Mathematics (Non-STEM) and Professional Mathematics (Statistics and Math for Elementary Education). The content in the new pre-college pathway will be selected so that the college does not require students who are pursuing a non-STEM or professional degree to master mathematical content that is not necessary for their career goals. Students pursuing the STEM or Business pathways will require and receive supplemental instruction at the college-level to fill in any skills and concepts that are not addressed in the new pre-college pathway.

Specifically, each program group will employ one chosen entry pathway to support students' progress to college-level math (see Academic Plan Goal 1). Those entry pathways will be designed as follows:

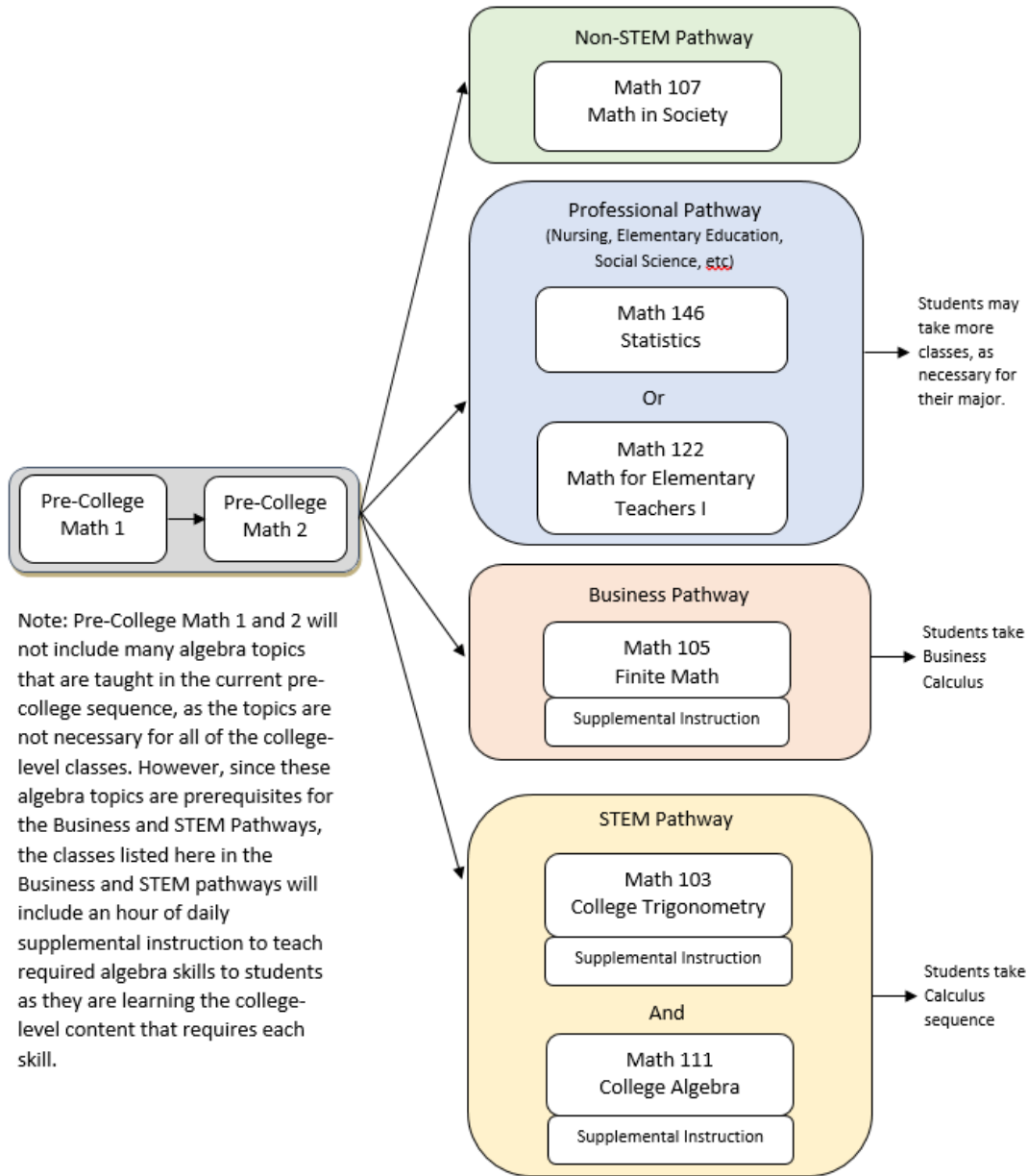


Figure 1. College-level Math entry pathways for program groups.

### Partnerships

- Math Faculty:** The Math department will be a vital partner in establishing streamlined and supportive entry pathways for college-level math. They will collaborate with Transitional Studies, transfer, and CTE faculty to align curriculum, identify key competencies, and provide resources for preparing students to succeed in college-level math.

- **Transitional Studies Faculty:** Transitional Studies faculty will coordinate with transfer and CTE faculty to ensure alignment between transitional and college-level math curriculum.
- **Student Affairs:** Student Affairs staff will assist with the implementation of these entry pathways by supporting students in developing their educational goals as a new student.

## 5. Assess and improve technology preparedness.

### *Description, Process, & Resources*

While a majority of millennials enter the college with some degree of familiarity with technology, many students still lack the technological skills necessary to succeed in college classrooms, particularly in eLearning environments. Recognizing national research which demonstrates that students do not, as a whole, pursue optional resources (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015), Clark will take directive steps to enhance students' technology preparedness and ensure that technology use becomes an aid, rather than an obstacle, to learning.

The first step to addressing gaps in technology preparedness is to identify them. For this reason, the Smarter Measure learning and technology readiness assessment will be a required component of the college's advising and placement procedures in order to determine students' technological competencies. These results will inform students about appropriate course choices and resources necessary to prepare them for success. These resources will include, but will not be limited to, dedicated student services support (mentoring, advising, and counseling) and student technical support (via librarians, tutors, and staff).

For those students wishing to pursue online learning at Clark, advising will coordinate with the eLearning department to ensure that students have clear expectations about online learning prior to enrollment. Once students enroll in online courses, the eLearning department will provide dedicated support throughout their course of study. This will ensure that students and instructors alike are able to focus solely on the course curriculum, without the persistent distractions of technical troubleshooting (see Academic Plan Goal 4).

### *Partnerships*

- **Assessment Center:** The Assessment Center will deliver Smarter Measure assessments to determine the technological support necessary to prepare incoming students for success in college.
- **Advising:** The Advising department staff will, based on Smarter Measure results, ensure that students access available courses and resources to overcome



technological obstacles to their learning. In addition, the Advising department will collaborate with eLearning staff to ensure that students enrolling in online course offerings are fully prepared to succeed in that virtual environment.

- **eLearning:** The eLearning department will collaborate with the Advising department to ensure that students enrolling in online course offerings are fully prepared to succeed in that virtual environment.

## 6. Expand and Redesign College in the High School and Tech Prep offerings.

### *Description, Process, & Resources*

A direct way to enhance college readiness among Clark's incoming students is to expand the college's collaboration with high schools in our service district. Expanding both College in the High School (CHS) and Tech Prep offerings will provide both academic and career and technical education college-level credit to qualified high school students. CHS will be revised versions of previous Clark offerings, redesigned to ensure quality curricula, effective teaching, regular evaluations, as well as adequate funding and support. As a result, these students will enter Clark with strengthened foundations for success in college-level course work.

To achieve this intended result, Clark will expand its CHS contracts with community high schools, collaborating to determine criteria for student eligibility and ensuring that any college credit awarded is aligned with the college's course and program learning outcomes.

In addition, Clark will expand Tech Prep articulation agreements via career and technical education offered at community high schools. These dual credit agreements will ensure that high school students have the opportunity to get a jump start on Clark program completion, as well as their careers. In these negotiations, Clark will continue to ensure the integrity of its curricular offerings by aligning for-credit offerings with the relevant course and program learning outcomes.

### *Partnerships*

- **High Schools in the Clark Service District:** Instructional faculty and staff will collaborate with these partners to ensure the appropriateness and integrity of articulation agreements and/or CHS contracts.
- **Student Affairs:** Recruitment specialists will notify high school students of these opportunities. And, college credit for these dual credit programs will be transcribed to the students' transcripts upon request.
- **Library:** The library faculty will provide resources and expertise to assess and improve digital and information literacy skills among CHS and Tech Prep students.

## GOAL 4: Develop physical and virtual spaces that engage and inspire all learners.

Environmental Integrity is one of the four core themes of Clark College's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Specifically, this theme directs the college to "facilitate student learning by providing the conditions that continually improve the college's physical, virtual, and social environment." This charge acknowledges that our shared outcome of student learning is influenced to a large extent by the environments in which that learning takes place. In short, high quality learning is impeded by substandard learning spaces.

In one sense, the term "learning space" refers to the conditions and tangible built environment where learning occurs. It encompasses both brick-and-mortar buildings and available technology. Physical comfort, climate setting, classroom arrangements, and equipment are all critical elements in creating a physical environment conducive to students meeting course and program learning outcomes (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990). The built environment influences both the cognitive and social dynamics that contribute to learning.

Considerations of the physical settings in which we situate learning, therefore, must emphasize accessibility and adaptability in order to foster inclusiveness. Bolted-down desks and non-compliant technologies might do more than just inhibit students' interactions with course material; they might lead to undue hardships for, or outright exclusion of, groups of students.

At the same time, we must recognize the importance of incidental learning when reconsidering our physical surroundings. Creating inviting gathering spaces – in which students, faculty, and staff might interact with one another – is a crucial strategy in promoting an inclusive and sustainable community of learners. Beyond the controlled environment of our classroom, unplanned encounters with others with diverse backgrounds and ideas – in lounges, libraries, and eating spaces – have the potential to contribute directly to the learning of every person on campus.

*"Ideas get supported when you work in a group. Everyone brings ideas and then you work together to expand and bring those ideas to life."*

As well as supportive physical and social spaces, Clark must support student learning online. In 2013, more than 68% of Clark students opted for an eLearning experience at the college. Such demand is only projected to increase. Just as we prepare students to learn by structuring their tangible surroundings, we must do the same with their increasingly virtual learning spaces. This includes rigorous orientation and support for those students who may be encountering online technology for the first time. We must also provide

dynamic and flexible online environments that will engage and inspire the most experienced users.

In all cases, the quality of the student learning produced by Clark College is intimately related to the quality of our environment. This goal of the Academic Plan recognizes that the college's central outcome of student learning depends upon those spaces – virtual and physical – that we provide for our learners.

**INTENDED RESULT: Create and sustain physical and virtual learning spaces that accommodate, facilitate, and inspire individual and group learning.**

### *Description*

Flexible learning environments that support the full range of active learning strategies (Academic Plan Goal 5) and foster communities of all types of learners (students, faculty, staff, etc.) are prerequisites for student success. Learning spaces – which include both physical (both indoor and outdoor) and virtual learning environments, from tutoring and study spaces, libraries, and lounges to learning management systems, support sites, and web pages – must support a broad array of activities, technologies, and learners.

To achieve this intended result, both physical and virtual spaces will be flexible and adaptive, able to accommodate a wide range of learning styles and abilities. They will also be aesthetically pleasing, reducing distractions and clutter in order to inspire a focus on learning. Finally, these will be inclusive spaces that communicate a shared respect for all learners.

*“As a hands-on learner, anything that gets me actively involved gives me more out of the experiences that I would get from independent learning. Classes that involve collaboration booster involvement, support ideas, and encourage problem-solving and cooperation.”*

### *Process & Resources*

*A Guide to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Space Design* (2005), published by the Joint Information System Committee of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, sets forth six criteria that we have adopted and will govern the design choices for all new and remodeled spaces provided by the college:

- Flexible – to accommodate both current and evolving pedagogies
- Future-proofed – to enable space to be re-allocated and reconfigured
- Bold – to look beyond tried and tested technologies and pedagogies
- Creative – to energize and inspire learners and tutors

- Supportive – to develop potential for all learners
- Enterprising – to make each space capable of supporting different purposes

Collectively, these criteria will ensure that all spaces that “can motivate learning and promote learning as an activity, support collaborative as well as formal practice, and provide a personalized and inclusive environment, and be flexible in the face of changing needs.” They will also allow faculty to take full advantage of their academic freedom in delivering customized lesson plans that optimize learning results for students.

These guidelines, in combination with principles of universal design and guided by considerations of social equity, can be applied to both physical and virtual learning spaces at Clark College. The following section identifies those criteria for achieving this intended result in both kinds of learning environments.

### *Physical Spaces*

In order to foster an inclusive learning environment that supports active learning, Clark's physical spaces must provide for mobile learning, connected learning (connecting students to resources and the broader learning community), visual and interactive learning, and supported learning (through adherence to principles of universal design) (*21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Space Design*, 2005).

Characteristics that will allow our physical spaces to achieve these aims include environmental details (art, color themes, materials, etc.) in common areas. New and remodeled learning spaces will:

- Reflect the culture of the Pacific Northwest, allowing students, staff, and faculty to recognize themselves and their home in their surroundings;
- Employ natural and/or dimmable light, as well as color and texture (wood, cloth, etc.) to create interesting and welcoming spaces and promote social interaction;
- Feature focal points or displays of interest (artwork, student projects, etc.) and eliminate outdated or unnecessary materials and advertisements by regularly reviewing focal points to ensure their relevance to learners; and
- Ensure positive sensory experience of spaces (smells, textures, and temperatures) in order to make them inclusive and welcoming.

These same principles governing our design of common areas will also inform our choices in the design of learning spaces. As well, the creation of new and remodeled classrooms will provide the following:

- Modular furniture and fixtures – adjustable for mobility and size – that will foster a customizable and inclusive physical space. As a result, classrooms will feature

multiple zones that can accommodate a host of learning activities (lecture, small group, active demonstration, quiet reflection, computer projection, etc.).

- Reliable Wi-Fi and network access, open access to electric outlets, assistive technologies, cameras for lecture capture and conferencing, projectors, and interactive whiteboards that will afford learners a full range of access to supportive technologies.

Finally, both common areas and classrooms will be mindfully planned in accordance with the principles of universal design and social justice. Consistent with the Social Equity Plan, this will include:

- Captioning all video demonstrations;
- Audio descriptions of videos, photos, and charts;
- Easy access to touch screens and computers for both right- and left-handed students;
- Displays of pictures and artwork that represent and reflect the community and culture of diverse students;
- Providing gender-neutral bathrooms; and
- Avoidance of acronyms in public signage.

In addition, the construction and maintenance of these environments will be in accordance with a key element of sustainability: environmental integrity. Following these guidelines will ensure that the college's physical spaces “provide a welcoming, secure environment, establishing the capability of the institution to cater for its learners” (*21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Space Design*, 2006).

### *Virtual Spaces*

Just as Clark's campuses feature common areas and classrooms in the physical environment, so too does it feature virtual common areas (such as the college website) and virtual classrooms (maintained in the Canvas learning management system). As with physical spaces, principles of virtual design will also focus on principles of universal design in order to provide inclusive and supportive venues that foster social interaction and active learning.

To that end, the overall design of virtual spaces – such as academic web pages, online marketing materials, and other electronic communications – will provide clear overviews to ensure learners’ expectations. They will also provide ease of navigation to effectively and efficiently guide users to their intended destinations. Each virtual space must be accessible, adaptable, and usable. This includes – wherever applicable – captioning, alt tags (i.e., audio descriptions for videos, pictures, and other visuals), multiple formats,

multiple languages, appropriate font sizes and styles, appropriate file formats, screen reader accessibility, and easily-navigated layouts.

With respect to online classrooms in particular, students will be thoroughly oriented and prepared to succeed in a virtual environment prior to enrollment in eLearning courses. Those students who need additional guidance will be directed to additional resources provided by the eLearning department (see Academic Plan Goal 3). As well, robust outcomes assessment will verify that the students' course success rates in online courses is accompanied by their attainment of course- and program-level learning outcomes (see Academic Plan Goal 1).

At the same time, online course materials in both hybrid and online formats will adhere to the standards of inclusive and supportive design detailed above. In addition, design of hybrid and online classes will be informed by best practices set forth by the Quality Matters program of review. Just as they do in a physical classroom, faculty members enjoy full academic freedom to deliver online instruction. To ensure that this instruction is made available to students in effective and engaging ways, the following criteria will characterize all virtual classrooms:

- A clear introduction to the online nature and design of the course is provided to students to ensure a successful start. This will provide a comprehensive overview of relevant virtual spaces and announce expectations of online learners. Specifically:
  - The course instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components. For hybrid courses, the online course shell includes expectations and requirements for online and face-to-face components and learn activities.
  - Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course through sections such as "Course Introduction," "Welcome from the Instructor," "Start Here," etc.
  - "Netiquette" expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are clearly stated, referencing institutional policies and conduct codes.
  - Minimum technology requirements and skills required for use of technology for the course are clearly stated, including instructions for use.
  - Prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.
  - The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and is available online.
  - Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class to begin the creation of a welcoming learning environment and sense of community.

- The course design reflects a commitment to accessibility so that all learners can access all course content and activities, and to usability, so that all learners can easily navigate and interact with course components.
- The course facilitates learner access to institutional support services essential to learner success. It is important to ensure online learners know they have access to and are encouraged to use the services that support learners at the institution. These support services include technical support, accessibility support, academic services support, and student services support.

In order to achieve this intended result for both physical and virtual spaces at the college, a host of resources will be necessary. To begin with, Repair Maintenance and Improvement orders (RMI's) will be reviewed for alignment with the design principles for physical spaces detailed above and prioritized accordingly. This will also involve the creation of a dedicated furniture fund to support modular design elements and customizable learning spaces.

In addition, robust professional development will be necessary to provide training resources in universal design, accessibility, and instructional design best practices. The college will also dedicate experienced instructional designers to mentor faculty in the creation and delivery of engaging and inclusive virtual courses. These designers will provide a variety of resources to support faculty's online instruction, ranging from practical workshops to course reviews to discipline-specific, ready-made course shells which faculty can customize according to their needs.

*“Working in groups is extremely important to my learning because it allows me to learn with others and apply new information to real life. I don't learn much of anything when the information is given solely through books and tests. I am a visual and auditory learner and that's why I love the ECE Program at Clark College. It's interactive and real – not just memorizing to pass the tests.”*

### *Partnerships*

- **Facilities Master Plan Committee:** This body will oversee the review and prioritization of RMI's as they align with the design principles set forth in this document.
- **Information Technology Services and Communications & Marketing:** ITS and C&M will partner to establish clear criteria about what is most effective for students to navigate virtual spaces.
- **Student Affairs:** Student Affairs, in conjunction with eLearning, will ensure that students registering for eLearning courses are oriented for success in the online environment.

- **Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee:** The TLAC will be responsible for overseeing the design and delivery of professional development training related to universal design, accessibility, and instructional design best practices.
- **eLearning:** The eLearning department will provide resources to support the professional development initiatives organized by the TLAC, the eLearning-related orientation and advising offered by the Student Affairs, and ample instructional design expertise and consultation.
- **Library:** The library will partner with eLearning, Information Technology, and the Facilities staff to ensure that its services are made available via accommodating physical and virtual spaces.
- **Tutoring Services:** The Tutoring Center will partner with eLearning, Information Technology, and the Facilities staff to ensure that its services are made available via accommodating physical and virtual spaces.
- **Campus Art Selection Group:** A group will assist in selecting and placing art that reflects the aesthetic criteria listed above.
- **Information Technology Committee/Group:** This group will evaluate both the accessibility and availability of technology made available to learners at Clark campuses.
- **Clark College Foundation:** The Foundation will identify fundraising opportunities to support advancements in the physical and technological features of the college.

**INTENDED RESULT: Offer at least one transfer program and at least one career and technical program that can be completed in eLearning modalities.**

### *Description*

The benefits of eLearning modalities to students are well documented. As noted in the EduCause publication, “The State of E-Learning in Higher Education,” these include increased access and flexibility, intentional design of course curriculum, structured learning environments, and decreased time to completion. At Clark, research has proven that students are as successful in eLearning classes as they are in traditional face-to-face learning settings. Clark’s millennial students are in fact *more* successful in hybrid environments than traditional learning environments, while there is no difference in course success rates between hybrid and traditional courses among other student age groups. Given that nearly four out of five students are from the millennial generation, hybrid modalities as a whole may in fact enhance student learning for students at Clark.



Consequently, offering programs that can be completed via eLearning modalities will allow the college to capitalize on existing models of support for student learning and expand these approaches to foster program completion rates for our students.

### *Process & Resources*

In order to achieve this intended result, the current work of developing the eLearning business plan will be completed to align with both the strategic and academic plans. The outcome of this work will determine the eLearning department's operational plan and departmental structure, as well as the staffing and other resources needed to achieve its related college objectives.

In addition, ongoing annual analysis of eLearning course offerings will determine the percentage of programs offered through eLearning modalities. In 2015-16, this analysis will focus on both transfer and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs:

- The transfer (Associate of Arts-Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA) analysis will determine whether adequate course capacity exists in the program's distribution areas to allow students to complete via eLearning modalities. The analysis will also include a focus on the AA Advisory Committee's pilot of guided pathways to simultaneously build an eLearning option for each of the AA-DTA pathways under development.
- The eLearning department's CTE analysis will focus on the Associates of Applied Technology in Network Technology (AAT NTEC). It will determine whether adequate course capacity exists in the required distribution areas to allow students to complete via eLearning modalities.

For both existing and emerging transfer and CTE programs, eLearning leadership will continue its work with those departments and distribution areas that lack capacity to offer eLearning options to students, determining what is needed to provide additional sections or courses. Resources include informal or official Quality Matters course reviews, as well as course development funds to support faculty who convert high demand courses to eLearning modalities.

To support this work, the eLearning department will need the necessary resources to invest in staffing, professional development, and technology. eLearning staff will in turn provide a variety of professional development for faculty, including instructional design mentorship and technology training. This increased support will make instructional technology and design services more widely available to both part- and full-time instructors. Instructors, in turn, will migrate high demand face-to-face courses to eLearning modalities.

### *Partnerships*

- **Student Affairs:** Student Affairs will provide comprehensive advising to prospective eLearning students and direct them to available resources to support their online learning. Smarter Measures will become a standard assessment for new students in the assessment center (see Academic Plan Goal 3).
- **K-12 Stakeholders:** Clark will collaborate with local K-12 groups to ensure that college readiness training includes technological preparation.
- **Advisory Committees:** These bodies will provide information regarding employment and skills trends that might suggest opportunities to expand eLearning program offerings.
- **Transfer Institutions:** Clark will collaborate with these institutions to maintain effective articulation agreements and degree alignment.
- **Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Washington Online:** Clark will coordinate with both the SBCTC and WAOL to leverage shared eLearning courses until we are able to build the needed capacity.
- **Inter- and Intrastate Higher Education Agencies:** As Clark expands its eLearning offerings, an expanded number of out-of-state students could result in a need to address both accreditation and state authorization guidelines.
- **Disability Support Services:** Partner with the college departments to ensure technology solutions are accessible.

## GOAL 5: Integrate Active Learning Strategies

The focus of the *Clark College 2015-2020 Strategic Plan* is student learning. Of the four core themes that emerged from the strategic planning process (Academic Excellence, Social Equity, Economic Vitality, and Environmental Integrity), the theme of Academic Excellence specifically directs the college to “Integrate active learning strategies within and across courses, disciplines, and programs with a global perspective.” This goal of the academic plan outlines the means by which instruction will accomplish that objective.

Active learning strategies are a key strategy to improve teaching and learning. Traditionally, higher education has operated on a model in which professors provide the sole source of knowledge, imparting information to students primarily through lecture. However, research has shown that this passive approach to learning is not maximizing students’ learning. The lecture method has proven particularly inadequate in the development of students’ critical thinking and interpersonal skills, which are essential to succeeding in an information-rich, modern workforce.

*“I appreciate working in a group because it multiplies my single ideas exponentially! Suddenly my one idea will grow into a wonderful plan that far exceeds my initial thoughts. Working alone creates a simple sketch. Working together creates a masterpiece.”*

To promote a deeper level of student learning, more dynamic instructional strategies have been developed to help students think critically and creatively, work effectively in groups, and develop personal connections to the learning process. Student engagement throughout the learning process takes learning from a passive to active process. As Ryan and Martens (1989) note, “Students learn both passively and actively. Passive learning takes place when students take on the role of ‘receptacles of knowledge’; that is, they do not directly participate in the learning process... Active learning is more likely to take place when students are doing something besides listening.”

Active learning can be provided in a variety of formats: in traditional classrooms, online, in learning communities – anywhere instruction is delivered. As well, active learning incorporates a host of different strategies, though each share the common goal of engaging students in ways that allow them to make meaningful connections to course material. Examples include integrative assignments, service learning, and capstone projects. By implementing active learning strategies in our classrooms, we acknowledge, as Plutarch did, that “The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.”

**INTENDED RESULT: All programs ensure that those courses that support student mastery of program-level learning outcomes integrate one or more active learning strategies.**

### *Description*

In 1991, Bonwell & Eison defined active learning instructional strategies as those involving “students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing.” In general, active learning instructional strategies result in: (a) a shift of emphasis from transmitting knowledge to developing student skills, (b) student engagement in analysis, synthesis and evaluation - higher-order thinking skills, and (c) activity-based learning. This wide definition results in a variety of active learning instructional strategies, which can be employed within or outside of the classroom, in individual or group settings. However, in all implementations, the instructor is providing opportunities for students to both demonstrate what they have learned and to receive feedback throughout the learning process.

*“It’s hands on. It’s practice doing what we’re learning. It’s full of different perspectives, not just the teacher’s. Everyone in class gets a voice. It can push you outside your comfort level, but usually it enhances the learning.”*

Five active learning instructional strategies are provided in this section. While this small number may at first seem restrictive, these strategies in fact encompass a vast range of possible applications to classroom practice. However, some of the strategies are interconnected and overlap, as each is intended to engage students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing.

### *Experiential Learning*

Experiential learning is the act of learning through experience. It replaces the old passive, top-down approach to education and engages the learner in a more active role. The overall intent is to allow students to develop critical thinking skills through the application of knowledge learned.

Moreover, experiential learning allows students to demonstrate what they have learned and to apply this knowledge to real-world problems or situations. In the classroom, experiential learning can involve case-studies, simulations, experiments, or projects where an instructor facilitates discussion and promotes critical thinking skills. Outside the classroom, students can engage in real-world experiences, such as internships, clinical experiences, and service-learning projects.

*“We get to go to the dealership and gain hands-on experience. It’s not just going to school and learning from a book. You get to practice what you’ve learned.”*

Through experiential learning – whether in online, face-to-face, or hybrid settings – students are motivated in the learning process, as the material becomes relevant and applicable in real-world situations, rather than abstract knowledge. Subsequently, experiential learning empowers students through feedback and reflection to become an active member in their learning process. Ultimately, students gain competencies needed to be successful in the workforce, including assessment of real-world problems and critical thinking skills to develop solutions.

### *Collaborative Learning*

Collaborative learning utilizes a social approach to learning, in which students learn in peer-to-peer or group activities. This approach is based on the recognition that learning is a socially-constructed process. As a result, learners benefit from engagement and interaction with diverse perspectives. In a collaborative learning setting, students and instructor share the responsibility of building and disseminating knowledge. Instructors “shift from dispenser of information to manager of the learning process” (Sweet & Michaelsen, 2015).

Collaborative learning settings can be developed in both face-to-face and virtual learning environments. In all cases, these settings emphasize interpersonal and cooperative skill building. Learning experiences are designed to promote interactivity and social exchange, as students assist and encourage one another's efforts to learn.

*“Working together teaches us to both bring ideas and take ideas. We learn to compromise and we take this skill and use it as we work with our peers, co-workers, and families. We get to hear different ideas and bring our knowledge together to form something that speaks to others of ideas, understanding, and teamwork.”*

As a result, students develop a greater sense of ownership over their own learning. Typically, collaborative learning features an overview by the instructor to course content, which is then followed by a structured activity that is intentionally designed for student groups to develop, demonstrate, and apply key concepts. As a result of these group processes, collaborative learning promotes development of interpersonal skills, which are critical for preparing students for the workforce.

### *Interdisciplinary Approaches*

Interdisciplinary instruction integrates more than one academic disciplinary framework to examine a theme or topic. By utilizing multiple frameworks, students develop a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of multiple perspectives on a particular issue. Interdisciplinary instruction can take place in both virtual and face-to-face settings, via class discussion, activities, projects, or assignments that require students to apply more than one disciplinary framework to analyze a complex issue.

Such an approach can be enhanced in integrated learning communities, where students are enrolled as a cohort in courses that are co-taught by instructors from different academic disciplines. In this way, course concepts are explored through an integrated lens. Interdisciplinary instruction can also occur between instructors outside of learning communities, where projects are coordinated and shared across the disciplines and between students. In asking students to synthesize different approaches and methodologies and to extend their analyses, interdisciplinary approaches promote critical thinking skills and prepare students to understand complex issues and develop innovative solutions.

### *Project-Based Learning*

Project-Based Learning is an experiential learning instructional method “in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to a complex question, problem, or challenge” (Buck Institute for Education, 2013). This outcomes-based approach focuses on establishing expected outcomes of the project, providing a real-world issue for students to address, defining a process that includes student-driven research and analysis of relevant knowledge, and providing instructor feedback to promote skill development. The result is a final product that provides opportunity for meaningful student reflection.

Through this student-driven approach to inquiry, students build ownership of their project and critical thinking skills to gain a deeper understanding of the real-world issue. Project-Based Learning can be implemented in both virtual and face-to-face learning environments, for individuals or groups, depending on the established expected outcomes of the project and diverse student needs. Student newspapers and journals, theatrical and musical performances, and capstone projects all offer opportunities for Project-Based Learning.

### *Problem-Based Learning*

Problem-Based Learning is a student-centered approach, with the instructor serving as a facilitator to a cyclical process, rather than a provider of knowledge and solutions. That process involves a prescribed series of six steps: (1) presentation of a case study that identifies the problem, (2) development of a problem statement, (3) development of a "knowledge inventory", which describes what is known and what needs to be investigated, (4) generation of potential solutions, (5) reflection to identify learning issues and provide feedback and revisions, and (6) sharing of findings and solutions.

Unique to Problem-Based Learning is the use of case-studies or scenarios to explore a specific issue. This method is well suited to online learning environments, where learners can participate and collaborate through wikis, discussion boards, and video presentations. Although Problem-Based Learning has its own history and structure, it is often seen as a subset of Project-Based Learning as projects can be structured to solve a problem.

*"As the saying goes, "two heads are better than one." Imagine what 30 heads can accomplish. I think more input, experience, and education together is beneficial."*

### *Process & Resources*

It is expected that all courses that support a program learning outcome will do so in a way that integrates active learning strategies. Moreover – in keeping with the Strategic Plan's theme of Academic Excellence and to prepare students to interact effectively in the workplace – these strategies will be integrated "with a global perspective."

Along with active learning in general, this perspective is delivered to students through course instruction. It will be identified by program offerings that successfully engage in one or more of the following:

1. Demonstrate how subject area, field, or profession is impacted by international issues and perspectives (e.g., integration of international or intercultural components into course activities and assignments)
2. Incorporate professional skills or practices from other countries and cultures (e.g., presentations about health care systems/practices outside of the U. S.)
3. Build competency across linguistic and cultural divides (e.g., interview assignments that require student engagement with culturally and/or linguistically diverse groups)

The Instructional Planning Team will ensure that all programs will integrate one or more of the previously listed active learning strategies within a global perspective through the Program Improvement Process.

Specifically, the Program Improvement Process subcommittee will add a component to inventory and assess the use of active learning strategies to improve teaching and learning relative to each program learning outcome of the degree or certificate under review. Every faculty member who teaches a course that supports a program learning outcome will self-report what active learning strategy they use to enhance student learning of the relevant outcome. In addition, program faculty will identify at least one of the three criteria of a global perspective that is instilled through program offerings using active learning strategies. This information will be stored in the Virtual Notebook.

To support this intended result, the faculty hiring process will be revised in order to emphasize the importance of active learning strategies in both job announcements and teaching demonstrations. Peer and supervisory evaluation criteria will also be revised to emphasize the practice of active learning strategies with a global perspective. Internships, co-ops, program capstones, service-learning projects, and other experiential learning opportunities will also be expanded in the college's curricular offerings.

Most importantly, though, this result will be achieved through the efforts of current faculty teaching existing courses. For that reason, the Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee will develop and implement a comprehensive schedule of appropriate faculty training opportunities throughout the duration of this academic plan. Such training will be a vital to enhancing the teaching and learning that takes place at Clark College. The ongoing faculty development calendar will feature active learning trainings that are introduced at Focus on Learning, then reinforced throughout the school year. This will also include development opportunities during spring break. In order to maximize the availability of this support, compensation will be made available as appropriate to adjunct faculty and full-time faculty who participate in trainings off contract time.

The Teaching and Learning Center will also maintain a robust website, which provides a repository of active learning strategies and interactive demonstrations as additional resources for faculty. An assignment clearinghouse will be established and outfitted with metadata tags to potentially match people who may be working on the same active learning strategies. Monthly or quarterly spotlights of faculty best practices will also be made available.



Satisfying the scale of demand for this professional development support will require robust oversight, which will be ensured by the hiring of a director for the Teaching and Learning Center.

### *Partnerships*

- **Instructional Planning Team:** Through its Program Improvement Process subcommittee, IPT will be responsible for ensuring that student learning of all program learning outcomes is enhanced by the application of active learning strategies.
- **Teaching and Learning Center:** The TLC will develop and coordinate the professional development necessary to support faculty in their research and implementation of active learning strategies.
- **Communications and Marketing:** Communications and Marketing will assist in developing and maintaining a robust and engaging web presence for the multitude of professional development resources that will be housed online.
- **Tenure Review Oversight Committee:** The TROC will review and provide recommendations on how to update the tenure committees' self, peer, and supervisory evaluation forms to reflect the presence of active learning strategies in observed teaching.
- **Advisory Committees:** Advisory committees will provide programs with resources to most effectively develop and implement active learning strategies.
- **Industry and Business Groups:** Career and technical programs will consult with relevant groups of employers to determine which active learning strategies are most appropriate for development and implementation.
- **Student Affairs:** Student Affairs will assist in advising and tracking students in integrated and service-learning offerings.
- **Human Resources:** Human Resources will assist in the revision of hiring processes to emphasize the importance of active learning strategies in faculty applications.
- **National Science Foundation and Other Regional/National Groups:** The NSF and others sponsor workshops and conferences devoted to developing active learning strategies that can be integrated into faculty practice.
- **Economic and Community Development:** Leverage ECD's educational offerings and partnerships to expand opportunities for experiential learning with businesses and organizations. Where the ECD offerings' learning outcomes align within instructional programs' learning outcomes, develop an articulation agreement.

**INTENDED RESULT: Offer at least one competency based education degree or certificate.**

### *Description*

Competency-based education (CBE) is an outcomes-based approach that defines the competencies that a student should master by the end of a course or program, and awards credit based on the students' demonstration of the learning outcomes. This approach differs from traditional models of higher education because it is not tied to a required amount of contact hours or student seat time. Students may demonstrate the requisite competencies and learning outcome mastery at their own pace, which can be accelerated in comparison to a standard term- or semester-based class.

As such, competency-based education degrees can decrease the amount of time required for a student to earn a credential; however, the most significant benefit is the focus placed on demonstrating learning outcomes. Student learning is assured through direct evidence that is tied explicitly to stated learning goals. This approach ensures the quality of learning for students completing the program.

CBE is *not* a requirement for all programs at Clark, though faculty are invited to consider its appropriateness for their own offerings. Currently, this approach is being explored by the college's automotive technology program. Recently, this program transformed its curriculum to match current industry needs, identifying and assessing more than 150 competency outcomes aligned directly with industry standards. While many automotive programs teach in silos, emphasizing particular functions of the automobile in isolation, this new curriculum was developed to engage students early-on to think like a technician – where the automobile is the sum of its parts. The intent of the new program is to develop skill sets that will allow graduates to be able to accomplish approximately 75% of the daily work required in most automotive repair facilities.

*“You get to do what you learned at school when you go to your internship. That’s probably the best part of it. I’ve learned more than I ever thought I would.”*

These changes in curriculum uniquely position the automotive technology program to become the college's pilot for employing a competency-based approach, as each set of competencies align with skills from a variety of different types of repair facilities and different levels of technician. In addition, the program will also help fill the community need for automotive technicians, with more than 150 annual opening throughout the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area.

### *Process & Resources*

In order to achieve this intended result, the automotive technology program will adopt a competency-based model for its students. The first step in doing is to establish a clear entry pathway (see Academic Plan Goal 3).

For example, students with prior work experience can apply Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), based on job type. For instance, a student who has been employed at a tire and alignment shop may be able to test beyond the Undercar Services course material. Some CPL assessments will need to be developed; however, common assessments can be employed, including ASE Certification, Years of Experience, and on-campus test-out procedures.

Once students have progressed through the entry pathway, the automotive technology program will develop their learning based on identified competencies that fulfill the automotive repair technician skillset as defined by industry standards. The format of the automotive technology courses developed (using curriculum that has already approved by college committees, the advisory committee, and the SBCTC) will build on the skills from previous courses, which can easily be aligned with the CBE model.

The pathway through the automotive technology program is arranged into a series of stackable credentials. Each course, or series of courses, will build students' abilities up to a repair technician level with some diagnosis technician level skills:

1. Maintenance Specialist – Certificate of Achievement
2. Light Repair Technician – Certificate of Proficiency
3. Repair and Diagnostic Technician (General Service Technician) – Associates of Applied Technology Degree
4. Degree Completion/Field Experience – Auto 273 Managed Internship and optional Auto 274 Capstone (for advanced degree seeking students)

At every step along this pathway, successful students will be able to demonstrate the core competencies that provide evidence of their mastery of relevant program learning outcomes, accelerating through the program at their own pace.

Currently, the automotive department has some current space constraints, but guiding students into comprehensive program pathways, rather than individual courses, allows faculty to utilize space more efficiently. As additional space becomes available, the number of students per section or number of sections can be increased.

Going forward, the program must determine policies in key areas, such as the minimum requirements that students must meet in order to continue in good standing, as well the financial aid impact on those students who do not meet the minimum requirements.

Quarterly credentialing for early and/or late completion of each area must be determined. Finally, additional staffing and equipment is needed for students moving at their own pace, who will need to work on different equipment at different times.

### *Partnerships*

- **Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges:** Currently, the SBCTC is piloting a competency-based education program in business administration, which will provide helpful insights into the successes and struggles of this program model.
- **Student Affairs:** The role of Student Affairs in delivering a competency-based program is vital, as most of the student services – enrollment services, financial aid, admissions, graduation, etc. – will have to alter to accommodate the students in a true competency-based approach to teaching and learning.
- **Industry and Business Groups:** These community partners will be instrumental in establishing internships, providing access to equipment, and securing pathways to employment for completing students.
- **Advisory Committee:** The input of the advisory committee will be necessary in order to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of the program's curricular designs.
- **Other Community College Automotive Programs:** The expertise of faculty in these programs will inform any future revisions to Clark's automotive offerings.
- **Instructional Planning Team:** IPT will be responsible for overseeing any further development or revision of the automotive program's curriculum.
- **Grant Funding Institutions:** These groups will be helpful in potentially defraying the costs of equipment, faculty, and curriculum development.
- **Clark College Foundation:** This Foundation will identify funding for student scholarships and equipment purchasing.

**INTENDED RESULT: Establish a college-wide theme to promote integrative and active learning.**

### *Description*

A key component of integrative and active learning is the opportunity for students to make connections – between issues, across disciplines, and beyond classrooms. Establishing a college-wide theme provides just such an opportunity. This approach allows a variety of different programs, courses, and student services to explore a shared issue in a multitude of formats and through a host of different lenses. Such an integrative

learning experience allows students to collaborate with both their peers and the broader college community, transferring learning across contexts in a way that makes their connection to the material richer and more rewarding.

*"I now have an acute awareness of my interests and values. I also have new ideas of how to align my occupational choice with my personal preferences and combined attributes."*

Common themes are often adopted for a set period of time, typically three to five years. They are supported by a variety of resources, such as a books, journal articles, and videos. The themes of these resources influence college-wide programming and events (e.g., film screenings, guest speakers, art projects, student symposiums, etc.), which offer diverse opportunities for learning in multiple settings.

### *Process & Resources*

Clark College's Strategic Plan 2015-2020 is founded on the core principle of the learning college: the work undertaken by each and every member of the college community shares the common outcome of student learning. The Student Affairs staff members guide students through the complexities of college and provide a pathway toward a career. Administrative Services create optimal learning environments in the buildings and grounds. Instructional staff and faculty bring expertise and engagement to the learning process. The President and Board of Trustees provide vision and resources for the institution to be a learning college.

By this same token, the college theme will be integrated across a broad sweep of college services. In essence, the theme will represent the evolution of previous common read initiatives, but will be focused on a common theme rather than a common book. Exploration of this theme will not be limited to the common read text, however. Supporting materials such as other books, films, and other scholarly and popular materials will be included to expand the scope and depth of student learning opportunities.

Integrating this central theme into the learning environments across the college will require sustained effort. To assist with this work, the Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee will convene a college theme subcommittee that will include representatives from departments throughout the college, as well as students. This subcommittee will be responsible for vetting and collecting materials related to the college theme. These might include videos, articles, discussion questions, podcasts, and more. The materials will serve as resources for departments to use in meetings, for services to use in interactions with students, and for faculty (both CTE and transfer) to embed into the curriculum. The college theme subcommittee will ensure that these materials are both engaging and

available to the broader college community, showcasing them in a centralized website to promote their integration into the day-to-day operations of the college.

### *Partnerships*

- **Communications and Marketing:** Communications and Marketing will assist in the maintenance of the college theme's web presence, as well as assisting in the marketing theme-related events to the larger college community.
- **Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee:** The TLAC will be responsible for convening the college theme subcommittee, which in turn will collect dynamic and robust materials in order to support theme-related learning opportunities across the college.
- **Instruction:** Instructional faculty and staff will integrate leaning related to the college theme into the curriculum.
- **Student Affairs:** In their interactions with students, the Student Affairs staff will support student awareness of the college theme and related events.
- **Associated Students of Clark College:** The ASCC will assist in organizing and marketing college theme events for students.
- **Clark College Foundation:** The Foundation will identify fundraising sources to support the recruitment of guest speakers and the purchase of other theme-related resources.
- **Publishing Companies:** These companies will supply the college with theme-related materials.
- **External Organizations:** Groups that engage in work related to the college theme (such as governmental or non-profit agencies) will provide expertise and/or resources to the college.

## GOAL 6: Infuse the Study of Power, Privilege, and Inequity Within the Curriculum.

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan defines our institutional mission as follows:

“Clark College, in service to the community, guides individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals.” Two crucial variables are embedded in this charge, and they represent a dual focus that must be maintained in order for the college to fulfill its mission.

The first variable is the “what” of the mission: the services provided by every college employee. Taken collectively, these services constitute the guidance we provide to individuals who trust Clark to help them achieve their educational and professional goals. Equally important, though, is the “who” of the mission—the individuals themselves. In order to provide meaningful guidance to our students, we must also fully appreciate who they are, what they value, and what challenges they face.

These considerations are vital in sustaining the role that any open-enrollment institution plays in its community. At Clark specifically, more than half of entering students identify with at least one demographic that is less privileged than a typical Clark County resident. Approximately 65% of students are low income. In addition, the majority are more diverse than either their communities or the college’s employees. The life experiences of our students require Clark to be deliberate and holistic about increasing the cultural competency of the whole college community.

*“My challenges to learning and choosing an occupation have not changed since the last time I pursued such endeavors back in 1979, 80, 81. I have a lot of work to do in order to be successful at this.”*

This requirement is widely recognized. The importance of social equity at Clark is, in fact, expressed throughout the components of the strategic plan. Social Justice is one of the plan’s six values. Social Equity is one of its four core themes, and diversity and inclusivity inform objectives of the plan’s Academic Excellence and Environmental Integrity themes.

These elements recognize both whom we serve as individuals and how we support their learning as students. Specifically, the Social Equity theme directs the college to “facilitate student learning by providing the conditions that improve educational outcomes and eliminate systemic disparities among all groups.” At the same time the Social Equity Plan advances this objective, the strategic plan also calls on instructional programs to enhance student learning through exposure to a variety of beliefs, cultures, and differences – as

well as analysis of systems of power, privilege, and inequity – as a catalyst for intellectual growth.

Such an emphasis has been proven to enhance learning outcomes for all students (Robinson-Armstrong, 2010). Findings have demonstrated that – when diversity recognition; cultural competency; and analysis of systems of power, privilege, and inequity are integrated into teaching and learning and support services – students make meaningful connections between their classes and life experiences. By infusing the study of power, privilege, and inequity within our curriculum, we will prepare students for life and work in a multicultural, diverse, and international society.

**INTENDED RESULT: All Clark College degree programs prepare students to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity.**

### *Description*

One important strategy that embodies Clark’s institutional commitment to social equity is the infusion of the study of power, privilege, and inequity within college curriculum and programs. Exposure to the dynamics of power, privilege, and inequity will prepare students in all of Clark’s degree programs of study to constructively participate in our increasingly diverse society, and reduce the harmful impact of existing systems of power, privilege, and inequity in the United States. Therefore, no student will earn a degree credential without successfully completing at least one course that provides the learning necessary to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity.

*“It gives me a chance to work on social skills and practice communicating with others. Working together with people is what I do at work who have different views and opinions. It gives me a chance to hear ideas from others and makes me take a step back to think.”*

### *Process & Resources*

The Instructional Planning Team will ensure that all degrees include at least one program learning outcome that articulates the student learning goal of analyzing systems of power, privilege, and inequity in the United States. The Outcomes Assessment Committee, a subcommittee of the Instructional Planning Team, will be responsible for the overseeing the alignment of specific course offerings with this stated program learning outcome.

Goal attainment will be assessed by the Program Improvement Process Committee, another subcommittee of the Instructional Planning Team. The process will identify programs’ adherence to the intended result and store this information in the Virtual Notebook.



Program faculty will be responsible for reviewing and (if necessary) amending degree requirements to ensure that all degree programs prepare students to meet a program learning outcome of analyzing systems of power, privilege, and inequity in the United States. Robust professional development will be needed to assist with this work, and so faculty will be supported by a designated faculty PPI Liaison.

A faculty liaison is an area expert whose responsibility is to provide the resources and professional development necessary to support their fellow faculty members' compliance with institutional initiatives. In this case, a faculty PPI Liaison would be a faculty member with the demonstrated ability, knowledge, and practice of preparing students to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity. They would function much like an outcomes assessment faculty liaison, a support position which has proven to be successful in the past.

The college will fund a two-year, temporary position for this faculty PPI Liaison. During that period, the Liaison will be responsible for providing faculty with the resources necessary to achieve this intended result. This work will involve a host of duties designed to build both the college's curricular and administrative capacities. In providing faculty support, the PPI Liaison will work with the Teaching and Learning Center to develop and offer faculty development. Recognizing that not every program will attain this intended result in the same manner, the Liaison will also coordinate and customize faculty mentorship for curriculum and program development, otherwise supporting faculty with guidance and best practices as needed.

The PPI Liaison will also be responsible for integrating existing college structures to support this effort. This will involve coordinating with an advisory field of faculty experts and the social equity council (formerly the cultural pluralism committee) to establish criteria for the evidence of learning to analyze systems of power, privilege, and inequity. The Liaison will also develop and implement professional development for Program Improvement Process (PIP) Committee members to be able to assess how students in degree programs are meeting this learning goal. The PPI Liaison will serve as a non-voting member of the PIP Committee while this position is filled.

The achievement of this result will develop in stages. In 2016-2017, the college will ensure that all degree programs have at least one program learning outcome supporting the analysis of systems of power, privilege, and inequity in the United States. Early adopters will have completed a full assessment cycle for this learning outcome. In 2017-2018, all degree programs will take steps to enhance student learning of this outcome. The PPI Liaison will continue faculty mentorship and provide "train the trainer" development. In

2018 and beyond, the assessment of student learning of this outcome will be institutionalized through the Program Improvement Process.

*Partnerships*

- **Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee:** This committee will work with the faculty PPI Liaison to offer the faculty development opportunities needed to support this intended result.
- **Instructional Planning Team:** Along with its subcommittees – Outcomes Assessment and Program Improvement Process – the Instructional Planning Team will work to oversee the curricular processes for any necessary program revisions to support this intended result.
- **Office of Diversity and Equity:** The Office of Diversity and Equity will provide advice, best practices, and other resources as needed for the purpose of faculty development.
- **Social Equity Council:** Currently the Cultural Pluralism Committee, the Social Equity Council will provide an extra-curricular, non-instructional resources for faculty and assist the PPI Liaison in navigating Clark’s institutional systems to maximize efficiency.

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