

Mission Fulfillment Review

February 2, 2016

GBC Mission Statement

Great Basin College enriches people's lives by providing student-centered, post-secondary education to rural Nevada. Educational, cultural, and related economic needs of the multicounty service area are met through programs of university transfer, applied science and technology, business and industry partnerships, developmental education, community service, and student support services in conjunction with certificates and associate and select baccalaureate degrees.

Introduction

To fulfill the Nevada System of Higher Education's approved Mission for Great Basin College, the faculty and staff of the institution determined that seven specific elements of that Mission needed to be assessed and ultimately satisfied. Those seven elements are derived directly from the GBC Mission: 1. Serve Rural Nevada, 2. University Transfer, 3. Workforce Development, 4. Partnerships, 5. Developmental Education, 6. Community Service and 7. Student Support. These Mission elements and criteria for evaluating them were presented in Appendix A of the 2014 Year One report. The information in that appendix is now updated in a document entitled, *Mission Fulfillment: Criteria, Measurements, and Expectations*. This is found within the Institutional Research and Effectiveness website and is also Appendix B of the 2016 Mid-Cycle report.

Collectively it is an expectation that the seven elements from the Mission must be satisfied. To assist in determining this, there is the expectation that 85% of the criteria for evaluating the elements be met to indicate that the mission of the college is fulfilled. Below is a brief narrative for each mission element to help explain the data presented in the *Mission Fulfillment* document.

Mission Element 1, Serve Rural Nevada

The central pillar of the college's mission statement is the providing of post-secondary education to rural Nevada. For many years Great Basin College served five counties of rural northeastern Nevada (Elko, Eureka, Lander, Humboldt and White Pine). Through highly innovative and proactive means GBC learned how to deliver educational opportunities to this sparsely populated portion of the state. To better serve the population, Nye County was added to GBC's service area in the mid 2000's bringing its coverage area to 63,000 square miles. Then as the "Great Recession" hit and budgets were deeply cut additional counties in the state were abandoned, because GBC had figured out how to deliver education, sometimes to a single place bound individual, the college asked to take over four additional counties (Pershing, Lincoln, Mineral and Esmeralda) bringing its service area to 86,514 square miles with just 152,000 citizens total. The adoption of these counties fit nicely with GBC's vision for growth designed to help offset year over year multi-million dollar budget cuts.

When reviewing the data associated with this mission element two things jump out. First, there are several NAs appearing in the fulfill column. These NA's are due to the March 2014 addition of Esmeralda, Lincoln, Mineral and Pershing counties. GBC is currently working to provide postsecondary educational services to these newly adopted communities and the numbers associated with those

additions will show up in the 2015/2016 data. Second, at the main campus in Elko, there was a significant drop in the number served in each year following the baseline year. The years leading up to the baseline year were immediately following the so-called Great Recession where many individuals returned to school and there were many federal programs encouraging citizens to do so. As those individuals were served and the federal programs began to fade away, GBC enrollment returned to prerecession levels. In short, GBC now has a physical presence in nine of the ten counties being served and student participation from all ten counties. Recent record numbers of graduates serves as a testament to good advising, adequate support resources and a focus on completion. The college is clearly fulfilling this mission element.

Summary: This Mission element is being fulfilled. For the criterion of maintaining a presence in rural communities, GBC met one of the three measurement expectations. Two are not applicable at this time because the increase in service area distorted the baseline of comparison. GBC did meet this criterion in consideration of this change. The second criterion was also met overall in consideration of the expansion of the service area post-baseline. Only in White Pine County was the expectation not met. The expectation for graduation in the third criterion was met.

Mission Element 2, University Transfer

Great Basin College was authorized and accredited to offer baccalaureate degrees beginning in 1999. GBC is still fundamentally a community college with 85% of its current students working toward a one-year certificate or two-year Associate's degree; the remaining "University Transfer" element is now bifurcated between external transfers and internal transfers. Approximately two thirds of the students now transferring from GBC courses of study go elsewhere (i.e., external transfers). One third of the students who continue their education beyond the Associate's degree level do so by remaining at GBC (i.e. internal transfers). As GBC continues to add additional bachelor's degree offerings, more and more students are anticipated to pick the internal transfer route. Some programs (e.g., Teacher Education) are market driven and have been down in enrolment recently because of this, and are now coming back up. By providing for both external and internal transfers GBC is fulfilling the transfer element of its mission.

Summary: This element of the Mission is fulfilled for all criteria over the recent three year period of evaluation, though the measurements are still not fully to the level of the baseline year. The measurements of the baseline year reflect the aftermath of extreme enrollments of the early years of the Great Recession; the recent years' measurements reflect fulfilled Mission under the current enrollment trends.

Mission Element 3, Workforce Development

Workforce development is at center of the Great Basin College mission. Each of the technical and health care related programs is developed with input from the industry it serves, which is primarily mining in the GBC service area. As such, employment rates of GBC's graduates are quite high. Additionally, GBC has expanded the number of sections in diesel technology, electrical technology and nursing. Also, an EMT/Paramedic program has been added in Winnemucca, Elko and Pahrump. GBC has a close relationship with the industry sectors it serves. The ever increasing output of workforce related graduates and their placement rate as shown in the data provides strong evidence of this mission element's fulfillment.

Summary: GBC is clearly fulfilling this element of the Mission in both criteria. A higher number of programs are being completed and 96% of graduates found employment within six months.

Mission Element 4, Partnerships

The College has a longstanding partnership with the mining and mining support industries. In recent years those industries have given millions of dollars in donations to the college and hundreds of thousands of dollars of scholarships to GBC students annually. Those partnership efforts have contributed to curricula, equipment, materials, internships and record numbers of graduates. Additionally, the college has had enormous success in receiving grants to assist in GBC's outreach and service to its partners. Some grants are reoccurring (e.g., the Perkins Foundation grant). However, GBC has an established and effective method of deciding which grants to go after by soliciting a go-no go response from President's Council members (see listing of members in the conclusion). The high rate of success in receiving grants has led the college to go after at least one completely new grant each year.

One noteworthy partnership growth area is with the high schools throughout the state. An increase in the number of high schools served coupled with a growing interest in dual enrollment has led to rapidly increasing numbers of students served, quadrupling in just four years. One place where the college has experienced a decline is in the contracted programs area. Here GBC is contracted to train incumbent mining company employees on an as requested/needed basis. Because there has been a downturn in demand due to lower gold prices, GBC has seen a commensurate drop in non-credit courses delivered. However, the college stands ready to immediately ramp up its offerings of contracted classes when asked.

Summary: For the three criteria of this Mission element, the expectations of all six measurements are being met and thus this element is being fulfilled. Because of the irregular nature of the functions beneath some of these measurements, increases cannot always be expected, but the expectation of continued effort is demonstrated.

Mission Element 5, Developmental Education

One of the necessities of operating an open access institution is the delivery of developmental education. By some measures Nevada is seen as among the worst states in the union in terms of preparing high school graduates for college level work. These underprepared students place a heavy burden on the college to remediate the academic deficiencies of nearly 60% of its incoming freshman. Success in this area is always a mixed bag.

The table for the criteria of this element shows a very high percentage of students completing a college level course when progressing from a developmental course. However, completing does not mean passing; some significant number of students in this category completed the college level course and received a failing grade or an incomplete. Since so many of GBC's entering students require remediation it is not surprising that over half of its graduates started with a development course.

Many steps are being taken at the secondary level to better prepare their graduates for college. As such the percent of GBC graduates starting with a developmental course should logically continue to drop, meaning the college needs to reconsider its expectations in this mission element area. Not reflected in these criteria or measurements are the current effort made by GBC to get students into English and Mathematics at the earliest time of enrollment and quickly get them through these courses.

Summary: The expectations for the criteria listed are being met, and thus this element of the mission is being fulfilled. With 55% of all GBC graduates beginning in remedial courses, it is imperative to recognize the need to succeed in this area. The criteria may need to be reconsidered for the future to include more criteria relative to different measures of success in this element.

Mission Element 6, Community Service

Great Basin College is a community creation from nearly 50 years ago, and the communities in which it resides see the college as their very own. Scores of community education classes are offered each year and a dozen or more major community events are held on its campuses each year. Although not recorded as a community event the college, in Elko and the centers in Ely, Pahrump and Winnemucca, GBC facilitates and accommodates nearly 1000 outside room requests annually. This mission element has been fulfilled.

Summary: This Mission element is fulfilled. The hosting of community events is difficult to evaluate quantitatively because of the various distance means of distribution sometimes used between sites. But from lists of events and sites, this criterion is being met.

Mission Element 7, Student Support

This mission element involving recruitment, advising and retention has been most effected by the year-over-year budget cuts. This is being addressed in the college's future hiring plans. In review, the number of recruiting contacts have been cut nearly in half over the last three years due to necessary budget driven personnel reductions. Fortunately, the mining industry has stepped up its recruiting efforts on behalf of Great Basin College. This may partially explain why GBC's enrollment is up when recruiting contacts are down. Next, GBC's number of first year applicants has dropped dramatically in recent years. It is believed that the huge increase in the number of dual enrolled students has proportionally taken away from the number of first year applicants because the dual enrolled students applied for admission to GBC and took at least one course prior to what is traditionally a first year of college. Advising too has been severely affected by budget cuts, and this is reflected in declining student satisfaction in this area. Finally, retention over the years has been improving. However, being an open access institution with 69% of our students being part-time, the college will struggle with this statistic while it technically meets the annual expectation for mission fulfillment.

Summary: The element of student support is one that the college is marginally fulfilling, and perhaps is not fulfilling in some respects. Budget cuts have most affected recruitment, advising, and retention at GBC in a negative manner. This is evident in the measurements for the criteria of this element.

Conclusion

The President's Council is made up of the following individuals: President, Assistant to the Presidents, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Business Affairs, Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Business and Technology, Dean of Health and Human Services, Classified Council President, Student Government Association President, Faculty Senate Chair plus outgoing and incoming chairs, Director of Continuing and Community Education, Director of Institutional Research and the Associate Vice President of Distance Education. This Council serves as the accreditation steering committee and reviews assessment information. Following a review of the criteria for each GBC Mission element, the

President's Council determined that GBC is currently fulfilling its Mission at the 92% level, exceeding the minimum expectation of 85%. All seven elements of the GBC Mission are fundamentally fulfilled, but not without certain areas identified for efforts at continued improvement.