

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

**A Full-Scale
Evaluation Committee Report**

**Community College of Southern Nevada
Las Vegas, Nevada**

October 4-6, 2006

*A Confidential Report Prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
That Represents the Views of the Evaluation Committee*

Introduction

The Community College of Southern Nevada (CCSN) began in 1971 as Clark County Community College. Located in a rapidly growing community, the college serves over 36,000 students in a 42,000 square mile area covering four counties. CCSN has three campuses, Cheyenne, Henderson and Charleston, plus several centers, making it one of the largest community colleges in the nation.

The college is administered by one president, who along with the administrative staff, is located at the largest campus, Charleston.

Growth continues to be an encompassing issue for the college; the rapid growth of Clark County suggests the college will continue to grow. Finding ways to expand (land, support budgets, programs), while a desirable problem, is, nevertheless, a challenge.

Further, the college's recent history has been one of uncertainty with constant changes in leadership positions. That, however, seems no longer to be the case. The new President, in his second year, has quickly moved to fill vacant administrative positions and to create an atmosphere of calm and trust. The Chancellor of the Higher Education System has added to the feeling of stability.

The evaluation committee is grateful to the faculty, staff, administrative leadership and the Board of Higher Education for their efforts and help in support of the committee's work.

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Table of Contents

Evaluation Committee	1
Report on the Self Study Report.....	2
Standard One – Institutional Mission and Goals	3
Standard Two – Educational Program and Its Effectiveness.....	4
Division of Health Sciences.....	4
Division of Science and Mathematics.....	6
Division of Arts and Letters.....	7
Division of Business, Industry and Public Safety.....	9
Division of Social Science and Education.....	10
Division of Advanced and Applied Technologies.....	11
Western Technology Center	13
Division of Workforce and Economic Development.....	14
Developmental Programs.....	16
Policy 2.1 – General Education	17
Policy 2.2 – Educational Assessment	18
Policy 2.6 – Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate, and Degree Programs.....	18
Policy A.6 – Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited	19
Standard Three – Students	20
Standard Four – Faculty.....	23
Standard Five – Library and Information Resources.....	25
Standard Six – Governance and Administration.....	28
Standard Seven – Finance.....	29
Standard Eight – Physical Resources.....	32
Standard Nine – Institutional Integrity	34
General Commendations.....	35
General Recommendations	36

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Report on Self Study

The Self Study was received by the committee with ample time for review. An update to the self study was also received prior to the visit. From the site visit, the committee verified there was wide involvement from the college community in its preparation. Further, the self study was made widely available to staff and students and appeared to have been widely reviewed.

The committee's work would have been aided, however, had the self study been somewhat more critical in its review. Understandably, CCSN, like many institutions, is very proud of its many accomplishments in this time of rapid growth yet in addition to documenting accomplishments a critical self review is also of value. While such a review may well have been a part of the self study process, it was not always evident in the document itself.

Standard One: Institutional Mission and Goals

The Community College of Southern Nevada has a publicly stated mission centered in a community college focus. The mission statement was adopted by the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education in June, 1999. Although the college recently implemented a bachelor's degree program, the commitment of faculty and college leadership remains focused on service to their students and community through typical community college programs.

Ten goals for the institution were identified in 2004-05 through a series of focus groups of staff, students, faculty and community members. Those goals and a strategic planning framework were approved by the Board of Regents in September, 2005.

While much work remains to be done, considerable progress has been made in Goal 1, Restoring Public Confidence. Regardless of the constituency represented, interviews with individuals and groups indicated a renewed confidence in the institution.

Issues of systematic planning for continued growth and assessing performance will be addressed later in this report. These two goals remain as significant challenges for the institution.

Standard Two: Educational Program and Its Effectiveness

Community College of Southern Nevada (CCSN) has rapidly increased its program offerings at the associate degree levels within the past five years and has now added its first bachelor's of science degree in dental hygiene. This transition has required substantial increases in faculty to develop programs and offer sufficient sections of courses to meet concurrent increases in student demand.

CCSN has employed academic program review as a part of its assessment plan. Past efforts yielded very little quantitative data about the program, faculty composition, enrollments, or other data that might be used to make institutional decision. It was reported that the academic program review results were used by the Faculty Senate budget committee in their deliberations. However, any direct evidence that program review resulted in any measurable effect on teaching or learning was not present.

Recent efforts have revised the self-study contents and added some additional elements of data and topics that departments will need to incorporate into their next cycle of program review. The hope is that this revised self-study will yield useful information that can be directly incorporated into documented institutional decision-making.

The following sections highlight the Committee's Standard Two evaluations of the seven Divisions that deliver the educational programs at CCSN.

Division of Health Sciences

The mission statement for the Community College of Southern Nevada (CCSN) was established in 1999 by The Board of Regents of the Nevada System for Higher Education (NSHE). Since that time the mission has not been changed although there have been periodic reviews by the College. The Division of Health Science has developed their own mission statement under the foundation of the College's mission statement. The Division statement focuses upon the issue of quality student-centered certificate programs and degree programs, which are offered to meet the needs of the local community and the state. An example of meeting a documented need in the community and the state is the implementation of a new Bachelor of Science Dental Hygiene (BSDH). In addition, the Division's statement contains strategic goals, outcomes, responsibility, and estimate time lines for completion of those goals.

Since the 2000 Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) site visit CCSN has added a new 75,000 sq. ft. Science Center building on the Charleston Campus, which opened in 2003. This Science Center was designed to meet a growing demand for professional skills in science-related career fields, including certificate programs in the health programs. In 2005 an 85,366 sq. ft. Health Science building was completed and houses the programs in nursing, diagnostic medical sonography, medical office assisting, surgical technology, as well as a computerized stimulator teaching laboratory. The Dental Sciences programs are located across the Charleston Campus.

The Division of Health Science has three Departments: Dental Science, Diagnostic Evaluation, and Rehabilitation Services, offering nine programs; Nursing, housing three programs; and the

Department of Health Related Professions, which has nine programs. Of the 21 Health Science offerings, 18 have specialized accreditation and three more are seeking such accreditation.

As of Fall 2006, the Division has 68 full-time faculty and 103 part-time faculty. The number of full-time and part-time students in the Health Science programs is 804 as of Fall 2006. In addition, most of these Health Science offerings are limited access/entry programs with more applications than admissions seats. Retention in the wide variety of Health Science does not present a problem due to the nature of the programs. Graduates of these programs have a strong record of licensure pass rates, between 92% to 100% (average = 98%), and employment placements at between 60% and 100% (average = 91.5%). The Division is to be commended for these efforts on behalf of the students and the professions they serve.

The Division has established several Advisory Committees for each of the Departments with the charge to provide input on workforce trends, acceptance of graduates in the workplace, and advice on curriculum. These respective Committees are made up of various stakeholders in the respective fields, including lay members. These Advisory Committees meet at least once a year.

Degree and certificate programs within the Division have documented a coherent design, have the appropriate breath, depth, sequencing of courses, synthesis of learning, and assessment of learning outcomes that the Commission expects in its Standards (2.A.3, 2.A.4, and 2.A.5). In addition, these above expectations are reflective in the standards of the specialized accreditation bodies as well.

The development of the BSDH has generated an interesting and serious discussion as it relates to the appropriate proportion of upper division versus lower division courses and deserves special notation. On the surface it may appear that this new degree is the result of two Associate Degrees being placed together to give the impression of a Baccalaureate degree. The debate has focused on whether the upper division course work has the fundamental underpinnings for a Bachelor of Science degree in instruction and requisite associated program areas of clinical research, continuing education, public health, administration, academic faculty, and institutional leadership.

The Evaluation Team found sufficient evidence (Consultant report/recommendation, action by the NSHE, faculty qualifications, upper division courses, and demand data) that support this “niche” degree for a BSDH. The BSDH has the content, depth, breath, rigor, and scope expected of a Baccalaureate offering. It is of value to note that this new degree is not a clinical degree pre se, but rather one that focuses upon leadership, and/or oral public health, which the state is in need of, especially in the areas of development of dental hygiene faculty and preventive oral care to the Nevada citizens.

The Evaluation Team determined that the CCSN degrees and certificate programs under the Division of Health Sciences meet NWCCU Standards 2.A.3 and 2.A.4.

Degrees and certificate designators are consistent with programs content, student learning outcomes and published in the catalog, and course descriptions are broadly defined as well. The responsibility for the design, approval, and implementation of the curriculum under the Division

is well defined and acted upon by the faculty (Standard 2.A.7) For example, the establishment of the BSDH followed the guidelines established by the NSHE, and the internal procedure for such degree offering in “niche” areas and significant involvement of the faculty, the dental community, and other stakeholders.

One continuing challenge(s) facing the Division is the develop of long term Memorandum of Agreements (MOA)/Affiliation Agreements for clinical education training sites for students in the various hospitals and health care facilities. The Division is making an effort to address these challenges for clinical training sites which have great significance in student learning.

In the attempt to meet Standard 2.B., the Division has developed both an Assessment Plan and a Report with input and review from the Assessment Office. It was well acknowledged by the Division that the Educational Program Planning and Assessment that efforts regarding this Standard 2.B are a work in progress.

Division of Science and Mathematics

The Division of Mathematics and Science is a very large and efficient unit of the institution. The faculty members, department chairs and dean who participated in the visit are dedicated, qualified community college faculty and are blatantly student-oriented. The faculty creates opportunities to support student learning and to invest in and commit time to community outreach. Examples of the “above and beyond attitude” of the Division staff include the planetarium outreach to public schools, dual enrollment articulations, and the instructor participation in faculty created science tutoring labs. (Standard 2.A)

The Division facilities on two of the three campuses are relatively new and no serious safety issues were noted. On the Cheyenne Campus, the facilities are dated and crowded. Discussions are under way to remodel the laboratory facilities, which will include an update to the equipment, redesign the preparation areas, as well as allow the Division to expand its student participation capacity. (Standard 2.A.)

The Division appears to have sufficient instructional support in the form of human, physical and financial resources. The institution is funded by the state based on student participation. Requests for new faculty are made during the local budget requests and positions are allocated internally. Although the departments appear to have adequate faculty positions, it is reported that there is a growing problem with recruiting for specific positions. Certain content discipline faculty (such as physics) commands much higher starting salaries than available through the system-wide salary schedule, which may impede the institution’s ability to attract seasoned instructors and retain competent faculty (Standards 2.C.7 and 4.A.4)

The Division’s educational programs appear to reflect coherent design and resemble good practice within the disciplines. The seven degrees offered by the Division are transfer degrees and articulation agreements exist with senior institutions offering opportunities for baccalaureate completion. The degrees include the state mandated general education distributions, which include the Commission’s suggested disciplines. Individual faculty members, as well as the Faculty Senate, are responsible for the design, integrity and implementation of curriculum, subject to system-wide policies. The Division chairs take responsibility to monitor the curricular

changes at four-year institutions and to negotiate content coordination and articulation for the advantage of students transferring from CCSN.

Although the Division has identified learning outcomes for each of its courses and degrees, the educational assessment for those degrees are inconsistent in their approach to determining value-added measurements. It was also difficult to determine from the materials provided whether its assessment activities lead to the improvement of teaching and learning, or whether the influence the planning process. Given the enormous growth over the past decade at the institution and subsequent divisional instructional response rate, the focus on student needs is impressive, but allowed no time for forward planning or reflection. (Standard 2.B and Policy 2.2)

Central to the outcomes assessments are judgments about the effects of the educational program upon students. Using only information about degree completers at this institution ignores approximately 97 percent of the students enrolled in courses, given the institutional graduation rate. Although the end of program assessment is an integral part of the picture, it is only one snapshot of the learning process. Other assessments can determine the value-added of required general education courses and pre-requisites to other programs. (Policy 2.2)

Commendation:

- The Committee commends the dedication and focused energies that the faculty, chairs and dean of this Division expend on improving student learning and providing community outreach. (Standard 2.A)

Concern:

- The Committee recommends that Division departments expand the assessment process to encompass all its offerings with the intent to continuously evaluate and improve the teaching and learning process for students. (Standard 2.B)

Division of Arts and Letters

The Division of Fine Arts and letters generally meets the requirements of Standard 2. The Division is made up of the Departments of Art and Art History; Communication; English; International Languages; and Performing Arts. These include the disciplines of American Sign Language; Art and Art History; Communication; Dance; Music; Theater Arts; ESL; Foreign Languages; Reading; Academic and Life Success; Developmental English; English Composition; and English Literature.

The Division has the mission of providing foundational courses for the community including developmental English; English composition; English as a Second Language; study skills; and public speaking. It also brings the campus and community cultural offerings, including live theater, dance performances, and musical events. An Art Gallery, located on the Cheyenne campus, is maintained by the Division. Faculty teach five courses per semester, and may also teach two classes of overload. Overload pay is \$2200 per course.

The Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees are similar. Differences include the AA requires 9 credits in social sciences and 7 credits in Life and physical science; The AS requires 12-13 credits in Science and 9 credits in social science. At many colleges and universities, the distinguishing feature between the degrees is language. An associate of arts generally means the student has completed three courses in a foreign language.

English Composition is divided into several areas depending on the student's score on a placement assessment. There is strict adherence to the placement scores/courses.

English 101 is the largest offering with 120 sections per semester. About 25 students are in each course. A lead teacher heads the course. A lead teacher also heads English 102. There are 55 tenure track faculty and 80 adjuncts for these courses. In looking at the various web sites, I was unable to find listings of the entire faculty. Of these, 10 faculty are Ph.D. qualified and 45 masters qualified. Adjunct faculty must have a master's degree in English or a closely related area.

Historically, there has been a strong reliance on adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are not asked to keep regular office hours, participate on committees, or serve with student groups. The Dean of the Division says there is little hope of hiring of new full-time faculty to replace some of those teaching as adjuncts.

In most of the areas of the Division, the assessment process began about two years ago. There have been some changes in curriculum based on the assessment. In English 101, several initial placement tests have been used. Now, an in house assessment is used which generates 8,000 essays each semester. Students are asked to write a one-page essay from a writing prompt. Normed readers are hired to read each of the tests; two readers must agree on the placement. Once students finish the course, they are also given an exit prompt, which is graded by the instructor.

Curriculum was changed based on assessment in English 102. Requirements in this course no longer include books or lengthy essays. Shorter essays are assigned and the students write responses to these essays. The Department believes their goals of strengthening reading and writing have been improved through this change.

The Performing Arts Department has outstanding course offerings, faculty and community outreach. Faculty in these areas participate professionally in symphony, theater, music and dance productions. With nine full-time faculty and 40 part-time faculty, the Department has a significant number of student and faculty production companies.

The Communication Department supports a speech course required by most majors at CCSN. By forming four new emphasis areas, they are encouraging students to graduate with a two-year degree. The internship program in Communication is extensive.

The International language Department offers 16 languages including a large ESL component. The college understands the needs of non-native speakers and shares these educational needs across several disciplines. This is a fast growth area.

The Art and Art History Department encourages students to graduate with an AA and continue their art work at another institution. They are active in their mentoring and assistance in transfer.

Commendation:

- The Performing Arts Department has excelled in providing community outreach through theater, music, dance and other productions. Faculty also participate in professional fine arts groups such as the symphony or Las Vegas “Broadway-type” productions.

Concern:

- All departments need to implement their assessment plans in order to provide evidence of student learning results.

Division of Business, Industry, and Public Safety

The Division of Business, Industry, and Public Services is comprised of the Departments of Accounting, Finance and Computer Office Technology; Business Administration; Public Safety and Human Services; and Resorts and Gaming. The Departments within this Division have dedicated general classrooms and computer classrooms divided among the Charleston, Henderson, and Cheyenne campuses. The Division’s degree and certificate programs reflect coherent design.

Departmental representatives report that there are sufficient human, physical, and financial resources to support the educational programs. Division faculty is engaged, student-focused, and responsive to community needs. This responsiveness is due, in part, to the active utilization of advisory boards.

Forty-seven full-time faculty members and over 200 part-time faculty members deliver the Division’s courses. The courses are delivered in a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous delivery formats. The normal faculty load is fifteen credits per semester with a small number of programs reporting that their faculty teaches overload courses as well. Faculty is actively involved with extension activities in area high schools. The Division has numerous partnerships with the Clark County School district.

The Committee found that all academic areas within the Division incorporate library use and resources into the curriculum. Faculty commented that the library is very responsive and helpful to students.

Learning outcomes for each degree area are published in the college catalog. However, the learning outcomes published in the catalog are not necessarily the same learning outcomes reported in self study documents provided to the evaluation committee. The assessment of learning outcomes is inconsistent across programs in this Division. The recent hiring of a college-wide assessment analyst demonstrates initiative by the campus to address assessment issues.

Documents reviewed by the Committee indicate that departments within the Division of Business, Industry and Public Services have begun the assessment process. Each department identified program goals, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and assessment implementation strategies. However, there was little evidence provided to the Committee to demonstrate that Departments within the Division have completed an assessment cycle or “closed the loop” on assessment activities.

The individual Departmental self studies and exhibits presented to the committee were not of sufficient quality to assist the assessment committee in determining the efficacy of the Division’s programs. What are missing are the follow-up steps to evaluate the achievement of the written outcomes and goals and analysis as well as corrective actions for program and institutional improvement.

The Division of Business, Industry, and Public Services has taken positive steps in satisfying Standard 2.B.2 by publishing expected learning outcomes. However, evidence that students have achieved expected outcomes must be delineated and the Division must demonstrate, with evidence, that assessment is linked to the planning process for improvement in teaching and learning (Standard 2.B.3).

Commendation:

- Faculty within the Division of Business, Industry, and Public Services are progressive and focused on students. This is evidenced (in part) by the following: CCSN has been selected as a pilot school by Educational Testing Services (ETS) in the development of their major-field test in business; CCSN is the reigning national champions of the “Culinary Knowledge Bowl”; and the program director of the fire technology program has secured hundreds of thousands of dollars through numerous granting agencies to purchase equipment that otherwise may not have been purchased. The Division of Business, Industry, and Public Services is commended for being proactive in these endeavors.

Concern:

- The committee recommends that Division of Business, Industry, and Public Services, in conjunction with the campus as a whole, develop and implement policies and procedures which allow for a complete assessment cycle.

Division of Social Science and Education

Education Department

The Cheyenne campus hosts the Education Department’s offices, teacher curriculum center with access to a nice collection of children’s books, and an early learning laboratory. The facilities are good and provide faculty and students with access to needed resources and practicum setting for future early childhood educators.

Programmatic goals and outcomes are articulated along with an assessment plan. When asked about data or evidence of student portfolios, the response is that some individual courses require student portfolios, but portfolios to demonstrate what students have learned in their programs of elementary education, secondary, early childhood or secondary are not yet developed or required. According to the assessment plan, EDUC 220 class requires a comprehensive examination with the overall goal 80% of the students achieving a grade “B” or better. Upon examining a syllabus for an online Fall 2006 syllabus for this class, there was no evidence of a comprehensive examination as a part of the requirements for the class. When asked if the Department had data about the number of their graduates who met one of their outcomes for “published requirements for entrance into a Nevada State college or university teacher education program,” the response was that data was not collected and not available.

Rubrics as written for evaluation of student learning goals are not descriptive of the desired behavior, attributes, or characteristics but rather a descriptive ranking ranging from exemplary to unsatisfactory which does not provide sufficient criteria to evaluate student work.

Social Sciences

Department chairs are aware of the central and significant role their departments play in the general education program. Each department, to a more or less degree, has defined student learning outcomes with possible ways of assessing those outcomes. The most creative and interesting plan resides in the History Department who has managed to keep their focus on student learning and create an assessment plan that is genuine, germane to the discipline and liberal arts, while having the potential of providing good data to the department about their majors. Other departments in the unit might want to consider other alternatives to student self-reports and interviews. It is not clear how the departments have used data from student assessment to inform programmatic goals, curriculum alterations or personnel decisions.

Concern:

- All departments need to implement their assessment plans in order to provide evidence of student learning results.

Division of Advanced and Applied Technologies

The general program requirements of Standard 2 are met by the Division of Advanced and Applied Technologies. The academic programs’ goals are clearly stated and aligned with the Division’s mission to prepare students for successful transfer or entry into the technical and trades-based careers for which they have been prepared. The Division programs support essential components of the College’s mission to prepare students to meet the high-tech training demands of Southern Nevada’s workforce.

This Division of the college was created in a College-wide reorganization as of July 1, 2006 in an effort to better achieve its mission, create efficiencies and maximize available resources. An Interim Dean was appointed with, administrative oversight of the department chairs and program directors. The Division includes the Departments of Applied Technology; Computing and

Engineering Technology; and Media Technologies. The new Dean is developing her administrative role and is actively involved with the College administration to bring stability to the Division.

The Division's faculty and facilities are distributed on all three campuses, the Boulder City Center, and Western High Tech Center. Classes are delivered at various CCSN campus sites; the determining factors in the level of course delivery at the various locations include student enrollment demands, physical resource and equipment availability, and staffing.

Facilities and resources are adequate to serve the current level of program enrollments. Many programs are experiencing growth in enrollment and graduation in response to the community employment needs. Construction programs in electrical, plumbing and HVAC are in high demand in the Las Vegas area. Growth will be possible as instructional capacity is expanded. For example, plans are underway to build a new transportation technology facility funded through a combination of public and private support.

The Division's programs demonstrate coherent design, depth, and breadth of content in their course sequence as appropriate for the discipline and certificate or degree level. Advisory committees, whose members include alumni and successful practitioners in each occupational area, support the faculty with program development and ensure stakeholder input to the assessment process.

There is evidence in the College's Continuous Assessment Plan (CAP) documentation that the Division's programs have plans to assess student learning via multiple methods, but data and evidence of changes in programs that are a result of the assessment cycle is limited. Specialized accreditations demonstrate quality and achievement of instructional program goals; program accreditations have been received in Automotive Technology (NATEF), Electronic Engineering Technology (ABET); and HVAC (ARI, pending Fall 2006).

Faculty have the major role in, and responsibility for, the curriculum and instruction. This role includes content, design, quality and instructional implementation including the approval and review of adjunct faculty that teach in the program. Synthesis of learning for program graduates is demonstrated by student performance in capstone courses and via portfolio assessment which is now being implemented across all of the Division's programs as a component of the CAP.

The Division's assessment plans indicate that work toward consistent attainment and application of Standard 2B and of Policy 2.2 is ongoing. All programs within the Division are participating in the institutional Continuous Assessment Plan (CAP) for student outcomes assessment but a culture of evidence and analysis has not yet been fully developed and integrated thoroughly. Each program provides a clear statement of degree objectives and intended student outcomes are now published in the College catalog. However, the Division still lacks consistency in reporting on data collection, analysis of findings, and demonstrating the use of results to improve instructional programs.

Program review is in its infancy and somewhat sporadic. The current administration at all levels is committed to consistent and regular reviews to assure quality as the programs experience continued growth; this is a component of the “Blue Skies Ahead” plan.

Division certificate and AA/AAS programs are designed on the College curriculum model that provides both a technical curriculum and general educational requirements. Curriculum is laid out progressively with appropriate regard both for general education requirements and for appropriate requirements for the major. General education components are addressed at the AS and AAS levels through specific credit hour requirements. Considerable attention has been given to the viability of associate degrees in terms of the potential for successful transfer of credit to UNLV or NSC.

Despite significant and rapid enrollment growth, and continually-changing technical skill standards, the Division’s programs have been well supported by the College to maintain an excellent suite of high-quality, industry-standard, instructional equipment and facilities. Student interviews indicate satisfaction with the quality of instruction, program course content and expectations.

Fulltime and adjunct faculty are well qualified by academic background and/or professional experience to carry out their teaching assignments in accord with the mission and goals of the Division and College. The Division utilizes adjunct faculty who are employed professionally in their technical field and contribute critical expertise and a real-world perspective to the instructional programs. Students report that the contributions of adjunct faculty from industry greatly enrich the learning experience in the Division. The Division faculty actively take advantage of professional development opportunities and are committed to educational outreach to the communities within the CCSN service area.

The Division is home to an active Tech-Prep program and related dual-enrollment partnerships with Clark County high schools. Programs are guided by joint Technical Skills Committees that include CCSN, school district and industry members needed to ensure the quality and relevance of these joint programs in meeting regional workforce needs. The Joint Technical Skills Committees are actively reviewing technical programs to identify common curriculum and areas of duplication to create efficient use of resources.

The Division offers credit courses and academic programs off the main campuses. The Aviation Science and Wild Land Fire Fighting programs are offered by faculty and staff at the Boulder City Center; the Construction and Building Trades programs are offered at the Western High Tech Center. These programs’ goals and missions are compatible and aligned with the School’s and Division’s mission. The academic curriculum and instruction in these programs are designed and supervised by full-time faculty. Instruction is evaluated consistently with campus practice and program outcome data is included in the Division’s assessment process.

Western Technology Center

The Western Technology Center is home to the Building and Construction, HVAC and Architecture programs. The center is a partnership between CCSN and the Clark County School

District. A CCSN training facility is located on a high school campus that is shared with the secondary education students. The Western Technology facility is occupied by the high school staff and students between the hours of 7:00 am – 1:30 pm while CCSN uses the facility between the hours of 1:30 pm – 10:30 pm for the delivery of college programs. High school classrooms are also made available to CCSN for instruction in the evening.

Building and Construction, and HVAC programs are delivered by qualified faculty. Programs are fully subscribed and graduates are readily employed. A four-year surveying program is available at the Center through a partnership with Great Basin College using interactive television for delivery. This is a welcome addition to current offerings and needed in the community. The Western Technology Center facility is representative of other CCSN centers.

Commendations:

- The Division faculty are commended for developing and maintaining high-quality, creative industry- and agency-based program partnerships. This strategy has been very effective at enhancing program quality as well as increasing the resources that are available to the faculty and students in the instructional programs.
- The Division is commended for its commitment to Tech-Prep and related dual-enrollment partnerships with Clark County high schools; programs are guided by joint Technical Skills Committees that include CCSN, school district and industry members needed to ensure the quality and relevance of these joint programs in meeting regional workforce needs.

Concerns:

- Assessment of student learning outcomes is not consistent among the Division's programs. With respect to Policy 2.2, the intent is carried out by Division programs but the Committee is concerned that program faculty need to address documentation of the assessment cycle, in particular the collection, analysis, and decision-making regarding actions for program improvement. The Division should also seek ways to document the progressive changes that are made in programs as a result of the assessment cycle.

Division of Workforce and Economic Development

The creation of a new Division of Workforce and Economic Development in February of 2005 appears to have enhanced the ability of CCSN to meet the needs of the local economy and emerging workforce needs. This new entity is beginning to brand itself as the centralized training arm of CCSN.

All areas of emphasis within the Division are consistent with the CCSN mission. All credit courses, programs, and degrees are developed in conjunction with the appropriate academic departments and full-time faculty as evidenced by minutes of the Curriculum Committee. Credit-bearing courses follow the standard method for determining credit, three credit hours for every forty-five hours of student involvement, as institutional policy indicates. Each course offered

under this Division, regardless of delivery mode, appears to provide ready access to structure to provide interaction time for the students with the faculty member and other students. Learning sources seem appropriate. Awarding of credit for prior learning follows the college's policy on prior learning and is in compliance with Policy 2.3.

Hiring qualified faculty can be a challenge when developing customized training programs and offering credit course on demand. While the turnaround time for developing new programs and hiring faculty can be very short, adherence to college policies on faculty qualifications and hiring practices is consistent within this Division.

Contractual agreements and Memorandums of Understanding were easily located and reviewed. All contractual agreements and Memorandums of Understanding that were reviewed by this evaluator were in compliance with Policy A-6. Agreements were consistent with the purposes of education and the mission of CCSN. Courses offered were consistent in regard to credit value and level to other courses offered in the institution. The scope of work and responsibilities of CCSN were clearly articulated and sole fiscal responsibility was assigned to CCSN in all contracts reviewed.

There is a clearly delineated line of authority in the administration of all programs within the Division of Workforce and Economic Development. There is appropriate authority given to the program specialists to develop new programs, along with the accountability of producing results. The program specialists report to the Director, who in turn reports to the Dean. The Director and several program specialists who have been with the institution for some time indicate that since the reorganization and with the new leadership that they feel like an integral part of the CCSN community. Increased collaboration between the Division and other Divisions of the college was corroborated by conversations with the other deans and faculty throughout the institution.

Newly developed budget guidelines and pricing procedures for non-credit courses have been implemented in all areas of the Division. These pricing guidelines seem to be an equitable fee structure that will allow the Division to be self-supporting. The refund policies that are practiced are consistent with campus procedures for credit-bearing courses.

Instructor evaluations in this Division are regularly performed and instructors are notified of the results. Evidence of working with the instructor to improve performance was present in the sampling of faculty records kept at the department level.

Program level assessment is being planned for, but has not yet occurred in a regular and systematic way. Some of the programs in this Division have national certifications and or industry level standards that are associated with them. While the Division has the results of these assessments, there is no documented indication that these results are used to improve the teaching/learning process. There has not been systematic evaluation of customer satisfaction to determine effectiveness of programs.

Non-credit programs and courses are under the direction of the Community and Personal Enrichment Department housed in the Division of Workforce and Economic Development. Review of the schedule, fee rates, and instructor hiring practices, and course development

processes indicate that college policies and procedures are being followed and that faculty are involved in this process where appropriate.

The Committee was able to see reports that detailed the offering of courses and programs throughout CCSN's service area. The diversity and quantity of offerings was incredible. The records for this Department are well maintained. The Department follows nationally recognized standards for the awarding of CEU courses and clearly publishes that standard. The certificates that students receive have CCSN's policy for computation of CEU's printed on the back.

Commendations:

- Cohesive team of highly entrepreneurial employees
- Strong apprenticeship programs
- Beginning integration of this unit into the fabric of the college
- Quantity and diversity of offerings
- Access to programs in most of the service areas of the college

Concerns:

- Evidence of regular and systematic program and student outcomes assessment that informs planning, budget, and improvement of teaching/learning
- Could look at further development of Kid's College

Developmental Programs

Developmental Education offers multiple programs, courses, and services aimed at improving basic skills. These programs and courses include Adult Basic Education programs (Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and General Education Development); Writing Skills program; Academic and Life Strategies; and Reading, Spelling, and Vocabulary programs. The A.D. Guy Education Center, a community learning and resource center, provides access to various social services and community college courses.

Developmental programs, courses, and services have well-defined goals, all of which support the College's mission statement. Interviews with administration and faculty indicate qualified, collaborative, and enthusiastic faculty who are genuinely concerned with student success. Several developmental education students noted that "[developmental] instructors were among the most caring instructors on campus."

Developmental programs and courses have clear student learning outcomes and assessment measures. However, there is no documented evidence that supports how assessment data is used at the program and course level to improve student learning. (Standard 2B, Policy 2.2) Additionally, there is no evidence to show how assessment data is used to influence resource allocation or to improve programs, courses, and services. (Standard 1B)

Faculty, including adjunct faculty, are evaluated per college policy. Multiple indices (peer, self, student, and supervisor evaluations) are utilized when evaluating faculty. However, the criteria

used to evaluate faculty performance needs to be strengthened to ensure teaching effectiveness and ultimately to enhance student learning. (Standard 4.A.5, Policy 4.1) Additionally, although student evaluations are administered in all course sections every semester and are made available to faculty after grades are posted, few faculty access student evaluations each semester. Thus, there is no evidence that supports how faculty use student evaluation data to strengthen instruction or to improve student learning. (Standard 4.A.5, Policy 4.1)

Commendation:

- The Committee commends the dedication, commitment, and student-centered approach that the Developmental Program faculty and staff exhibit.

Concerns:

- The Committee recommends that the Developmental Programs implement a complete assessment cycle that informs student learning and influences resource allocation.
- The Committee recommends that the Developmental Programs strengthen their faculty evaluation plan for evaluating faculty performance.

Policy 2.1 General Education

CCSN requires a component of general education in all of its degree programs as required in Standard 2.C.1, Policy 2.1 and Eligibility Requirement (ER) 12. These general education requirements offer the students a substantial and coherent program of general education courses that are clearly articulated in the catalog and taught by faculty that are appropriately qualified. The faculty members deliver the applicable courses directly in the classroom and, for selected courses, on-line. Students interviewed by the accreditation committee expressed an interest in having access to a broader range of general education courses available using the on-line delivery format.

All candidates for the Associate of Arts, Associate of Business, Associate of Science and Baccalaureate degrees must complete a general education core consisting of coursework in the areas of English, Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science/Humanities and a Constitution component (as mandated by Nevada state law). The goals of CCSN's general education program are clearly articulated in the 2006-07 catalog. However, the anticipated learning outcomes of the general education program could not be found in the catalog. The general education goals were developed by reviewing UNLV's goals for general education and adapting these goals to provide alignment with CCSN's mission. During the 2006 Fall Semester, these goals are to be reviewed as they are translated into specific outcomes and measurable assessments. Additionally, the assessment committee is currently being revived to define the mechanism(s) for general education assessment.

ER 12 also requires "regular and systematic assessment" to demonstrate "that students who complete their programs, no matter where or how they are offered, will achieve these outcomes." The accreditation committee could not find evidence of clear assessment of general education

outcomes nor could they find criteria “by which the relevance of each course to the general education component is evaluated” (Standard 2.C.2).

Policy 2.2 Educational Assessment

Education assessment at CCSN exists at various levels and formats across departments. Academic programs are assessing content and outcomes to some degree. Advisory committees, employer input, graduate employment, student feedback, and specialized accreditation are some of the methods used by departments to assess quality. Information is gathered through formal surveys as well as anecdotal comment.

There is some evidence that the campus is implementing an assessment plan that “responds to the college mission” as required in Policy 2.2. However, the committee could not confirm that a comprehensive educational assessment plan is used to impact teaching and learning outcomes based on regular and continuous assessment of programs.

CCSN has employed academic program review as a part of its assessment plan. Past efforts yielded very little quantitative data about the program, faculty composition, enrollments, or other data that might be used to make institutional decisions. It was reported that the academic program review results were used by the Faculty Senate budget committee in their deliberations. However, any direct evidence that program review resulted in any measurable effect on teaching or learning was not present. Recent efforts have revised the self-study contents and added some additional elements of data and topics that departments will need to incorporate into their next cycle of program review. The hope is that this revised self-study will yield useful information that can be directly incorporated into documented institutional decision-making.

Policy 2.6 Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate, and Degree Programs

CCSN has twelve online degree programs assisting numerous departments in their mission to educate as well as to graduate students. The Division of Distance Education is in compliance with all requirements set forth in Policy 2.6. Currently Distance Education has an FTE of 2,750 students. Headcount is 14,000 with 8,000 in non-duplicated students.

The Distance Education program has been allowed to grow quickly in the past two years. The Divisions and Departments at CCSN are responsible for all courses that are covered by Distance Education. Most course sections enroll 25 students and are conducted online over the internet. The Divisions and Departments are responsible for the curriculum, hiring of faculty and quality of the courses. Payment for faculty teaching the courses comes through the department. Payment is often part of the faculty member’s contract. Faculty can also be paid \$2200 per overload course they teach through Distance Education. Adjunct faculty may teach up to three courses through internet.

The courses on the internet are maintained through Sunguard. The Director of Distance Education is pleased with quality of service offered by Sunguard. Delivery options for Distance Education also include broadcast and interactive courses. CCSN participates in a cable TV

consortium with UNLV and CCSN which airs the broadcast courses. The interactive courses are held in “smart” classrooms that contain broadcast equipment to remote sites.

Administrators and faculty at CCSN believe that distance delivery is necessary to keep up with the high demand for classes at CCSN. The Department Chair would schedule the courses on the campuses if there were classrooms available. Space has become a severe issue at CCSN, and Distance Education is helping with the bottleneck created by high demand for English courses. In the English Department, four tenure track faculty teach their full load of five classes per semester through distance education. Three faculty teach 2/5 of a load through this mechanism.

Commendation:

- Distance Education has responded professionally and rapidly to the growing educational needs of the various campuses associated with CCSN. Because of severe space limitations, departments are able to continue to offer enough courses to keep up with most of the educational demands.

Policy A.6 Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited

Contractual agreements and Memorandums of Understanding were easily located and reviewed. All contractual agreements and Memorandums of Understanding that were reviewed by this evaluator were in compliance with Policy A-6. Agreements were consistent with the purposes of education and the mission of CCSN. Courses offered were consistent in regard to credit value and level to other courses offered in the institution. The scope of work and responsibilities of CCSN were clearly articulated and sole fiscal responsibility was assigned to CCSN in all contracts reviewed.

Standard Three: Students

Purpose and Organization

With the arrival of a new vice president for student affairs who is seasoned, energetic and thoughtful, the entire division is undergoing a renaissance. This actually started with an assessment process that began in 2002, before his arrival, and resulted in a reorganization that better suited the division to deliver services to students. The staffing efforts that began at that time are just being finalized. Staff turnover and unsuccessful searches have slowed the process. At the same time, the new VP has restructured the responsibilities for supervision. As a result, the area seems newly poised for providing programs and services to support the college's mission.

A new student affairs plan, which flows from CCSN's strategic plan, is being put into place. Similarly, department plans with specific initiatives, goals and outcomes are being developed to give meaning to the larger plan. This plan was based in part on the results of such assessment instruments as Noel Levitz's SSI, as well as on best practices seen at peer institutions and the experience of some of the new staff. However, these efforts to link assessment and planning are relatively new. It will be important to implement, measure and adjust the plan throughout next few years in order to begin to establish a pattern of improvement. This will be aided if a stable staff, from the VP level down to the department director level, is in place. The division of student affairs should do all that it can on these two fronts in order to assure that it can contribute to students' educational development.

The new initiatives that are being rolled out have required additional operating dollars. In many cases such money has been made available. For example, the new retention plan called for additional personnel in the Retention Office and some five new individuals will be hired this fall. At the same time, as the student body has grown there has been a need to increase staff in order to continue providing current services. Both the self study and interviews on campus served to point out that such growth has not always kept up with student demand. For example, the math tutor at the Henderson campus is booked out several weeks in advance. The institution should continue to plan for increases in operating and personnel budgets commensurate with enrollment growth, in addition as for any new initiatives to better serve students.

One area of greater concern is the provision of adequate physical resources. At Charleston much of the counseling for students concerning the registrar, admissions and financial aid is done in areas that do not always provide for private conversation and preservation of confidentiality. Even academic advising, which does have private offices for counselors, sometimes takes place in open reception areas. In all departments computer screens are often turned to public areas, visible to passers by, in order to discuss student concerns or answer questions. Similar issues exist at the other campuses. Given the limited space and the stated desire to offer expanded as well as new services, the college will have to plan for physical space that is adequate and creates an atmosphere where students can feel comfortable. It should be noted that the college is working to improve the delivery and increase the use of electronic means for providing appropriate programs and services. These efforts are applauded.

General Responsibilities

As mentioned earlier, the college sporadically has used some instruments for assessing student needs and recently has adopted others. The resultant data has not always been used to create plans or to inform program initiatives and budget decisions. Recent attempts to tie mission, planning and assessment are solid. Time will tell if such work will be ongoing and effective in the effort to serve students as well as possible.

Such concern for students is visible through the inclusion of students in various decision-making capacities and governing bodies at the college, from search committees to the President's Cabinet. It is also evident in the move to ensure the safety and security of students through the institution of a post-certified police force, as a result of the increased enrollment and expanding campus plant.

Academic Credit and Records

CCSN is in compliance with the bulk of this standard. However, there should be concern over 3.C.5. Because the college has chosen to centralize particular functions of the admissions and registrar processes to specific campuses, the need for temporary storage of records (usually one semester) occurs on each of the campuses. For example, in-person registration forms and academic appeal documents are held for a semester in Henderson or Charleston before being sent to Cheyenne for electronic storage. Temporary storage arrangements do not meet standards that require records be, "...protected by fire-proof and otherwise safe storage and are backed by duplicate files." In addition, most housed records awaiting scanning in Cheyenne are not fire protected at all. This should be corrected immediately.

Furthermore, though not rising to the level of a recommendation, difficulty in working in a confidential manner with students given the physical space provided to student service functions is apparent. 3.C.5 states that, "Student records, including transcripts, are private, accurate, complete, and permanent." There is a need to balance the commendable attempt to provide convenient, "one-stop-shop" service to students and still maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Student Services

The student affairs staff at CCSN is obviously committed to the college's mission, open admissions and providing services that support students' achievement of their educational goals.

One great example of this is the new emphasis on retention. A new plan is in place, additional staff has been hired at each of the campuses and realignments have been made to foster improvement.

At the same time, the significant growth in enrollment during the past few years has put stress on certain parts of the delivery structure.

Loan default rates, though historically cyclical, have grown over the past few years from approximately 8% to over 13%. Low retention and graduation rates likely influence this number,

as might increased enrollments. CCSN pushes most students towards in-person loan counseling, has added a half-time, work-study position to call students, and has a reduction rate plan in the files if needed. Still, the college should continue to monitor this rate and do all it can to support students in this area.

Interviews with various directors, counselors and faculty showed holes in the college's application of course placement policies, especially concerning math. It seems as if the administrative computing system does not create registration blocks that force students to complete academic requirements, as is generally assumed, and that students sometime move into classes that are above required placement levels or without having completed prerequisites. Though a full study has not been completed, there is some evidence that this adds to drop-out rates.

As students do seek tutoring as in response the college's early alert program and retention counselors' outreach there may be need to increase tutoring services. For some courses on some campuses there is a scheduling wait of up to two weeks. Some faculty and staff report the difficulty such lag time presents as courses move forward.

Standard 3.D.12 asks colleges to assure that health care is readily available to students, as appropriate. The self study simply states that the college does not operate health centers. On-campus interviews showed that administration believes that students can find adequate services in the community. No assessment in this area seems to have taken place, including through the Noel Levitz survey. Given that the recruiting base of the college includes students from outside of the area, some type of assessment may be warranted, even though it may support the administration's notion.

Intercollegiate Athletics

The small athletics program reports through the executive dean and student affairs vice president and uses all of the regular college functions and offices in providing student services to athletes.

During the visit the college was unable to provide a published policy concerning conflicts of scheduling for athletes (3.E.6). It is recommended that the college come into compliance with this standard.

Policy 3.1- Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

A review of publications, both electronic and print, and on-site visits with appropriate members of the staff show that the college is in compliance with this policy.

Recent efforts to align the offices of recruitment and retention with an eye towards improving student success are to be commended.

Standard Four: Faculty

The faculty employed by CCSN are qualified, competent and dedicated to the success of students. The number of faculty is sufficient to serve the current needs of the college. However, continued growth and program changes require regular monitoring of staffing to maintain quality.

Faculty members are both professionally and academically prepared. CCSN has faculty qualification standards for both adjunct and full time instructors. Position postings and hiring practices are in concert with the established standards.

Both adjunct and full time instructors participate in academic planning, curriculum development, and review. Institutional governance includes faculty input through various committees. Faculty have a very active role in the decision making at CCSN and are respected by the campus leadership. CCSN continues to be in a growth mode that creates change. Faculty in most areas embrace change and are excited to be engaged in the growth of the college.

Faculty salaries for most programs seem to be adequate to recruit qualified instructors. CCSN administration recognizes the challenge of faculty recruiting for highly technical or credential programs. A process for addressing required salary enhancement is available and can be implemented as needed.

Faculty Evaluation

Processes are in place to evaluate both academic and non-academic faculty with student evaluations for every class. Currently the original information sheets are sent from Institutional Research back to each individual department where the department chair is charged with reviewing each faculty's individual sheets. Data are not summarized or aggregated at any level. The IR department has the capabilities to summarize the data, but that capacity is not being used by any department. As stated by one person, "I see piles of papers sitting in the departments."

Faculty seeking tenure must include student evaluations, but it is the faculty's responsibility to select what student evaluations to include. When asked if the student evaluation instrument was useful, there were conflicting responses. Some said the check boxes were not helpful, but the student comments were. Others said the instrument itself was flawed and should be reevaluated. The process for distributing the student evaluation forms appears to rely upon the faculty to meet with the department chair and there was a suggestion that sometimes faculty do not bother to pick up their student evaluations from the departmental office.

Faculty achieve tenure after the third year of successful performance. New faculty report that the criteria and processes for tenure are clearly communicated by their individual departments. Some departments use their "lead" faculty to serve as mentors for new faculty.

Short form does not appear to add any substantive comments for faculty. It is not clear why tenured faculty must fill out the short form every year between their long form due every third year.

Faculty see themselves as teachers and are proud of their strong relationships with their students. Faculty understand that research or creative activity is not a part of their responsibilities and are clear that research with the concomitant peer review is not a college expectation.

Assessment of faculty is conducted on a yearly basis. The recommendations for continuing status are signed by the department head, faculty member, dean and human resources director. An absolute deadline is set yearly for the assessments to be filed permanently with the Human Resources Office.

Tenure is granted after three years. The majority of faculty apply for tenure at this time. If tenure is not requested, a continuation of one or two semesters may be granted. If the tenure application is not completed after this extension, the faculty member will not be retained.

Vita of faculty should be available for the accreditation team to review. In a random search of about 40 personnel files, only about half had Vitae. Many of these had not been updated. Most files were current, however, with the faculty assessment document. Vita of randomly selected administrators were not updated.

Commendation:

- The yearly assessment of the faculty is in order. Many faculty take advantage of this opportunity to let others know of their accomplishments for the year, including publications, papers presented, professional presentations, etc.

Concerns:

- Faculty vitae were only available through personnel files.

Standard Five: Library and Information Resources

Purposes and Scope

The Community College of Southern Nevada Library provides an array of essential resources and services to the college. Three main libraries on the Charleston, Cheyenne, and Henderson campuses provide access to over 106,000 volumes. The library budget has tripled to \$745,595 with 37% of the collection added since 2000, giving a high degree of currency to the collections. Electronic databases (from 10 to 25) give access to over 5,800 periodical titles and 12,820 electronic books, with password protected remote access offered over the web. Electronic reserve via WebCT and video-on-demand supports distance and multi-site education. In addition, sharing agreements with UNLV, Nevada State Library, Clark County Public Library, and the Desert Research Institute offer a wide variety of additional research options. The library offers all traditional services of collection development and management of information resources, technical processing, as well as reference services and information literacy training.

In January 2006, Sungard Higher Education contracted to provide campus IT support for student labs, network support and security, distance education, faculty and staff desktops, smart classrooms, web support and academic computing. A 24/7 help desk and computer technicians are available for troubleshooting.

Information Resources and Services

The library provides an assortment of materials in print, electronic, and media formats. Adequate access to computers, video and DVD players are also provided. In addition, computer labs at the Cheyenne, Henderson, and Charleston campuses as well as many of the college's learning sites give access to electronic databases and campus computing. All computers are networked to printers, with copy machines and scanners available.

Library materials are organized in Library of Congress classification with regular weeding of material to maintain currency of the collection. Electronic access to journals and books has increased 250% in the last five years, with database usage increasing each year. The library's online catalog includes access to the holdings of UNLV, Nevada State College, and the Desert Research Institute.

Traditional ILL through OCLC and the Ariel service efficiently delivers materials not locally owned, often within twenty-four hours if electronic.

Of course, library materials and databases are of little use if students do not have the analytical informational skills to use them. Librarians provide information literacy training in a variety of ways. Course specific instruction directed at specific assignments tailors the instruction to the need. A one-credit elective library course (LIB 101) gives in-depth opportunity for students to enhance research skills. Individual instruction at the reference desk along with printed guides and handouts engages the student as they walk through the library entrance. Workshops, both in the library and through distance education, are offered to faculty and students to update them on

new resources and new means of searching for electronic information. An online tutorial offers options for distance education and independent learners.

The library maintains written policies for collection development, circulation, and interlibrary loan. Brochures with policies are distributed. However, placing all policies (collection development, e.g.) on the library homepage is strongly encouraged. A library newsletter communicates new collections and services to faculty and students.

Faculty and students can suggest improvements in library collections and services via a library homepage link along with an email link to the appropriate librarian. Each new course must have the sign-off of the Director along with a required faculty review of supportive library materials. The Director actively participates in the General Education Review Committee and the Academic Standards Committee.

Sungard faces the challenges of upgrading the campus network to a gig backbone with 100 MB to the desktop, upgrading servers and security, installing wireless capability, establishing a one-card system, and voice-over IP telecommunications. PC's are replaced every two years for labs, every four years for desktops, and every five years for servers. Smart classrooms are needed on the Henderson campus.

Facilities and Access

All campus library facilities are open to registered students with accessible parking. ADA standards are addressed, and accessibility software is available in the computer labs. Hours appear to be reasonably adequate for a community college environment.

The most serious need of the library, especially measured against peer institutions, concerns inadequate space. The college reports that the number of users desiring seating far exceeds availability. Importantly, a \$25 million capital allocation for the Charleston campus includes new library space. The Henderson campus library is also undersized, with a "new library facility under consideration" (p. 178). A need for group study facilities at each campus to accommodate students working in teams would respond to a growing trend toward group activities. Availability of computer classrooms to teach library electronic resources is also an issue.

The agreement with Las Vegas/Clark County Library District to maintain library services and collections for the Health Science program appears to be strained. When the new Charleston library opens in 2007, CCSN library will assume sole responsibility for supporting collections and services. In similar fashion, UNLV Law Library and Clark County Law Library provide core legal resources for students and faculty. A more formal and documented contractual arrangement for the paralegal program is being prepared. CCSN is beginning to purchase legal reporters and databases to support this program.

Personnel and Management

All librarians hold the professional Master's in Library Science from schools accredited with the American Library Association, and have developed job descriptions and competencies in

coordination with the Faculty Workload Committee. As faculty, librarians have the opportunity to serve on faculty committees across the campus, particularly those relating to new programs and courses. Professional attendance of conferences are both encouraged and expected. New technologies, information literacy training, and support for distance education places increasing demands on librarians.

Sungard Higher Education staff competencies are high as reported by faculty and staff.

Planning and Evaluation

The library is just beginning to develop a strategy for assessing student learning and establishing core competencies in information literacy by working with faculty in the core general education requirements. WorldCat collection analysis and LibQual service analysis along with a new strategic plan indicate a good beginning.

A Faculty Technology Committee evaluates and gives feedback to Sungard concerning IT issues. In addition, a regularly held Technology Open Forum offers opportunity for feedback. The Chief Information Officer meets regularly with student government to address student computing issues. Sungard should aggressively maintain an open flow of communication in order to respond to faculty and student needs. A campus strategic plan for technology is being developed.

Commendations:

1. Librarians are full-time faculty with active participation on faculty committees, particularly those related to new courses and programs.
2. Library electronic resources have greatly expanded with proxy access to better serve multiple sites and distance education students.

Concerns:

1. The library needs to find more space for individual and group learners. The new library at the Charleston campus is very encouraging, but the need at the Henderson (in particular) and Cheyenne campuses exists as well.
2. A regular program of assessment that measures the impact of the library on student learning needs implementation.
3. Sungard needs to actively engage faculty and staff concerns regarding more technical staff help directly on campus, and in better identifying levels of priorities for technical help consistent with campus desires.

Standard Six: Governance and Administration

The visiting team reviewed relevant documents, interviewed representatives of the Board of Regents, the Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education, the President, and members of the leadership team. In addition, faculty and student leadership groups were also interviewed.

Campus groups reported a strong institutional commitment to shared governance. Trust in the governance process seems strong at all levels. An elected Faculty Senate actively participates in the governance process. Students are also represented on governing bodies.

Many vacant and interim positions have been filled recently. This has also contributed to the increased perception of stability, an improvement to the uncertainty that existed previously.

Standard Seven: Finance

The Community College of Southern Nevada (CCSN) is one of four community colleges in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The college is part of the higher education system in Nevada, which is governed by a 13-member, elected Board of Regents.

Financial Planning

The Board reviews and approves CCSN budget requests and approves the CCSN annual budget, as well as revisions to its budgets. Within this framework, CCSN has autonomy in directing resources consistent with needs determined by the college.

A period of unprecedented enrollment growth has presented considerable operating and capital challenges to CCSN. While enrollment growth has now leveled off, needs to respond to growth have been the recent highest priority for CCSN, and have overwhelmed, understandably, long term plans that were in place prior to the increased demand. Significant turnover in the college's presidency also affected the college's ability to establish and pursue long range planning.

A recently developed strategic planning framework, with ten overarching institutional goals, in combination with the NSHE Master Plan for Education and other priorities, has informed CCSN's 2006 operating budget and its 2007-09 operating budget request to the legislature. The College Budget Committee, which includes membership from teaching faculty, administrative and classified staff, solicits, reviews, and ranks requests for new positions and equipment. As part of this process, the Committee holds hearings to obtain additional information. The Committee then forwards its work as a recommendation to the president. The college publishes, distributes and holds annual workshops to explain its operating budget to interested faculty and staff.

Long-term capital planning has been complicated by the lack of a relevant facilities master plan, which has awaited the recent completion of the college's strategic plan and the consequent academic plan (underway at the time of this visit). While individual campus development plans are in place, work remains to be done on an overall long range capital vision for the college. Progress has been made, however, on mission statements for each of the college's twelve academic centers.

CCSN debt issuance follows Board policy and requirements of the State of Nevada. The college does not have any capital debt outlay.

Adequacy of Financial Resources

The college is funded according to an operating budget formula established by the Nevada legislature that takes into consideration projected future enrollment demand when determining the appropriate level of support for the ensuing biennium. In the recent years of rapid enrollment growth, the college's enrollments outpaced the projected enrollments used by the formula. The college has been successful in obtaining state resources for capital projects.

The college maintains expenditures within current year revenues and does not rely upon reserves to balance its operating budget. CCSN has established a reserve pool of 5% of general fund appropriations and intends to increase the reserve over time.

CCSN receives almost 60% of its annual operating revenue from the State of Nevada. An additional 23% of its revenues are derived from student payments. The remaining approximate 17% of revenues come from Federal and State grants and other miscellaneous income.

The college demonstrates consistent financial stability, but is facing the challenge of adjusting its future budgets to the impacts of flat enrollments, both with regard to the funding formula as well as projected tuition revenues.

State funding has been predictable and stable. The college has been able to fund new faculty positions and to generally keep up with needs for equipment. The new baccalaureate program in Dental Hygiene receives appropriate state funding (considered a high cost program in the formula) and students pay a higher registration fee (the college's term for resident tuition) than do lower division students.

Auxiliary enterprises are primarily outsourced and are not dependent upon college fiscal resources. These operations have contributed approximately \$1.5 million annually to the college's revenues. This is projected at a lower level (approximately \$1 million) in the future, due to the college's decision to reduce its bookstore commission in favor of lowering student textbook prices. Auxiliary enterprise income is not used to balance education and general operations.

The NSHE Board of Regents has established a policy that requires colleges to set aside 50% of all student fee increases to support student financial aid. The current year set aside for student financial aid is \$2.50 per credit hour.

Financial Management

Regular budget reporting is in place according to the policies of the NSHE Board of Regents. Briefings are provided to the Board on the operating and self-support budgets, accountability against legislative appropriations, fiscal exceptions, budget revisions and transfers.

The college's financial functions are consolidated under the Vice President for Finance and Budget. A recent reorganization created a new vice president of administrative services position with responsibilities for a number of functions that formerly reported to Finance and Budget.

All expenditures and income, and the administration of scholarships, grants-in-aid, loans and student employment are controlled by CCSN and are included in its planning, budgeting, accounting, and audits. The college uses generally accepted accounting principles.

An NSHE Board of Regents policy delineates how college investments must be handled.

Financial audits are conducted annually under a contract with an independent certified public accounting firm retained by the NSHE Board of Regents. The NSHE Board of Regents requires the college to follow up on any financial audit management letter issues. Internal audits are conducted by both a college internal audit function as well as the NSHE Board of Regents. These two separate internal audit functions do not overlap one another.

Fundraising and Development

The Foundation is a separate 501c(3) non-profit, public corporation which operates to raise funds for the college and for student scholarships. The Foundation is governed by a separate board of directors with bylaws and policies and is audited annually. The mission of the Foundation is to provide funding for student scholarships, capital endeavors, and educational programs. The relationship between the college and its Foundation is clearly defined. NSHE Board of Regents policy provides specifically for the investment and holding of endowment funds for all entities of the NSHE.

Standard Eight: Physical Resources

Instructional and Support Facilities

CCSN has three college campuses in the Las Vegas area, and will soon add a fourth. In addition, the college operates 12 academic centers. In all, the college operates 287 classrooms and 205 labs. In addition, the Nevada legislature appropriated \$40 million in 2005 to construct new facilities – an automotive center at the Cheyenne Campus, and a multi-use building at the Charleston Campus to include classrooms, library and learning resource spaces. Because of the rapid, recent growth of CCSN, many facilities are recently constructed and in excellent condition. Facilities are generally utilized in excess of usage standards established by the NSHE Board of Regents.

The college has successfully implemented an aggressive, efficient capital construction program designed to bring new space on-line as soon as possible. The first design/build facility built in Nevada was constructed on the Cheyenne Campus. Use of design/build and CM/at risk construction methods have accelerated building delivery over traditional design/bid/build projects, not only providing much-needed space quickly, but also minimizing inflationary costs typically associated with long project delivery schedules.

It is readily apparent that college facilities and grounds are well maintained. The facilities are very clean, attractive and welcoming. The evaluation team notes that the campus is “graffiti-free”. The college is in conformance with ADA standards and has an attorney on staff to review plans for continued compliance. Students, faculty and staff report that college facilities are welcoming and suitable.

The college recognizes that it faces facilities challenges, including needs for additional library, classroom, child care and other space. CCSN has acquired technology to streamline and better communicate requests for minor repairs and improvements. (The existing manual tracking system was adequate for the college before it experienced growth and expansion to multiple locations.)

CCSN has established a priority to equip “smart classrooms”, which incorporate technology such as up-to-date projection and other IT equipment. There are currently more than 50 smart classrooms, and the college has a plan to put this technology into all classrooms.

Equipment and Materials

The college has been successful in providing funding for instructional equipment requests. A recent improvement in the equipment request process promises to improve coordination of new equipment requests, including a review by the facilities management function to ensure that new acquisitions can be supported within college infrastructure. The College Budget Committee reviews and ranks equipment requests and forwards recommendations to the president.

CCSN has very recently shifted from a college-operated information technology function to a contractual, out-sourced agreement with Sungard. Significant progress is now underway to

provide functionality that would be expected at an institution of CCSN's size, such as student email and wireless internet access. In order to provide improved functionality on a solid framework, work is currently underway to strengthen the college's technology backbone.

Hazardous materials are disposed in accordance with established policy and under the purview of an on-staff expert in this area.

Physical Resources Planning

The college has in place a facilities master plan dating from 2001. This plan has been eclipsed by extraordinary growth since its completion, and plans are underway to update it. CCSN's strategic plan, recently completed, and its academic plan (underway) will provide the platform for facilities master planning.

CCSN's biennial capital requests are submitted to the NSHE Board of Regents which prepares a comprehensive, prioritized request list that is presented to the Governor. The legislature considers the executive request, makes its own modifications and provides funding. CCSN has been successful in this process, due in part to its well-documented needs associated with enrollment growth, and also in part to its efficiency in completing projects within original funding appropriations.

The college has recently secured land in northwest Las Vegas for its fourth campus. The land was donated to the college by the City of Las Vegas. CCSN, having been encouraged by the legislature to develop alternative financing means to augment state capital funding, is in the process of proposing to the NSHE Board of Regents a public/private development for this newest campus. The Board of Regents is also considering a CCSN proposal for a private housing development on unused land at its Henderson Campus, intending to create positive cash flows in the near term, with the land ultimately reverting to the college for future campus growth.

The college is also pursuing legislative authority to issue bonds for future campus facilities. The legislature recently approved up to \$20 million in bonds for the sole purpose of providing additional parking. In the upcoming legislative session, the college will request that this authority be expanded to \$50 million, and that the purposes be expanded beyond parking.

Standard Nine: Institutional Integrity

Institutional integrity, as seen from within the institution, is almost always a question of perception. At CCSN, the confidence in governance and leadership that is slowly returning, has led to an increased sense of integrity within the institution. Systematic implementation of policy and procedures will remain an urgent emphasis of the institution as they move toward a goal of unquestioned integrity.

Policies in support of institutional integrity, i.e., academic freedom, conflict of interest, hiring and dismissal policies, are in place and are a part of the college's operations. A great deal of the remaining task is taking that message outside the institution as well as making it well known within the college. This has been done and will continue to be a part of institutional effort.

General Commendations

1. The committee commends the college and system leadership for developing an atmosphere of stability and confidence within the college and the community.
2. The committee commends the college for outstanding stewardship of its buildings and grounds, and for creating and sustaining an attractive, clean and comfortable environment for teaching and learning.
3. The committee commends the college for making great strides in providing a consistent efficient, centralized approach to meeting the local area business and industry needs of a skilled workforce through the newly organized Division of Workforce and Economic Development.
4. The committee commends the college for its success in obtaining and deploying operating and capital resources to address the access demands posed by rapidly increasing enrollments during recent years. It is further commended for developing alternative capital financing models to augment future state capital resources.
5. The committee commends the faculty and staff for their commitment to students and for creating a teaching environment where students feel valued.
6. The committee commends the college for effective community outreach through a variety of programs such as theatre, music, dance, astronomy, culinary arts and high school partnerships.

General Recommendations

1. The committee recommends that the college strengthen the criteria used to evaluate faculty and to use the evaluation data to ensure teaching effectiveness and to enhance student learning. (4.A.5, Policy 4.1)
2. The committee recommends that the college engage in systematic planning and evaluation, using the results to influence resource allocation and to improve its instructional programs, institutional services and activities. (1.B.3, 1.B.4, 3.B.1, 5.E.3)
3. The committee recommends that the college implement its educational assessment plan on a regular and continuous basis, using the results to improve teaching and learning outcomes. (2.B, Policy 2.2)
4. The committee recommends that the college assure the privacy and security of student records, including protection against destruction by fire. (3.C.5)
5. The committee recommends that the college continue to review its policies and procedures for completeness and compliance. (3.E.6, 2.A.9, 2.A.12)