



# Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Linfield College  
McMinnville, Oregon

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
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# **Linfield College Mid-Cycle Report**

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## **Introduction to Linfield College**

Linfield College is a four-year, non-profit, coeducational institution historically and currently affiliated with the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. It is a comprehensive college with a strong commitment to study in the liberal arts and sciences. Linfield's main campus of 1,671 undergraduates is located in McMinnville, Oregon. The College also has a Portland Campus, home to over three hundred students in the Linfield-Good Samaritan School of Nursing. The Portland Campus began offering upper division transfer-only programs in 2005-2006. Over five hundred additional students pursue undergraduate degrees online through the Division of Continuing Education.

Fall 2013 FTE enrollment was 1,612 at the McMinnville Campus, 320 at the Portland Campus, and 260 in the DCE program, creating a total of 2,192 FTE. The headcount for all three programs in fall 2013 was 2,530. Females made up 67% of the total enrollment and males 33%. On the McMinnville campus, that percentage was 60% female, 40% male; on the Portland campus, it was 81% female, 19% male; and in the DCE program, the female to male ratio was 82% to 18%. In the fall of 2013, U.S. students of color comprised 30% of the McMinnville Campus student population, 25% of the Portland Campus student population, and 19% of the DCE program population. On the McMinnville campus, of the 2013-2014 graduates who entered as freshmen, 87% earned a bachelor's degree in four or fewer calendar years while 98% completed degree requirements within five or fewer years. 41% of the 2013-2014 McMinnville Campus graduates studied abroad as did 14% of the Portland Campus graduates.

Linfield has fifty unique majors, four pre-professional programs, and six certificate programs. The average class size is fifteen at the McMinnville Campus, twenty-six at the Portland Campus and eighteen in the DCE program. In the fall of 2013, Linfield faculty members numbered 161. Ninety-one percent of the McMinnville Campus faculty hold the highest degree in their field, 48% of the Portland Campus faculty do so. The average student-to-faculty ratio on the McMinnville Campus was 11:1; in Portland the ratio was 11:1 (with that ratio declining to 8:1 in nursing clinical settings).

## **Accreditation History**

Linfield College's accreditation was reaffirmed in 2012, based on the College's submission and the Commission's approval of the Year One Report (<http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation/year-one-report.html>). (The College received one recommendation to clarify the use of the term "Sample" when discussing the indicators that will serve as measures of the "Overarching Objectives" contained within each Core Theme. We will address this recommendation in Part II of this report.)

After the completion of the Year One Report, the College embarked on preparations to submit a Year Three report due in September of 2013. A broadly constituted steering committee was formed in 2012. Subcommittees began the work of analyzing information based on Standard 2 as required for the report. This steering committee met regularly and provided updates to the College Planning and Budgeting Committee (CPBC). The work

of the steering committee was reported regularly to the Faculty Assembly, Administrators' Assembly and to the Linfield Employees' Association.

In December 2012, the Commission informed Linfield College that the Year Three Report submission date was moved to September of 2014 and the College would have a virtual site visit. The steering committee continued to make progress on the Year Three Report.

In February of 2014, the Commission notified the College that there would be a significant change in reporting expectations and in March of 2014 the Commission issued guidelines for a new Mid-Cycle Report to replace the Year Three Report. The Mid-Cycle Report would be submitted in September of 2014. The Commission offered options concerning the work done to date on Standard 2: 1) submit the Year Three Report addressing Standard 2 as originally required; 2) submit a summary of the Report on Standard 2; or 3) submit materials addressing Standard 2 with the comprehensive Year Seven Report. Linfield College chose option three and will cover Standard 2 in the Year Seven Report.

NWCCU continued to refine the guidelines through June 2014 for the Mid-Cycle Report and Linfield College is, to the best of our ability, addressing these latest guidelines. We would like to note that the timing of the announcement of the revised reporting expectations has resulted in a smaller committee available to address the report. In particular, we have less faculty participation, and the regular College governance venues we utilize for dissemination of information have been on summer hiatus. We trust the Commission will understand that under normal circumstances, the entire College community would have representation in the creation of the report and the content would have been more widely disseminated for input. Nevertheless, this Mid-Cycle Report will benefit from the work done in the Year One Report as well as the analysis of Standard 2.

### **Changes Since the Year One Report**

Linfield College consistently addresses the needs of our students, their families, staff and faculty in an environment of continual improvement. On an annual basis the College undertakes a goal setting process at the Cabinet level and the President communicates administrative goals to the entire Linfield community. The Board of Trustees is updated on a regular basis. Each Vice President of the College develops goals consistent with the Strategic Plan and which support the mission of the College from their divisional perspective. A schedule of surveys provides standardized measures for input ranging from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), to surveys conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). We have a systematic cycle of program evaluation that produces a review for each academic department every seven years. Each academic department conducts a self-study followed by an evaluation conducted by external and internal evaluators. Because of data provided by these external reviews, departments have revised their programs, course offerings and used the data to plan for the future. Programs requiring professional accreditation are reviewed accordingly. In 2013 we completed our

Nursing accreditation, meeting both the *Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education* (CCNE) and *Oregon State Board of Nursing* (OSBN) requirements and were granted the maximum time before our next review (<http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>). In addition, our Chemistry Department was granted American Chemical Society certification in 2013.

Since the Year One Report we have accomplished some significant College milestones. We completed a Strategic Plan and the Board of Trustees approved it in May of 2012. The plan engaged faculty and staff across the College in a comprehensive process that included a faculty retreat, many open discussions, surveys and other methods for input, and regular planning updates to the community. The plan reaffirmed our mission and Core Themes and articulated three focused strategic goals. As we indicated in our Year One Report, the College assessment strategy has linked the mission, the Core Themes and overarching objectives with our Strategic Plan. As a follow-up to the planning process, we connected facilities investments with our Strategic Plan priorities and we are now in the process of completing significant physical plant renovations that support Core Themes with a newly defined international hub (Core Theme 3: Global and Multicultural Understanding) and a space that will integrate key student services (Core Theme 1: Culture of Engagement and Excellence).

The College has welcomed new personnel in some key roles. The new Vice President for Institutional Advancement joined the College in July of 2013 and in December of that year the new Vice President for Finance and Administration arrived. The new Dean of the Linfield Good Samaritan School of Nursing also arrived in July 2013 and the new Director of Online and Continuing Education joined the College in June 2014. These new leadership appointments have already contributed to fulfillment of the College's Strategic Plan and mission, and will continue to do so in the future.

Based on our Strategic Plan and an external evaluation report the College significantly reorganized the Division of Continuing Education (DCE) to more formally align student support functions with appropriate units. <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html> This DCE reorganization exemplifies data gathering, analysis and assessment as an institutional process. Many members of the College participated in the reorganization through "Team DCE." They used external evaluators, internal assessment, and national benchmarking standards to create a more integrated program of online learning for the College and students. In addition, starting in 2012 we formally aligned our online Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing program with other Nursing programs, and eliminated two DCE degree options that the Faculty deemed insufficiently rigorous (Social and Behavioral Sciences and Arts and Humanities). We also discontinued our Health Science Program at its former location on our Portland campus (2012) and now offer course work through DCE with both a certificate/minor in health administration and global health to serve a broader audience of students.

## **Part I - Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability**

Our Mission and Core Themes, in concert with the College Strategic Plan, guide all College priorities and decision-making. The Core Themes serve as our guiding principles and the Strategic Plan addresses the principles through an action-oriented approach that reflects broad institutional interests and the necessary steps towards achieving them, including allocation of resources to ensure sustainability. Taken together the College has a comprehensive approach to mission fulfillment.

As a starting place for the planning process the College deliberated upon the mission and Core Themes. We reaffirmed their relevance as principles and their utility to set priorities. Building on this foundation, the 2012-2018 Strategic Plan determines the direction most critical to the College for the immediate future. The interconnectivity and meaning are evident when the key points are viewed together.

Linfield College defines the broad learning outcomes for students through the following Mission Statement:

Linfield College is committed to the teaching of undergraduates in an atmosphere of academic freedom that offers intellectual rigor, creativity, and a sense of personal and social responsibility. To accomplish this goal, the institution embraces the following mission statement.

Linfield College advances a vision of learning, life, and community that

- Promotes intellectual challenge and creativity,
- Values both theoretical and practical knowledge,
- Engages thoughtful dialogue in a climate of mutual respect,
- Honors the rich texture of diverse cultures and varied ways of understanding,
- Piques curiosity for a lifetime of inquiry, and
- Inspires the courage to live by moral and spiritual principle and to defend freedom of conscience.

Reflecting the values, history and mission of the College, the following Core Themes were unanimously agreed upon by the College community in 2011 to be the foundation upon which curricular planning and evaluation, program development and evaluation, resource allocation and assessment of student learning would be based.

Core Theme 1: Culture of Engagement and Excellence

Core Theme 2: Integrated Teaching and Learning

Core Theme 3: Global and Multicultural Understanding

Core Theme 4: Experiential Learning

<http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation.html>

The Core Themes are operationalized through the 2012-18 Strategic Plan, which describes the blueprint for reaching the following goals:

- Goal 1. Strengthen Academic Programs
  - Goal 2. Enhance Linfield's Regional, National, and Global Connections
  - Goal 3. Grow and Strategically Align Linfield's Resources
- <http://www.linfield.edu/strategicplan.html>

Oversight of the assessment of mission fulfillment is the responsibility of the College Planning and Budgeting Council (CPBC) that reports to the College President. Newly formed at the time of our 2011 Year One Report, the CPBC has assumed its intended role of providing a locus for comprehensive oversight of planning and budgeting. Comprised of representatives from all employee categories at the College (faculty, exempt and non-exempt) as well as students and a trustee of the College, CPBC is co-chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Finance and Administration. The council is charged with:

- 1) Integration: Integrate planning, budgeting, and assessment to set priorities.
- 2) Planning: Evaluate effectiveness.
- 3) Budgeting: Assist in the optimizing resources to implement Linfield's Strategic Plan, and maintain accreditation.
- 4) Process: Function in an open and transparent manner.
- 5) Accountability to the Linfield community.
- 6) Honoring both the common and unique contributions of all divisions of the College.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) of Linfield College was actively involved in the creation of the Strategic Plan building upon the Core Themes. Each of the seven working groups that were formed to investigate specific areas (Student life, Faculty life, Enrollment, Portland/McMinnville, Continuing Education, Resources and Finance, and External Relations) had a Board liaison. In addition, a trustee served on the Strategic Planning Executive Committee. This trustee reported back to the BOT at every meeting and the Strategic Plan was the subject of a 3-day Board retreat in May 2012. The BOT approved the Strategic Plan in May 2012 and annual updates are discussed at each May Board meeting (<http://www.linfield.edu/strategicplan.html>).

In 2012-13 a working group of the CPBC created a matrix linking the Core Themes and overarching objectives with the Goals of the Strategic Plan. A rich and detailed document, it provides evidence that the College's integrated approach to mission fulfillment provides both direction and quality.  
(See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>)

This Mid-Cycle Evaluation again confirms the value of the Core Themes as they articulate central principles for Linfield. The Overarching Objectives continue to serve the College and connect with the Strategic Plan. The matrix also demonstrates that assessment data analysis can assist the College in reaching its goals via the Strategic Plan

in an intentional and effective way. In Part II of this report we look at two specific examples that demonstrate institutional mission fulfillment.

The data we have gathered, and the completion of planned assessment cycles, have resulted in a preliminary decision that the sample indicators included in our Year One Report are too numerous to provide the meaningful, focused data the College needs. A distinctive feature of the College's assessment work is inclusiveness of indicators across academic and administrative departments, mirroring the make-up of the CPBC. Thus all constituents will be involved in reconsidering which indicators are no longer necessary or relevant. This work will be completed in 2014-15.

Moving forward, we will prioritize student-learning outcomes. Our Strategic Plan has articulated the integration of the student learning experience through the curricular and co-curricular (experiential) activities of the College. Learning outcomes are fostered in a residential setting on both the Portland Campus and the McMinnville Campus, as well as in DCE. The sample indicators listed in the Year One Report provide a good starting point for prioritizing student learning outcomes as we ask what is meaningful and what benchmarking goals we use for our indicators.

Our next steps will be to identify the indicators that address essential student learning outcomes, curricular and experiential. CPBC will have a lead role in this endeavor, and as has been our practice, we will engage a representative constituency of the College, provide numerous opportunities for input, and report our analysis through our standing committees and assemblies over the next two years.

Part II will provide two specific examples focusing on student learning outcomes through our general education program and student learning in the Student Affairs Division. In Part III we will look ahead to our Year Seven Report.

## **Part II - Representative Examples**

As defined in our mission, Linfield College is a liberal arts college focused upon teaching and learning. Below are two examples of the importance of an intentionally structured student learning experience. The first addresses the Linfield Curriculum, the general education foundation upon which majors and minors are built, and its assessment program. The second example addresses out-of-classroom learning. The McMinnville Campus is predominately residential and therefore provides an opportunity to add value to the formal curriculum through a deliberately designed co-curriculum. The co-curriculum provides a laboratory for traditionally aged students to prepare for lives that integrate intellectual knowledge with practice in a field of study, with community-engagement experiences that reinforce civic habits and where constructive dialogue is practiced.

### ***Example 1: Linfield Curriculum***



Linfield embarked on a new phase of general education assessment in 2005-07 through the work of the General Education Review Committee (GERC). The Linfield Curriculum consists of four major components: (1) the Inquiry Seminar; (2) the Modes of Inquiry; (3) Diversity Studies; and (4) a Writing-Intensive Requirement in the major. In addition, each student must complete an Upper-Division LC course in one of the Six Modes of Inquiry. <http://www.linfield.edu/catalog/reqs/linfield-curriculum.html>

The GERC established working groups for each of the eight designations within the Linfield Curriculum (LC) framework. The charge of each of these working groups was, and continues to be, the determination of appropriate student learning outcomes for the eight LC designations (Creative Studies; Global Pluralisms; Individuals, Systems, and Societies; Natural World; Quantitative Reasoning; Ultimate Questions; U.S. Pluralisms; and Vital Past). During the 2007-08 school year, the working groups met, held open meetings, led discussions at a faculty retreat, and brought forward motions to the Faculty Assembly with proposed learning outcomes for each of these eight categories. These learning outcomes were approved and then each course with an LC designation was reviewed by the appropriate working group with respect to these outcomes.

What remained to be developed was the mechanism by which we would determine the extent to which students are meeting these learning outcomes. For three semesters, starting in Spring 2009, the Linfield Curriculum Assessment Task Force (LCAT), worked to create a system that balanced resources with meaningful assessments of student work. After open meetings and discussions, the Faculty Assembly approved this assessment process in Spring 2010.

Beginning in 2010, all incoming first-year students (and transfer students) on the McMinnville campus were required to submit exemplars of their work providing evidence of meeting the relevant learning outcomes for any course for which they intended to satisfy an LC requirement. Initially, students submitted their work on Blackboard (for the first year). We then moved to an ePortfolio system, Taskstream, which we have used since. Students complete a questionnaire concerning the specific course used for LCs requirements, submit relevant work examples, and write short descriptions of how their work meets the learning outcomes in each category. Students must complete these by the end of finals week of the term in which they are taking the course. This system was extended in 2011 to include all students in DCE and in the School of Nursing on the Portland Campus. In addition, students must also submit exemplars for any transfer courses for which they intend to satisfy LC requirements. While this may be a challenge, particularly for courses taken prior to matriculation, the goal is to provide all students with a common experience and exposure to the core of a liberal education. It also provides students an opportunity to integrate what they have learned during a course, as illustrated in the example through the template laid out below:

## Core Theme 2: Integrated Teaching and Learning

*Overarching Objective #2: Students articulate principal concepts from and relationships among multiple disciplinary perspectives and scholarly/creative traditions.*

#### Linfield Curriculum

##### Sample Indicator

*1) All students complete courses in six modes of inquiry as well as two cultural diversity courses. Throughout the course of their general education experience, students articulate concepts from multiple disciplinary perspectives as indicated in the exemplars submitted for the LC assessment program.*

We have a four-year rotation for the evaluation of the student submissions. Each summer, two of the LC Working Groups meet for two days to evaluate a random sample of student work. After scoring each submission using the rubric developed by the working group, they summarize their analyses and recommendations in a report, which is submitted to the faculty through the Curriculum Committee in the fall. These recommendations are discussed in open meetings during the following school year and the Faculty Assembly approves all subsequent changes. We have now gone through almost one entire cycle of this four-year process. Each of these groups has recommended changes in learning outcomes and has subsequently had those changes—sometimes slightly altered after discussions with those who teach within the designations—approved by the Faculty Assembly.

In every case, the changes that have been recommended and approved demonstrate faculty analysis of data representing student learning. The subsequent revision of the learning outcomes for each LC illustrates we have closed the loop of the first cycle of the assessment for the Linfield Curriculum. The 2014-15 year will be the final year in the first cycle. All of the eight designation working groups will have reviewed student work samples, made appropriate adjustment to learning outcomes and the faculty assembly will discuss and vote on any changes in Fall 2014. We will begin the cycle again in summer of 2015. This first example selected for our report illustrates the analysis process for the eight designations by reviewing one of them in more depth: Quantitative Reasoning.

As we describe in our catalog: “courses in this category explore contextual problems involving quantitative relationships by means of numerical, symbolic, and visual representations. These courses foster critical analysis of the uses and constraints of quantitative information and its representations. Finally, they focus on discussing models; making appropriate assumptions; and deducing consequences or making predictions (page 7 of catalog).

During the first year of the assessment cycle, Quantitative Reasoning was one of the designations evaluated. The learning outcomes were:

1. Pose questions involving quantitative relationships in real-world contexts by means of numerical, symbolic, and/or visual representations.

2. Analyze problems by discussing models; making appropriate assumptions; and deducing consequences or making predictions.
3. Understand the uses and constraints of various representations of quantitative information.
4. Communicate and critique quantitative arguments.

After analyzing the data in summer of 2011, the working group realized that students who failed to appropriately discuss the assumptions on which the models were based were going to be penalized in the final three learning outcomes. Because of this, the following wording was proposed and approved by the Faculty Assembly in 2011-12 and implemented for 2012-13 classes:

1. Frame contextual questions using mathematical representation.
2. Apply models to deduce consequences or make predictions.
3. Communicate quantitative arguments using clear prose.
4. Critique quantitative arguments with respect to assumptions, constraints, and logical coherence.

With this revision above, the overall set of expectations for student learning has not changed, but the expectations for individual outcomes are more clearly delineated.

We have learned that the clarity of the learning outcomes is a critical factor for student success. By design, the classes that have an LC designation cut across multiple disciplines. QR classes are located in math, economics, computer science, and nursing. They share a common lens on the world but they are distinctive in subject matter and the learning outcomes need to be articulated in ways that makes sense for the students in both the disciplinarily based courses and in the QR designation.

In most cases, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was lower than we anticipated. We need to continue to implement the assessment cycle: clarifying meaningful outcomes, providing consistent and multiple learning opportunities for students, and agreeing on specific benchmarks for success. We will incorporate specific benchmarks for the second round of the assessment cycle for QR that will begin in summer of 2015.

### ***Example Two: Student Affairs Experiential Learning***

The co-curriculum at Linfield is expressed through experiential courses that are credit bearing, through internships, through varied and numerous leadership experiences and, most importantly, through a residential living-learning community. Learning through living in a residential community is not accidental at Linfield; the residence halls provide a structured and intentional environment where students are encouraged to engage in purposeful experiences that support student learning around four learning domains: Living in Community, Effective Communication, Valuing Diversity and Skills for Success and Wellness.

The second example in this report illustrates the assessment work representative of experiential student learning in the Student Affairs Division. The Student Affairs Division began its assessment of student learning outcomes in 2012. Prior to that date, assessment efforts revolved around program evaluation for effectiveness and efficiency, linked primarily to resource allocation. Linfield College has long valued experiential learning, and the development of the Core Themes and Strategic Plan involved key members of the Student Affairs Division. Since 2012, the Division of Student Affairs has worked with its contracted assessment partner, Campus Labs, to improve the quality and consistency of data collection and analysis for program evaluation and to develop strategies to assess student learning outcomes.

This division has developed several core competencies in the following areas.

- Leadership Development
- Social Responsibility
- Effective Communication
- Multicultural Competency
- Collaboration

Addressing individual student learning outcomes within these core competencies is a key strategy for Mission fulfillment as it relates to co-curricular, experiential learning and the work of the Student Affairs division. We began with a group of student leaders who are critical to the success of the residential experience at Linfield, the Resident Advisors (RAs). Often, the Resident Advisor position on a college campus is viewed as one which provides service and resources to other students, but powerful learning also occurs for the RA as they master their responsibilities. At Linfield we define the resident advisors as student leaders who exemplify experiential learning. They develop skills that will benefit them going forward, no matter what their academic major. The RAs are first introduced to the College's leadership outcomes in the leadership training course offered during January term and spring semester. (See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>) This class exposes students to these leadership core competencies as they prepare to apply for student leadership positions. This course is theoretically based with an experiential learning component. Students who are selected to be resident advisors following the successful completion of this course are also exposed to learning outcomes in the extensive fall training program for RAs. (See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>)

All RAs serve as peer resources, supportive upper-class advisors for students in the residential community. They hold all residential students accountable for community standards and are trained to refer students to appropriate resources on campus as reflected in the mission, "Linfield College advances a vision of learning, life and community that ... engages thoughtful dialogue in a climate of mutual respect and honors the rich texture of diverse cultures and varied ways of understanding ..."

Research demonstrates that communicating across cultures is a vitally important skill for students in their future roles as citizens and employees. Residential students at Linfield have often not experienced living in a residential community with diverse members. The resident advisors are frequently called upon to address incidents of bias, the use of inappropriate and offensive language, and an inability to resolve interpersonal issues related to difference. Therefore, a critically important skill set for RAs is broadly described as multicultural competency. The third Linfield Core Theme states that the College cultivates a culture of global and multicultural understanding. The RAs contribute to this through their effective work as student leaders in their work with residential students.

Overarching Objective 3.1 *“Students demonstrate theoretical understanding of the role of diversity in society.”* The Overarching Objective (3.3) that Student Affairs responds to for this Core Theme is this: *“Students, faculty and staff engage in global and multicultural experiences.”*

As with most assessment, moving from the global college learning outcomes to specific student learning is a challenge. Because of the important responsibility that RAs are given to address specific community actions around multicultural understanding, we provide specific training and instruction in order to better serve our students, structuring learning outcomes that are congruent with the College’s mission and Core Themes.

We have operationalized the indicator for this objective in the following way. During the fall RA training, the RAs write in their journal each night, reflecting upon their learning for that day. RAs meet every other week with their supervisors and discuss their learning focused upon the five learning domains established and the core competencies. The professional staff may re-emphasize a particular topic after reading RA journals and determining that student leaders did not understand the material.

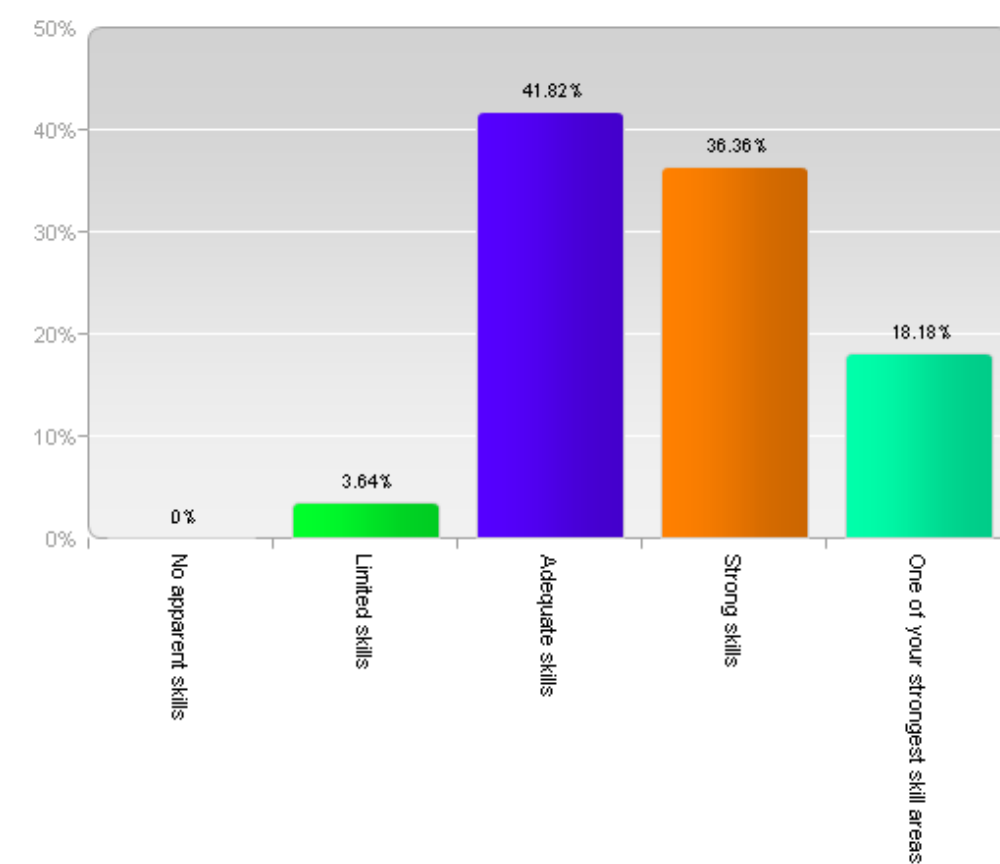
The final assessment on the student leadership outcomes occurs at the end of the academic year with an RA self assessment and final meeting with the RAs’ supervisors. See (<http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>) During the 2012-2013 academic year, this assessment revealed that student RAs felt least competent in the multicultural outcome. They were asked to give examples of effective use of a multicultural competency. Only 19 RAs were able to give examples of their multicultural development or competency, while 28 RAs gave examples of their communication skills. Many of these examples, in our analysis, did not rise to the level of competency.

To correct this and to close the assessment loop, the professional staff used this analysis in 2013-2014 to increase the number of formal trainings (from three to five) focused upon diversity and cultural competencies knowledge. The staff added one training session on bias and appropriate response to bias incidents in the residence halls. They also invited a faculty member to conduct one session on micro-aggression. As a result, more than 50% of RAs assessed Multicultural Competency as one of their strongest skill areas. The analysis revealed that RAs were able to give better examples of their multicultural diversity competency, and many of their examples indicated more depth of understanding

of their personal development in this area (See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>)

Figure. 13-14 Assessment Chart

Q14. Please rank your skills in Multicultural Competency as a result of your leadership role this year:



Qualitative data is collected during interviews and meetings with the RAs. And, quantitative data is gathered through a mid-year survey and an end-of-year survey. The Residence Life staff analyzes this data in aggregate to continually improve the learning outcomes. Reports including this data are shared with all Residence Life staff including the student RAs. Additionally, RAs have individual meetings to review the data and the concomitant analysis with their immediate supervisor. RAs' learning is assessed at the end of October and at the end of the year (See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>). This 360-degree evaluation includes a self-assessment, peer RA evaluation, resident evaluation and a supervisor one-on-one meeting about the RA's performance and learning. Each evaluation provides an opportunity to set new learning goals. The data is also used to evaluate the overall residence life program and is analyzed,

aggregated, and then communicated to various constituencies (See <http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation-reporting.html>).

### **Year One Peer-Evaluation Recommendation Response**

The evaluation panel recommended that Linfield College clarify its use of the term “Sample” when discussing the indicators that will serve as measures of the “Overarching Objectives” contained within each Core Theme, and adjust its list of indicators to reflect that clarification. (Standard 1.B.2)

The word “sample” was used as a synonym for “example.” Each indicator was merely a potential example for the achievement of each overarching objective. In the 2011 Year One Report, we wanted to understand the range of indicators that various departments, both academic and administrative, used for program planning. This was our starting point for the list of examples. We now realize that this abundance of indicators does not result in meaningful assessment and Linfield College is identifying a reasonable number of indicators for each Overarching Objective.

### **Part III - Moving Forward to the Year Seven Report**

Our comprehensive assessment of academic and co-curricular programs demonstrates that the mission and Core Themes of Linfield College create a compelling, holistic student learning experience. We have learned from the two examples described above, and from other data analysis not referenced in this report, that student learning is improved through careful assessment and analysis followed by program or curricular change.

Looking ahead to our Year 7 Comprehensive Report, we will continue to monitor our resource allocation and budgeting process. We must reduce the number of indicators we described as samples in our Year One Report so that each year we analyze those objectives and indicators that matter the most for student learning. Our LC assessment cycle will continue, and in the summer of 2015, as the first modes of inquiry begin their second cycle, we will review the upper division course offerings and determine appropriate learning outcomes.

Since the Year One Report, the College has embarked on three additional major initiatives reflected in our Strategic Plan and exemplified in our Core Themes. The Program for Liberal Arts and Civic Engagement (PLACE) was launched with a pilot in fall of 2012 and continues to be developed and expanded. Through the exploration of thematic connections among modes of thinking and inquiry within the Linfield curriculum, PLACE helps students to see how the liberal arts approaches one topic from different perspectives, and how the topic connects to community and civic engagement (<http://www.linfield.edu/place.html>).

The second initiative is a revision of our first year experience (FYE). While the College has had components required of all first year students, we are developing an intentional

and integrated program that holistically approaches orientation, a colloquium/advising experience and the revitalization of programming specifically for first year students.

The third initiative has been a serious commitment to improvement in science education at the College. We envision educational programming that will better educate *all* students at Linfield as befits a liberal arts education. One goal of these efforts is to examine and plan for science facilities.

As each of these initiatives develops, they will have implications for our planning and assessment processes. It is important to note that, as other initiatives have been broadly inclusive, so too will these three involve all members of the College community.

### **Conclusion**

This Mid-Cycle Report documents the work completed to date as Linfield College addresses the 5 NWCCU standards. We look forward to continuing to participate in our peer evaluation system that will provide us with enhanced feedback and guidance.