

NWCCD Compliance Report

CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

As stated in Series 6010 of the College Policy and Procedures Handbook (<http://www.sheridan.edu/president/6000.nwc.pdf>), page 10) the college is authorized to award Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Fine Arts (AFA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, each with established and published requirements. Degree requirements include General Education courses intended to provide the student a common core of knowledge appropriate to the degree level.

All Associate degrees require a minimum of 64 credit hours; 40 credits of General Education courses are required for an AS degree, 48 for an AA degree and 24 for an AFA degree. Degree and program requirements are maintained for public viewing in the College catalog at <http://catalog.sheridan.edu/>. These credit hour requirements are similar to those of the other six community colleges in Wyoming and meet the standards of the HLC Criteria for Accreditation.

NWCCD has nine categories of General Education courses – Writing, Math & Quantitative Reasoning, Science, Cultural Context (Humanities, Visual & Performing Arts, Social & Behavioral Science), US & WY Constitutions, Global Diversity, Communication, Health & Wellness, and Foreign Language. In addition to General Education requirements, specific program requirements provide a foundation of knowledge and skills more specific to the program of study to prepare students for transfer to a Baccalaureate program or for entry into the workforce.

NWCCD is also authorized to award Certificates of Completion to students demonstrating both knowledge and skills necessary for job-related functions in order to be successful in entry-level positions within a job category. While there is no minimum credit hour requirement, NWCCD's Certificates generally require two semesters of study, have at least 30 credit hours, and often lead into AAS programs. In a few instances a Certificate is available with fewer credit hours. These shorter programs supplement other programs, as is the case with the Athletic Coaching and Music Technician certificates, or meet a specific skill level for job placement, such as Early Childhood Education, Biotechnology, Carpentry, and Massage Therapy.

Wyoming community colleges and the University of Wyoming have a common course numbering system for transfer courses and some technical courses, and the University maintains a Transfer Guide. The community colleges must submit syllabi to the University for courses to be placed in the transfer guide and thereby approved for transfer to the University. As such, NWCCD faculty ensure that courses and programs align with the University for smooth transition and contain equal rigor. Each course is identified with an instructional method and a minimum number of classroom/lab minutes per credit hour awarded. Guidelines are outlined in Series 6010.4 of the College's Policy and Procedures Handbook. (<http://www.sheridan.edu/president/6000.nwc.pdf>), page 12)

Lecture, 750 min/credit hour	Practicum, 2250 min/credit hour
Lab, 1500 min/credit hour	Clinical, 2250 min/credit hour
Lecture/Lab, 1125 min/credit hour	Internship, 3000 min/credit hour
Lecture/Studio, 1500 min/credit hour	Co-op, 3750 min/credit hour
Private Lessons, 210 min plus 840 min arranged practice/credit hour	

Tuition is established by the Wyoming Community College Commission for all Wyoming community colleges. The Commission reviews tuition regularly and compares rates with other states in the region. The colleges have freedom in establishing program and/or course fees. NWCCD has established a program fee for just two programs – nursing and dental hygiene – because of the high costs associated with these programs. Still, the fee of \$250 per semester is conservative. Assessing other courses individually, faculty and administrators have identified those having high costs and have assessed moderate course fees. Courses having fees are primarily in science or technical departments.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

NWCCD has written procedures providing students avenues for communicating concerns to the administration. Students are encouraged to seek immediate resolution by visiting with a faculty member, student services administrator, Dean of Students or any other executive administrator, but also have options for making a formal complaint. Depending on the nature and severity of the complaint, a student may post a concern through the website, file an appeal, make a formal complaint, or file a grievance. Procedures are published in the College Policy and Procedure Handbook, in the Student Handbook and on the College website. Each process is discussed separately below.

Concern filed from website: The student portal web page, MyCollege (<https://mycollege.sheridan.edu/default.aspx>) under Student Feedback, provides an option for students to submit an issue or concern regarding Sheridan College or Gillette College. In many cases individuals submit a comment or question without identifying themselves. In other cases students will include a name and e-mail address with their submission and follow-up communication is made with the student. Once submitted, the message is delivered to the Dean of Students and her administrative assistant, Dean of Enrollment Services, and the Chair of the Student Issues and Concerns Committee. If one of the Deans cannot address a complaint directly, it is forwarded to the person most appropriate to handle it. In many cases, such as parking, a quick solution is not available but the complaint is acknowledged and relevant information is shared with the student.

Academic Year	Type of Issue or Concern	# submitted
2007-2008	Shortage of parking	1
	Criteria for nursing program acceptance	1
	Academic calendar	1
	Class or textbook concerns	3
	Athletic practice schedule	1
2008-2009	Shortage of parking	1
	Class or textbook concerns	2
	Web/e-services concerns	4
	On-campus smoking	2
	Maintenance issues	2
2009-2010	Weekend access to lab	1
	Reserved parking	1
	Class or textbook concerns	5
	Web/e-services concerns	2

Appeals: The student appeals process is used for students seeking a specific resolution such as having a bill reduced or removal from academic or financial aid suspension. Students have the right to take their case to the Dean of Students or file a grievance if they are unhappy with the decision of the Student Appeals Committee. However, that step is rarely taken by students once the rationale of the decision is communicated to the student. Information about the Student Appeals Committee is outlined under NWCCD Governance System in the College Policy and Procedures Handbook, Series 2005 and 2005.1 (<http://www.sheridan.edu/president/2000.nwc.pdf>, page 12). Information is also provided to students through the Student Handbooks (Sheridan, page 21 and Gillette, page 22) or online at (<http://www.sheridan.edu/offices/ir/sr.stuhand1011.pdf>), page 21.

Grievance: A formal grievance process is in place to ensure that student rights are protected. A grievance is a dispute of policy and/or procedure with a member of the College community. The process is described in the Student Handbooks (Sheridan, page 15 and Gillette, page 16) or online at <http://www.sheridan.edu/offices/ir/sr.stuhand1011.pdf>, page 15. The Dean of Students is responsible for ensuring that student complaints are handled in an equitable manner. The grievance process is not intended to replace informal processes, but provides an additional avenue for dialog for students.

The grievance process establishes that a grieving student first meet with the Dean of Students in an effort to resolve the issue informally. If those efforts fail, the student may prepare a formal grievance and the grievance enters a formal hearing phase. A Grievance Committee is formed and is obligated to provide a prompt, fair, and equitable hearing, allowing the student and accused party to participate. The Committee submits written findings to the Dean of Students or designee and makes recommendations to resolve the grievance; the Dean of Students or designee makes the final decision. Hearing guidelines and strict timelines are provided in the grievance procedure to allow for fair and timely disposition of a complaint. Only three student grievances have been filed in the past three years and each was resolved informally.

TRANSFER POLICIES

NWCCD transfer policies are described in our online catalog, located under General Information. (http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=112#Transfer_Policies). Applicants are asked to submit official transcripts and the evaluation process is further explained during the initial advising session. Many incoming students feel most comfortable contacting the Records Office directly to discuss transfer of coursework. Records Office personnel explain the process and personally walk through the steps if there is any confusion. In cases where a course is not initially equated to a NWCCD, the Associate Registrar will work with the student in locating more information about the course and working with academic departments in further evaluation of course outcomes.

VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

NWCCD uses Blackboard Academic Suite to deliver course content online. Event driven integration is employed to push courses and enrollments from Datatel to Blackboard. Students access course materials in Blackboard using their NWCCD MyCollege username and password. Traditional high stakes multiple choice exams are discouraged unless the instructor implements a proctoring solution. Our Distance Learning Course Development Guide 2010-2011 provides guidelines for proctoring

<http://www.sheridan.edu/distance/faculty.asp>) Ideas for appropriate proctors are provided on our distance learning website for students (<http://www.sheridan.edu/distance/testing.asp>) that includes, but is not limited to, professionals from other accredited post secondary institutions, clergy, and library professionals. Hours and contact information for our College testing centers is also provided.

We have investigated identity solutions such as Axiom, which verifies identity but does not verify that the work submitted by students is their own. Another solution we have begun to investigate is ProctorU. This online solution has proctors who verify student identity using Webcam technology. NWCCD has recently purchased Elluminate Live. This Web conferencing solution may have potential for our testing centers in Sheridan, Gillette, and Buffalo to use Webcams for identity verification and exam proctoring.

Through student account activation for access to electronic services within our institution (email, WebAdvisor, Blackboard, etc) we verify student identity by one of the following unique identifiers:

1. Social Security Number + Student Last Name
2. Student ID + Student Last Name

Within the next year we plan to expand this verification to include a unique PIN or identifying information that is not pre-determined by existing student information prior to their arrival at the institution (such as date of birth, SSN, etc). This unique identifier would be utilized for activation of their accounts. The method of delivery and process for execution of this unique identifier has yet to be determined.

TITLE IV PROGRAM and RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

General Program Responsibilities

NWCCD continues to be in good standing within the Title IV program. The College has never had negative reviews that resulted in fines or monitoring by the US Department of Education. The College received reauthorization to participate in the Title IV Programs on 02/19/2009 from the Denver Team.

Financial Responsibility Requirements

NWCCD has an annual audit of its financial statements, including a determination of major programs in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. The audit includes internal control related to the major programs and an opinion on compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on each major program.

NWCCD files the electronic SF-SAC annually with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and electronically submits its annual audit to the US Department of Education using the eZ-Audit system. The most recent 6 years of A-133 compliance audit contained no findings.

NWCCD calculates its composite financial ratios annually using its audited financial statements. The CFO reviews these ratios on an annual basis and presents an analysis to senior leadership on at least a biennial basis. These ratios are submitted to the Higher Learning Commission on an annual basis as part of the annual institution data update, including historical information back to fiscal year 2003. The College has a benchmark of at least 3.0 for its CFI.

	Benchmark	Ratio	Strength			Ratio	Strength		
	3 out of 10	2008	1-10	Weight	CFI	2009	1-10	Weight	CFI
Primary reserve ratio	40%	59%	4.444	35%	1.56	47%	3.510	35%	1.23
Net Operating Revenue Ratio	2.0%	0.3%	0.380	10%	0.04	-0.1%	-1.000	10%	-0.10
Return on Net Assets	6%	24%	10.000	20%	2.00	17%	8.250	20%	1.65
Viability Ratio	1.25	1.60	3.848	35%	1.35	0.90	2.160	35%	0.76
CFI - Consolidated Financial Indicator	3.00				4.94				3.53

Student Loan Default Rates

Default rates for NWCCD for the past five years are shown below. The Department of Education has not reviewed or made negative findings related to our default rates. The National Cohort Rate is provided by the Department of Education and represents all Title IV institutions.

Cohort Default Rate

Year	Borrower in Default	Borrower in Repayment	Cohort Default Rate	National Cohort Rate
2003	13	175	7.40%	4.50%
2004	13	232	5.60%	5.60%
2005	18	214	8.40%	5.10%
2006	19	265	7.10%	5.20%
2007	28	275	10.10%	6.70%

NWCCD rates have increased in recent years, following a national trend (Inside Higher Ed, 9/14/10 <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/09/14/default>). While the rate for NWCCD is higher than the national default rate for all institutions, our rate is only slightly higher than the rate for two-year institutions. A prolonged slump in the economy is a contributing factor, making it more difficult for students to stay in school or to meet financial obligations following graduation. The College educates its borrowing students on the importance of repayment and is proactive in its default management plan, which includes the following:

- Letters are sent to our students who are delinquent, encouraging them to contact their lenders to rehabilitate their delinquent loans.
- Loan counseling is required for all student borrowers.
- All First-time student borrowers are required to wait thirty days before receiving any loan funds. If the student is not maintaining standards of progress, the student is not entitled to the loan and the funds are returned to the lender.
- Loan exit counseling material is sent to all students who graduate or are no longer attending NWCCD.

Campus Crime Information and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information

NWCCD maintains a Student Right-to-Know webpage to provide information to the public related to campus safety, graduation and transfer rates, student privacy, equity in athletics, financial aid policies, accreditation, and student rights and responsibilities. (<http://www.sheridan.edu/srtk>)

This webpage is maintained by the Dean of Enrollment Services with assistance and participation from Student Services personnel and the Campus Security Office. An electronic notice is distributed to all students and employees every October 1 to provide evidence that the College is following its obligations. The notice states:

In compliance with the Student Right-to-Know/Campus Security Act, NWCCD has made the following information available on its website: Graduation/Transfer Rates, Campus Crime Statistics, Campus Security Policies & Procedures

Website address: <http://www.sheridan.edu/srtk>

If you prefer a hard copy of this information, please call the Office of Institutional Research at (307)674-6446, ext. 2820.

The Department of Education has made no negative findings related to our disclosures.

Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies

In order to stay in good standing for financial aid, full-time students must successfully complete at least 12 credit hours per semester or 68% of credits attempted, whichever is greater. Three-quarter time students must complete 9 credits and half-time students must complete at least 6 credits. Further, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA as follows: 1.6 GPA for the first 29 credits, 1.8 GPA for up to 44 credits, and 2.0 GPA thereafter. These requirements are consistent with federal regulations. Any student failing to meet the standards of satisfactory academic progress receives a letter from the Financial Aid Office explaining the loss of eligibility to participate in Title IV programs.

Information on Satisfactory Academic Progress is provided to students in person during their initial financial aid counseling meeting with Financial Aid personnel. Written information is available in four locations. First, on page 3 of the Financial Aid Policies document posted on the Financial Aid web page of the College website (<http://www.sheridan.edu/sc/financialaid/policies.aspx>). As part of the process, students must submit progress reports that are available at <http://www.sheridan.edu/sc/financialAid>. Second, in the Student Handbooks (Sheridan, page 12 and Gillette, page 14). Third, in the Student Handbook link on our Student Right-to-Know web page (<http://www.sheridan.edu/offices/ir/sr.stuhand1011.pdf>), page 12. And fourth, in the College catalog (http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=112#fina_aid_scho_loan), under General Information on the main menu.

Attendance is addressed in College Policy under Series 5005.4 (<http://www.sheridan.edu/president/5000.nwc.pdf>, page 3) as follows:

CLASS ABSENCE

Attendance Policies

Each instructor or department shall include a copy of his/her attendance policies in each course syllabus and distribute it to all students in his/her classes at the beginning of each course. Adopted attendance policies shall be announced to and clearly understood by the classes affected. The District recognizes regular class attendance on the part of the student as a major contributor to student success and expects students to attend class regularly.

Authorized Absence

Although authorized class absences will not affect a student's course grade, a student is entitled and obligated to make up any/all work missed. Authorized absences are defined as:

Medical reasons;
Personal tragedy, i.e., death, illness or accident in the family;
Jury Duty.

Anticipated Absences

All anticipated absences incurred in representing the District in athletics, field trips, or other official capacities will be reported by the activity sponsor/coach to the instructors concerned in advance of the class meeting to be missed.

Contractual Relationships

The College has a strategic alliance agreement, originally signed in 2003, with Career Step, LLC to provide online course access for the College's Medical Transcription Certificate of Completion Program. The content of this program is delivered using a predominantly online model with content experts located within Career Step. NWCCD has a program coordinator on-site who also functions as an advisor and faculty course facilitator to assist students in navigating the program, and linking students to resources to assist their learning as necessary. In addition, NWCCD offers a face-to-face class in medical terminology that serves this program as well as others.

INSTITUTIONAL DISCLOSURES and ADVERTISING AND RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

A statement of our accreditation is provided on our College website (<http://www.sheridan.edu/site/about-nwccd/>) and in our College catalog (http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=112#Accreditation_Memberships). Additionally, a separate webpage is dedicated to our AQIP process, including our Portfolio and feedback from our last Portfolio review.

Accreditation/Memberships

Northern Wyoming Community College District is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. The College's affiliation status may be viewed online at the HLC website at : http://www.hlcommission.org/component/option,com_directory/Action,ShowBasic/Itemid,184/instid,1725/lang,en/ .

Nursing and Dental Hygiene programs carry additional professional accreditations. Certification is available in some technical programs through state and national program accreditation.

The College maintains institutional memberships in the American Association of Community Colleges, Council of North Central Two-Year Colleges, the National Junior College Athletic Association and other professional organizations.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCIES AND WITH STATE REGULATORY BODIES

NWCCD's Nursing Program is approved by the Wyoming State Board of Nursing and accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission. The Dental Hygiene Program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. Rigorous review of each program is completed at regular intervals to ensure compliance. Accreditation was reaffirmed for the Dental Hygiene Program in 2010. The Nursing Program had its accreditation reaffirmed in 2003 and will have its next visit in Spring 2011. Information about these accreditations is available on the College website and in program brochures. Nursing information may be found at <http://www.sheridan.edu/sc/academics/programs/nursing> and information on Dental Hygiene is located at <http://www.sheridan.edu/sc/academics/programs/dental>.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT and THIRD PARTY COMMENT



September 17, 2010

Mary L. Green
AQIP Accreditation Services
The Higher Learning Commission of NCA
230 South LaSalle, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604-1413

Dear Mary:

This is to inform you that our Notification of the Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment Process advertisement was placed in the following daily regional newspapers:

Gillette News-Record
The Sheridan Press

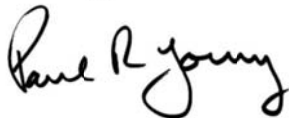
In addition, we sent a press release to the two daily newspapers, two regional weekly papers: The Buffalo Bulletin and the High Plains Sentinel, and the local radio news company, Sheridan Media.

A copy of the Press Release is attached, as are photocopies of the two advertisements as well as the story as posted on Sheridan Media's web site: www.sheridanmedia.com.

In addition, we sent the Press Release as a general email to all NWCCD employees and made announcements at the following meetings: NWCCD Board of Trustees, Sheridan Center for a Vital Community Board Meeting, and the Student Government meetings for both Sheridan and Gillette Colleges.

A binder with hard copies of this information will be placed in our Team Resource Room.

Sincerely,



Paul R. Young, President
Northern Wyoming Community College District

3059 Coffeen Ave. • P.O. Box 1500 • Sheridan, WY 82801-1500
800.913.9139 • 307.674.6446 • www.sheridan.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 7, 2010

Contact: Wendy Smith (307) 674-6446 ext. 2801/Email wsmith@sheridan.edu

NWCCD seeks comments from constituents as part of accreditation process

Northern Wyoming Community College District is seeking comments from the public about the District in preparation for its periodic evaluation by the regional accrediting agency. The District will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit November 17-19, 2010, by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges. The NWCCD has been accredited by the Commission since 1968.

In 2005, the District was accepted into the Academic Quality Improvement Program process for accreditation.

“The AQIP model is designed to align the Higher Learning Commission’s reaccreditation process with an institution’s program of continuous quality improvement,” said Dr. Paul Young, NWCCD President. “This progressive concept is valuable to our District and will help us continue to meet the rapidly shifting needs of the students, employers, and communities we serve.”

Part of the AQIP accreditation process includes the creation of a dynamic document called the Systems Portfolio. This document includes an organizational overview as well as specific information on how the institution meets key requirements for accreditation. It outlines key strategies, goals, challenges, and opportunities the institution faces. This information as well as information about all NWCCD AQIP projects can be found on the web site at www.sheridan.edu/about/aqip.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the college:

Public Comment on Northern Wyoming Community College District
The Higher Learning Commission 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500 Chicago, IL 60604

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and signed; comments cannot be treated as confidential.

All comments must be received by October 15, 2010.

The Sheridan Press, Monday, September 13, 2010

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Northern Wyoming Community College District is SEEKING COMMENTS

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Public Comment on Northern Wyoming Community College District
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604

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GILLETTE NEWS-RECORD

September 13, 2010



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HAS ARRIVED.



What Do You Think About Sheridan, Gillette and Buffalo Colleges?

By Betsy Love on Fri 09/17/2010 04:55




Northern Wyoming Community College District is currently looking to hear what you think about our local colleges. Wendy Smith, Director of Marketing and Public Information for Sheridan College, explains why the District is currently seeking comments from the public: ▶

She says that comments should address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its programs and that all comments must be signed.

Information about all NWCCD AQIP projects can be found on the web site at www.sheridan.edu/about/aqip.

Send all comments by October 15th to:

Public Comment on Northern Wyoming Community College District
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604




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NWCCD Preparing For AQIP Accreditation "Checkup"


By Betsy Love on Wed 09/22/2010 04:20



In 2005, Northern Wyoming Community College District became one of roughly 100 regional colleges to adopt an alternative pilot accreditation program called "Academic Quality Improvement" or AQIP. Typically, the accreditation process happens once every ten years. In contrast, colleges that have chosen to go the AQIP route have accreditation "checkups" every seven.

Sheridan College President, Dr. Paul Young 

Currently, NWCCD is gearing up for their accreditation checkup, which includes a visit from AQIP representatives in late November.

Young says one of the areas the college district has focused on improving is student retention rates: 

So how has the college district fared in meeting some of these goals? Tomorrow we will have more details, as well as some info on how changing federal standards are impacting our local colleges.

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Similar News


- NWCCD Prepares For Accreditation Visit--Part 2
- What Do You Think About Sheridan, Gillette and Buffalo Colleges?
- College District Readies for Quality Checkup
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NWCCD Prepares For Accreditation Visit--Part 2

By Betsy Love on Thu09/23/2010 04:00




Yesterday, we discussed Northern Wyoming Community College District's preparation for their accreditation "checkup" visit, which will be in late November.

Being a member of the alternative accreditation program called AQIP, the three members of NWCCD, which are Sheridan, Gillette and Buffalo Colleges, must "self reflect" on both their strengths and weaknesses. Sheridan College President, Paul Young.

And on the other side, a suit-clad Young tells Sheridan Media's Betsy Love.

Young says that one of the big shifts in the accreditation process is the federal government's greater emphasis on accountability these days.

You can view the college portfolio, as well as the reviewer's comments, by visiting the Sheridan or Gillette College website <http://sheridan.edu> and clicking on the section, "about us."



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Similar News

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