REPORT OF A CHANGE VISIT

TO

Yavapai College
Prescott, AZ 86301

October 10-11, 2011

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Stephanie Bulger, Vice Chancellor of Educational Affairs and Distance Learning, Wayne County Community College District, Detroit, MI 48226

Dr. William Tammone, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL 61635 (Team Chair)

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12/14/11

ASSURANCE SECTION

I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit: Requested Change

The purpose of this visit was to evaluate Yavapai College's request for approval to operate distance (online) delivery of associate degree programs at Percentage Bracket 3 [according to the definitions of distance-delivered courses and programs contained in the Higher Learning Commission's Substantive Change Application for Distance Delivery, Version 1.7 (March 2011) and later].

B. Accreditation Status

Yavapai College was first established in 1965. It received Candidate for Accreditation status in 1972 and was accredited by the North Central Association in 1975. The last comprehensive visit took place in April 2003. The next comprehensive visit is scheduled for the 2012-2013 academic year. Yavapai has been selected to be one of the pilot institutions in the Higher Learning Commission's Pioneer Pathways Project for next year.

C. Institutional Context

Part of the Arizona Community College System, Yavapai College is a two-year, public, comprehensive community college based in Prescott, Arizona. With a population of approximately 40,000, Prescott is the county seat of Yavapai County, which, as of the 2010 census, had a population of just over 211,000. The College is governed by a District Governing Board made up of 5 members. Each member represents one of the 5 districts within the county and is elected for a 6-year term.

In addition to the main campus in Prescott, Yavapai College also has a branch campus in Clarkdale (Verde Valley Campus), the Career and Technical Education Center in Prescott, and learning centers in Chino Valley (Chino Valley Center), Prescott Valley (Prescott Valley Center), and Sedona (Sedona Technology Center). The College also offers courses at 24 other locations around its rather extensive service district (8,123 square miles). It currently has 7,969 students taking 54,320 credit hours. Classes are taught by 121 full-time faculty and approximately 320 part-time faculty.

Yavapai College began offering courses via the Internet in 1997. Approximately 83 students were enrolled in 6 online sections that first year. Currently (fall 2011), 2,595 students are enrolled in 216 sections. Sixty-two percent of these sections are taught by full-time faculty while 38% are taught by part-time faculty. Approximately 150 different courses are available in an online format this

semester. Online enrollments account for about 24% of the College's total annual credit hours (13,065/54,320).

Of the 29 degree programs offered by Yavapai College at the present time, 5 of those programs are delivered at a distance (i.e., 50% or more of the courses in those 5 programs are available over the internet and/or interactive television). Thus, the percentage of programs available via distance delivery is approximately 17 % (5/29).

Two concerns expressed by the Comprehensive Visit team in 2003 are particularly relevant to Yavapai College's efforts to offer online programming. These were concerns related to strategic planning and the assessment of student learning. The 2003 Comprehensive Visit led to a Focused Visit on these two topics in 2005, which then led to a follow-up Progress Report on the same two topics in 2008.

The team shares the view expressed by the Progress Report Staff Reviewer in 2008 that although the College has made adequate progress in strategic planning, there is still much work to be done when it comes to the assessment of student learning.

D. Special Conditions

The team reviewed several of Yavapai College's online courses prior to as well as during the visit.

Interviews conducted on the Prescott campus with students, faculty, the Curriculum Committee, and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) committee included Yavapai College staff at the Verde Valley campus participating over ITV. One student also participated from home over video conferencing software.

E. Approval Obtained

None required.

F. Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

Governing Board and Executive Management

1. District Governing Board (All 5 Members)
2. President
3. Vice President for Instruction and Student Services
4. Vice President for Administrative Services

Faculty, Management and Staff

5. Associate Dean, Career & Technical Education
6. Associate Dean, Student Services
7. Curriculum Committee
8. Director, Library Services
9. Director, Admissions, Registration & Records; Registrar
10. Director, Academic Advising & Counseling
11. Director, Verde Learning Center
12. Chief Information Officer
13. Coordinator, General Education
14. Coordinator, Instructional Technology
15. Coordinator, Testing Services
16. Dean, Business, Computer Science, Economic & Workforce Development
17. Dean, Career and Technical Education
18. Dean, District Student Services & Instructional Support
19. Dean, Northern Arizona University – Yavapai
20. Dean, Verde Valley Campus
21. Dean, Visual, Performing & Liberal Arts
22. Director, Facilities
23. Director, Financial Aid
24. Director, Human Resources
25. Director, Institutional Research
26. Director, Residence Life & Judicial Affairs
27. Director, TRiO Programs
28. Faculty (open meeting with 6 participating in Prescott and 7 participating over ITV from the Verde Campus)
29. Faculty President
30. Instructional Designer
31. Manager, Teaching & eLearning Support
32. Specialist, Instructional Technology
33. Specialist, Academic Technology
34. Specialist, Disability Resources
35. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Committee

Students

36. Open meeting with 11 online students (7 met with the team in Prescott, 3 participated via ITV from the Verde Campus, and one participated from her home)

Community and State Representatives

None

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

Yavapai College Self-Study Documents and College Publications

1. Higher Learning Commission Substantive Change Application
2. Yavapai College Catalog

Yavapai College Administrative Documents and Reports

1. Academic Integrity
2. Affiliation and Accreditation – YC Quality Initiative
3. Assessment Plans and Reports by Division, 2010-2011, BSA 120-232 Section 1
4. Assessment Plans and Reports by Division, 2011-2012
5. Assessment Friday!
6. Board Ends Metrics, Revised 7-16-2011
7. Budget 2010-2011
8. Budget Timeline for FY 2011-12
9. Comparative Analysis of Online and Face to Face Learning
10. Distance Learning Complaint Process for Out of State Students
11. District Governing Board
12. Fact Sheet – Budget (7 Feb 2011)
13. Faculty Assessment Plan, Form 1
14. Online Course Success Rates for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011
15. Online Course Tune-Up
16. Revised Academic Organizational Chart (24 Feb 2011)
17. Strategic Initiatives 2010/2011 – 2013/2014
18. Student Code of Conduct
19. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment
20. Student Learning & Outcomes Assessment Committee
21. Teaching and Learning Support
22. Yavapai College Facts and Figures

Yavapai College Website and Miscellaneous

1. 2011 Live Orientation Schedule
2. Communication (Netiquette, Discussion Board)
3. Computer Skills (Common Computer Issues, Ergonomics)
4. College Web Site (http://www.yc.edu)
5. Course Outlines
6. Form 1 Assessment Plan Training Module
7. General Education Core Courses
8. General Education Core Curriculum
9. Get To Know Your Course (guidance)
10. Hardware and Software Recommendation for Students
11. Language Literacy Values

12. Learning Styles Assessment
13. Online courses (several)
14. Organization (File Management, Time Management Guidance, Additional Information, Links to Websites)
15. Presentation to Employees Detailing Realignment/Changes (14 Feb 2011)
16. Press Release to the Media (7 Feb 2011)
17. Student readiness Survey for Online Courses
18. Student Support for Online Learning Best Practices
19. Tegrity Support for Students
20. What is an Educated Person?
21. Yavapai Adopted College Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012
22. Yavapai College General Education Arts and Humanities Courses
23. Yavapai College General Education Behavioral Science Courses
24. Yavapai College General Education Critical Thinking Courses
25. Yavapai College General Education Ethnic, Race, and Gender Awareness Courses
26. Yavapai College General Education Global/International Awareness Courses
27. Yavapai College General Education Historical Perspective Courses
28. Yavapai College General Education Information Literacy Core Competency
29. Yavapai College General Education Physical and Biological Science Courses
30. Yavapai College General Education Quantitative Literacy Courses ["Numeracy Requirement" link on College website]
31. Yavapai College General Education Social Science Courses

II.   EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST FOR CHANGE

A. Alignment with the institutional mission: Commitment to, preparation for, and fit of the proposed change to the institution

- Yavapai College has been offering courses via the Internet since 1997. With over 14 years of experience in delivering courses via distance learning technologies, the College is well positioned to start offering complete associate degree programs online.

- Enrollments in the College's online classes have increased from 83 students in 1997 to almost 2,600 students in fall 2011. The number of sections offered during this time span has increased from 6 to 216. There is clearly a demand for the College's online courses by its constituencies.

- One of the initiatives in the College's strategic plan relates specifically to online learning: "Improve online support services." This is just one indication that the College's request to offer more online coursework is a well-considered attempt to increase access to higher education and better serve its students.

- Online courses at Yavapai have been offered exclusively over one course management system, Blackboard, since 2001. This delivery of courses over a single platform helps to create a consistent technical and visual framework for both students and faculty. Perhaps even more importantly, the College's course management system allows for appropriate interaction (both synchronous and asynchronous) among classmates, as well as between instructor and students, thus enhancing opportunities for student engagement and learning.

- The College's administration and faculty have considered issues of workload, compensation, and ownership of intellectual property. The College's policy regarding intellectual property is articulated in Policy Number 2.3.1, adopted by the District Governing Board on December 12, 2000.

- The institution already provides appropriate information and services for students taking courses at a distance, including:

  - Accurate and timely information about the institution, its programs, courses, costs, and related requirements
  - Pre-registration advising
  - Admissions
  - Placement testing
  - Course registration
  - Financial aid
  - Payment of tuition and fees
  - Academic advising
  - Timely intervention for students not making adequate academic progress
  - Tutoring
  - Career counseling and placement
  - Library resources
  - Bookstore services
  - Ongoing technical support

- Interviews with students at Yavapai College indicate that they appreciate the convenience and flexibility of online courses and that they support the College's request to offer complete online degrees. They had high praise for Yavapai's online faculty, technical support team, library resources, and student services staff.

- A variety of college constituents – including the District Governing Board, administrators, faculty leadership committees, and students – support the offering of online certificates and degrees as a further realization of the mission of Yavapai College to extend postsecondary educational access to county residents living in remote locations.

B. Capacity for implementing and sustaining the change

- Support for online teaching and learning at Yavapai College is provided by a very competent and engaged Teaching & eLearning Support (TeLS) staff, which includes, in addition to the manager, an Instructional Support Specialist, an Instructional Tech Coordinator, and two Instructional Designers. This staff provides those responsible for online instruction the orientation and ongoing professional development opportunities they need to help them become and remain proficient in the use of instructional technologies. Since 2008, the TeLS staff has provided the Yavapai faculty with more than 1,320 hours of training. The TeLS department also offers student orientations to online learning at the beginning of each semester.

- The College has recently contracted with a company called Perceptis to provide 24/7 Help Desk support for students. Technical support services are also provided to both students and faculty by the College's knowledgeable and dedicated TeLS staff. Together, these two approaches should provide Yavapai students with adequate help desk services.

- The faculty and staff at Yavapai College are deeply committed to student success. The team is confident that the institution will do whatever it takes to deliver the new online degree programs at a level of quality comparable to its traditional face-to-face programs. A plan to monitor and compare student success in online classes with student success in faced-to-face classes has already been created.

- The software and hardware infrastructure that supports online courses, faculty training, and student services reflects considerable investment by Yavapai College in the delivery of online education. Faculty, students, and staff all expressed satisfaction with the College's investment in and ongoing support for technology.

- Administrators presented evidence of multiple ways that students at a distance may access student and instructional support services including tutoring, bookstore, financial aid, advising, and tuition payment, admissions, and disability services such as by using the phone, email, Skype, and the College website.

- Interviews with the TeLS staff and login information provided to the team verified several approaches to maintaining student privacy and authentication through such means as a secure login and password to an institutional portal, faculty workshops on developing assessments, and on-campus face-to-face proctoring.

C. Strategies for systematically monitoring and evaluating the effects, performance, and/or quality of the change

- In documents and interviews with the District Governing Board, the team found that the Board Ends Metrics are intended to address areas of development (e.g., increase in retention, success rates of enrollment and retention by delivery system, learning outcomes assessment, and program reviews) for all students at Yavapai College, regardless of delivery system.

- On November 1, 2010, Yavapai submitted to the Higher Learning Commission a document titled "Comparative Analysis of Online and Face to Face Learning." The College will use this project as its quality improvement initiative for the Commission's Pioneer Pathways Project for next year. Yavapai also compares student success in its online classes to student success at other colleges by means of the Community College Benchmark Project. These are indications that College views online instruction as a valuable mode of instructional delivery and that it is committed to improving it.

D. Strategies for addressing strengths, challenges, or strategic issues (especially those previously identified by the Commission) related to the change

- The annual process for program and general education reviews is an approach designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in academic programs and disciplines (e.g., English, mathematics, etc.) and includes data on five year historical trends of full time equivalent students, average class size, number of sections, success rates, and summaries of outcome assessment activity. At this time, however, the College is still not assessing student learning on a systematic basis in general education or at the program level.

- Yavapai College is engaged in a process to develop annual metrics and timelines for Strategic Initiatives that involves the District Governing Board, college president, administrators, and faculty. Administrators report that enrollment growth maximums such as 3.8% will be used to contain enrollment growth in online classes at Yavapai College.

E. Potential positive or negative effects of the change on other institutional operations

- Potential positive effects of offering online degree and certificate programs would be recruiting students in rural locations, developing new partnerships for dual and concurrent enrollment with K-12 providers, expanding the ability to be competitive with other colleges and universities, and developing a

faculty that is both comfortable and confident with using technology in teaching.

- One of the potential negative effects of the change would be academic fraud. Though some faculty teaching online courses are requiring their students to take their exams in a proctored environment, many are not. Whether or not they require proctored testing, all faculty should have systems in place to insure the integrity of student work. [Core Component 1e; Federal Compliance Program – Verification of Student Identity]

- Another potential negative effect of the change is that under-prepared students might be attracted to the convenience of online education but will be unsuccessful due to unrealistic expectations of its demands. The College does not have required reading prerequisites for online classes, nor are students required to demonstrate computer literacy skills prior to enrolling in online classes.

F. Quality standards

- Yavapai College uses the median online course success rates published by the National Community College Benchmark Project as one way of evaluating student retention in its online classes.

- Faculty are encouraged, but not required, to use the Yavapai College "Recommended Guidelines for Online Instruction" as they develop and review their online classes. These guidelines (similar to the Quality Matters guidelines) could also be used for external and internal peer reviews as well as administrative course evaluations. At the present time, however, these are used only by the Yavapai faculty for the purpose of self-evaluation. The College's inconsistent approach to the development and evaluation of online courses could result in a number of challenges, including low retention and ineffective student learning in some of its classes.

III. Recommendation and Rationale

A. Recommendation of the Team

Evidence demonstrated to recommend approval of change request.

B. Rationale for the Team's Recommendation

After thoroughly reviewing Yavapai College's Substantial Change Request and interviewing students, faculty, staff, and members of the District Governing Board, the Team is confident that the College has the capacity to offer online programming and services at a level of quality consistent with its on-campus programs. Therefore, the team recommends that Yavapai College be granted approval to expand its distance education offerings.

C. Other Accreditation Issues

- Though Yavapai College has made progress in the assessment of student learning in recent years, attention to assessment has been sporadic since the Comprehensive Visit in 2003, and there is still much to be accomplished. Program and general education assessment both need greater, ongoing attention. Although goals have been articulated for Yavapai's degree programs, the institution is not yet assessing to what extent students are meeting those goals. Similarly, although the institution has articulated some General Education Outcomes, these intended learning outcomes are not published in the college catalog and are not being assessed on a regular basis. The team also has concerns about the clarity of those outcomes. [Core Component 3a and Commission Statement on General Education]

- Page 1 of the College Catalog refers to Yavapai College's accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission without providing the Commission's web site address. [Commission Policies 12.2 (An Affiliated Organization's Obligations for Public Disclosure) and 12.6 (An Organization's Advertising and Recruiting Materials)]

IV.   **AFFILIATION STATUS**

    A. Summary of Commission Review

    Year for next comprehensive evaluation: 2012-2013

    B. Nature of Organization

      1. Legal status

        No change

      2. Degrees awarded

        No change

    C. Conditions of Affiliation

      1. Stipulations on affiliation status

        No change

      2. Approval of degree sites

        No change

      3. Approval of distance education degree

        The institution is approved to offer more than 20% of its programs via distance education. The institution is not approved to offer correspondence education.

      4. Reports required

        None

      5. Other visits scheduled

        None

    D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

        None

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

A. Overall Observations about the Organization

Yavapai College is well-positioned to expand its online programming and services. The College has been offering courses via the Internet since 1997 and online enrollments have grown steadily since then.   Currently (fall 2011), 2,595 students are enrolled in approximately 150 different courses (216 sections).   Online enrollments account for about 24% of the College's total annual credit hours (13,065/54,320).

However, one of the concerns expressed by the Comprehensive Visit team in 2003 continues to be a challenge for the College: the concern related to the assessment of student learning. The 2003 Comprehensive Visit led to a Focused Visit on assessment (and strategic planning) in 2005, which then led to a follow-up Progress Report on the same in 2008.   Like the HLC staff reviewer in 2008, the Change Visit team continues to have concerns about the College's assessment processes.

B. Consultations of the Team

1. Quality Standards

Definitive measures of quality for online education are limited, though the literature provides suggestions on general factors including faculty training, instructional design, assessment and evaluation, and student support (see Kaye Shelton, A Review of Paradigms for Evaluating the Quality of Online Programs 2010, E:\A Review of Paradigms for Evaluating the Quality of Online Education Programs.mht, for a review of quality factors in current literature).   Additionally, Yavapai College benchmarks retention in its online courses using The National Community College Benchmark Project to analyze their online course success rates against median rates.

Yavapai College noted in the Substantive Change Application that there is no separately identified organizational unit to manage online education. Interviews with Teaching & eLearning Support (TeLS) staff confirmed that this is the case. It was clear that TeLS is responsible for the support of students and faculty, instructional design assistance, non-mandatory training, and the learning management system in concert with the Information Technology department. TeLS staff believes that they have worked to create a "culture of online learning" at Yavapai College.   The interviews with faculty and students corroborated this belief.

Certain elements of the existing processes used in managing online education at Yavapai College concern the team. First, there is an inconsistent process to qualify faculty to teach online. For example, it is not mandatory for faculty to be trained to teach online classes, though they may receive $300 for successful completion of an online training experience (i.e., by achieving a minimum of 90 points on an

assessment). The Yavapai College "Recommended Guidelines for Online Courses," "Faculty Preparedness Guidelines," and "Instructional Design Checklist for Online Courses" that are currently provided to faculty are self-assessments. The potential inconsistency in the development of faculty to teach and develop courses for online delivery could result in a number of challenges including retention and ineffective student learning.

The team recognizes that several organizational structures may be effective in managing quality in online education. The College's strategy has been to encourage faculty to take advantage of the wealth of information provided by a non-academic unit; as the College begins to expand online programs and courses within its current organizational structure, it should re-evaluate its processes and procedures for areas that should be required to maintain the quality standards found in the literature. In keeping with the current organizational structure, the leadership for such a re-evaluation should reside in the academic units (e.g., the academic deans) of the college. The team offers the following additional advice for consideration:

- Use the Instructional Design Checklist to develop a rubric for assessing online courses
- Implement the Course Tune Up Program for all courses on a routine basis (e.g., every two to three years)
- Require training to teach online for first time instructors
- Institute peer review of online courses
- Involve the Faculty Senate in creating and maintaining processes and procedures for faculty training and online course revision

2. Planning

The organization responded adequately to the concern expressed by the 2003 Comprehensive Visit team regarding strategic planning. One of the fruits of their efforts, a document titled "Strategic Initiatives 2010/2011 – 2013/2014" was displayed prominently throughout campus during the Change Visit, and College administrators indicated that they were committed to maintaining the current plan as is until it expires in 2014.

The team encourages the College to consider taking a more flexible and dynamic approach to planning, however. There are several reasons for doing so. In the first place, the existing plan was created prior to the arrival of two key administrators: the current President and Vice President for Instruction and Student Services. These two leaders should not be compelled to wait three more years before having input into developing the College's strategic initiatives.

Secondly, higher education is changing rapidly, and the College should be prepared to adjust the strategic plan when warranted. As indicated by the topic of the Focus Visit, for instance, the College has recently begun to focus more on the delivery of

online programming. In fact, the College has chosen a project titled "Comparative Analysis of Online and Face to Face Learning" as its quality initiative for the Higher Learning Commission's new Pathways Construction Project. It could easily be argued that a project of this magnitude and importance should be integrated into the College's strategic plan. At the moment, however, it is not.

Thirdly, as noted both above and below, the College has a significant amount of work to do in the areas of assessment and general education. In order to assure institutional commitment to addressing these chronic problems and meeting Higher Learning Commission expectations for accreditation, this important work should also be elevated to the level of a strategic priority for the College. Yavapai does have a Strategic Initiative titled "Measure/affirm learning and engagement," but this initiative, as conceived and articulated, does not recognize the organization's challenges related to general education and program-level assessment.

Another reason for updating the strategic plan more frequently is that not every goal or initiative takes the same length of time to accomplish (in Yavapai's case, four years). Some of the initiatives listed on Yavapai's "2010/2011 – 2012/2014 Strategic Initiatives" document may take four years to complete ("Improvement of gateway course success rate," for example), but others ("Develop institutional measures for student success, for example) should be completed in a much shorter time-frame. If the College adopted a shorter-term planning cycle, completed initiatives could be retired and replaced by new initiatives created in response to new challenges and opportunities.

None of this is to say that the current four-year plan should be completely discarded. But, if the College is going to develop long-range plans (and a four-year planning horizon could easily be considered "long-range" in today's rapidly-changing world of higher education), it should still be prepared to initiate and discontinue strategic initiatives when the situation calls for it. The institution could work from what is sometimes called a "rolling" long-range plan, where the plan is continually projecting four years out, but is "refreshed" or updated on an annual (or some other shorter-term) basis.

A number of resources are available for professional development in planning. In the first place, the president and/or one of the vice presidents might consider membership in the Society for College and University Planning. In addition to its annual meeting, this organization offers Planning Institutes (workshops) on an ongoing basis and publishes numerous valuable print resources on planning. Many other useful print resources are available as well. The team recommends, for example: Rowley, Lujan, and Dolence, *Strategic Change in Colleges and Universities* (Jossey-Bass, 2001), and John M. Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, 3rd ed. (Jossey-Bass, 2004).

3. General Education

According to the Commission Statement on General Education:

> Regardless of how a higher learning organization frames the general education necessary to fulfill its mission and goals, it clearly and publicly articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of the general education it provides for its students. . . . Moreover, the organization's faculty exercises oversight for general education and, working with the administration, regularly assesses its effectiveness against the organization's stated goals for student learning [*Handbook of Accreditation*, 3rd ed., p. 3.4.3].

The team is not convinced that the organization has clearly and publicly articulated the intended learning outcomes of the general education Yavapai College provides for its students or that it regularly assesses the effectiveness of its general education against the organization's stated goals for student learning.

To begin with, the College's general education outcomes are not published in the College Catalog. To find them, the team had to be given directions on how to navigate down three levels of the College website: "Home Page" to "Academics" to "Curriculum" to "General Education Core Curriculum."

Secondly, the outcomes as currently articulated are not in all cases clear to the team and it is difficult to imagine that students and other stakeholders would readily understand all of them. For example, under the heading "Yavapai College General Education Outcomes," one finds the following:

> Upon completion of their AGEC at Yavapai College, the successful student will be able to:
>
> 1. differentiate, synthesize and integrate the knowledge they have acquired;
> 2. reflect upon and evaluate their commitment to the General Education Values;
> 3. apply information literacy skills to the development, evaluation, and use of information;
> 4. use reading, writing, listening and speaking as modes of discovery, reflection, understanding and sustained, disciplined reasoning;
> 5. engage in independent learning.

The reference to "General Education Values" in number 2 in this list requires one to read through a list of 13 even-lengthier statements under the heading "The General Education Curriculum at Yavapai College commits students and faculty to." In other words, just to understand intended outcome 2, a student (should he or she happen to find this page) would have to read through and understand 13 relatively lengthy and convoluted "Value" statements. ["Value" 1, for example, "commits students and

faculty to . . . seek a coherent center of values and an integrated understanding of the cultural, social, and physical environments."] It should also be noted that these "Values" are somehow intended to apply to Yavapai faculty as well as students. [See http://www.yc.edu/v4content/curriculum/gen-ed/default.htm.]

Thirdly, it is not clear that the outcomes are really Yavapai College's general education outcomes in the sense that they would apply to all associate degree graduates of the institution, regardless of their degree type or program of study.   As quoted above, these General Education Outcomes are said to apply specifically to those students who have completed their "AGEC" at Yavapai College. According to the Yavapai College Catalog, the "AGEC" (Arizona General Education Curriculum) is a "35-credit general education component of the Associate degrees for transfer [which] fulfills lower-division general education requirements for students transferring to Arizona's public universities (Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and University of Arizona)."   The problem with developing General Education Outcomes that apply only to those students completing the 35-credit AGEC is that not all graduates of Yavapai complete the AGEC.   In order to earn an Associate of General Studies degree, for example, Yavapai students are only required to take 28 general education credits and Associate of Applied Science degree graduates are only required to take 20 credits of general education [see 2011/12 Yavapai College Catalog, pp. 27 and 37].

Adding to the complexity of the organization's attempts to explain what general education means for Yavapai College, the team was presented with several more documents housed on the College's website. One was titled, "What is an Educated Person?"   [http://www.yc.edu/v4content/curriculum/gen-ed/educated-person.htm]. Many of the 8 bulleted qualities listed under the heading "An educated person . . ." could be construed as goals for general education, but they are different from the "General Education Outcomes" listed on the "General Core Curriculum" document housed on the website [http://www.yc.edu/v4content/curriculum/gen-ed/default.htm]. Another one of these documents was titled "General Education Core Courses" [http://www.yc.edu/v4content/curriculum/gen-ed/liberal-core.htm].   This document contains a list of 7 "Core Outcomes" that differ significantly from the "Yavapai College General Education Outcomes" on the "General Education Core Curriculum" document as well as the qualities listed on the "What is an educated person?" document.

The other general-education-related documents presented to the team had the following titles:

- Language Literacy Values
- Yavapai College General Education Quantitative Literacy Courses [link on the website says "Numeracy Requirement"]
- General Education Core Courses
- Yavapai College General Education Physical and Biological Science Courses

- Yavapai College General Education Arts and Humanities Courses
- Yavapai College General Education Behavioral Science Courses
- Yavapai College General Education Historical Awareness Courses
- Yavapai College General Education Critical Thinking Courses
- Yavapai College Global/International Awareness Courses
- Yavapai College Ethnic, Race, and Gender Awareness Courses
- Yavapai College Information Literacy Core Competency
- Yavapai College General Education Historical Perspective Courses
- Yavapai College General Education Social Science Courses

Each of these documents contains a list of still-more outcomes. Although they appear very reasonable, there is no clear link between the subject of these outcomes and the "Yavapai College General Education Outcomes." Two of the titles listed above, for example are related to history – "Historical Awareness" and "Historical Perspective." But, none of the "Yavapai College General Education Outcomes" mentions anything about history.

Although many at the College expressed disagreement during the visit, the team strongly believes that the faculty at Yavapai need to spend some time simplifying and clarifying exactly what general education means for Yavapai College and what they expect their students to learn as a consequence of earning a degree from this institution. They then need to:

1. clearly and publicly share these expectations (as goals or intended learning outcomes) with their students and other stakeholders;
2. assess, on an ongoing basis, to what extent students, regardless of their program of study, are meeting those expectations;
3. demonstrate that they are evaluating and using the results of these ongoing assessments to improve student learning and inform the planning and budgeting processes.

Numerous publications exist that might prove helpful to the Yavapai faculty as they think about and discuss the institution's goals for general education. The team recommends the following in particular: Andrea Leskes and Ross Miller, *General Education: A Self-Study Guide for Review & Assessment* (AAC&U, 2005); Andrea Leskes and Barbara D. Wright, *The Art & Science of Assessing General Education Outcomes: A Practical Guide* (AAC&U, 2005); National Panel Report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (AAC&U, 2002); and Mary J. Allen, *Assessing General Education Programs* (Anker Publishing, 2006).

It should be noted that the 2003 Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit also expressed concern about Yavapai College's goals for general education. On p. 12 of that report, under the heading "Evidence that demonstrates [Criterion 3] requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up," the team noted that Yavapai's

"general education statement is very broad and difficult to assess in ways that can contribute to improvement."

4. **Assessment of Student Academic Achievement**

Yavapai College has made notable progress in assessment since the last Comprehensive Visit in 2003. It appears that all courses have course-level goals and that the faculty are assessing on a regular basis whether or not students are meeting those goals. The College has also articulated program-level goals for all of its degree programs. At this point, however, the College still does not have a process in place to assess whether or not its graduates are meeting its program-level goals and its goals for general education. The team recommends the following resources to Yavapai College to assist with advancement of its assessment process.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities has examples of general education rubrics on its website. The association also publishes reports on assessment that could assist faculty and staff with continuing their assessment efforts [http://www.aacu.org].

North Carolina State University has a website that compiles internet resources for higher education outcomes assessment for two-year and four-year colleges. The information is free and would allow Yavapai faculty to review the various resources to determine those that best match their mission [http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm].

A number of excellent print resources are also available on assessment. In addition to *Assessing General Education Outcomes* and *The Art & Science of Assessing General Education Outcomes* (cited above), the team recommends four others in particular:

1. Mary J. Allen, *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education* (Anker Publishing, 2004).
2. Ross Miller and Andrea Leskes*, Levels of Assessment from the Student to the Institution* (AAC&U, 2005).
3. Catherine A. Palomba and Trudy W. Banta, *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing and Improving Assessment in Higher Education* (Jossey-Bass, 1999).
4. Linda Suskie, *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide*, 2nd ed. (Jossey-Bass, 2009).

Other helpful print resources on assessment include: Catherine A. Palomba & Trudy W. Banta, eds., *Assessing Student Competence in Accredited Disciplines* (Stylus, 2001); Barbara D. Wright, "Evaluating Learning in Individual Courses," in Jerry G. Gaff, James L. Ratcliff and Associates, *Handbook of the Undergraduate Curriculum* (Jossey-Bass, 1997); Mary E. Huba and Jann E. Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses* (Allyn and Bacon, 2000); Barbara E. Walvoord, *Assessment*

Clear and Simple (Jossey-Bass, 2004); and Peggy L. Maki, *Assessing for Learning* (Stylus, 2004).

Excellent national conferences on assessment include those sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and Indiana University Purdue University – Indianapolis (IUPUI).

The team also recommends that Yavapai College consider sending teams of faculty and administrators to Higher Learning Commission assessment workshops. The Commission's Assessment Academy is another option Yavapai might consider.

During the campus visit, members of the Yavapai Assessment Committee indicated to the team that at least some faculty were assessing the College's general education outcomes at the course level. Using course-embedded assessments is generally recognized as a legitimate method of assessing general education outcomes. If the College uses this approach, however, it is important to keep in mind one of the fundamental differences between grading and the assessment of student learning. When grading, faculty are focused on the academic achievement of individual students. In assessment, faculty should be focused on the academic achievement of groups of students – all students in a class, all graduates of a program, all graduates of the college, etc. In other words, assessment data should be *aggregated* in some way beyond the level the individual student. [See, e.g., Ross Miller and Andrea Leskes*, Levels of Assessment from the Student to the Institution* (AAC&U, 2005), pp. 7-12 and Catherine A. Palomba and Trudy W. Banta, *Assessment Essentials* (cited above), p. 103.]

Finally, the team suggests that Yavapai College publish its program-level goals and intended general education learning outcomes in the College Catalog as well as on its website. Where appropriate, faculty members are also encouraged to identify the specific general education learning outcomes being assessed in their courses. This is particularly important if the faculty intend to assess general education outcomes using course-imbedded assessments.

INSTITUTION and STATE: Yavapai College, AZ

TYPE OF REVIEW *(from ESS)*: Change Visit

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW *(from ESS)*: Request to initiate distance delivery. ;

DATES OF REVIEW: 10/10/11 - 10/11/11

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION:

DEGREES AWARDED: A

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: None.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: New Commission policy on institutional change became effective July 1, 2010. Some aspects of the change processes affecting distance delivered courses and programs are still being finalized. This entry will be updated in early 2011 to reflect current policy. In the meantime, see the Commission's Web site for information on seeking approval of distance education courses and programs.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: *The institution is approved to offer more than 20% of its programs via distance education. The institution is not approved to offer correspondence education.*

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

OTHER VISITS SCHEDULED: Change Visit: 2011 - 2012; Request to initiate distance delivery.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: None

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2002 - 2003

YEAR FOR NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2012 - 2013

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: Yavapai College, AZ

TYPE OF REVIEW *(from ESS)*: Change Visit

___ No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

		Program Distribution	**Recommended Change (+ or -)**
Programs leading to Undergraduate			
	Associate	29	
	Bachelors	0	
Programs leading to Graduate			
	Masters	0	
	Specialist	0	
	First Professional		
	Doctoral	0	

Off-Campus Activities

In-State:		Present Activity:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	Clarkdale (Verde Valley Campus)	
	Additional Locations:	Chino Valley (Chino Valley Center) ; Prescott (Career and Technical Education Center) ; Prescott Valley (Prescott Valley Center) ; Sedona (Sedona Technology Center)	
	Course Locations:	24	

Out-of-State:		Present Wording:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	None	
	Additional Locations:	None	
	Course Locations:	None	

Out-of-USA:		Present Wording:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	None	
	Additional Locations:	None	
	Course Locations:	None	

Distance Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

Associate - 11.0101 Computer and Information Sciences, General offered via Internet; Associate - 24.0199 Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Other offered via Internet; Associate - 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General offered via Internet; Associate - 52.0301 Accounting offered via Internet; Associate - 52.0401 Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General offered via Internet; Certificate - 22.0301 Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary offered via Internet; Certificate - 23.1302 Creative Writing offered via Internet; Certificate - 24.0199 Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Other (Liberal Arts Block Transfer) offered via Internet; Certificate - 41.9999 Science Technologies/Technicians, Other (Science Transfer Block) offered via Internet; Certificate - 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General offered via Internet; Certificate - 52.0301 Accounting offered via Internet; Certificate - 52.0401 Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General offered via Internet

Recommended Change:
     (+ or -)
Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None