



May 24, 2013

Dr. Jeanne K. Swarthout
President
Northland Pioneer College
P.O. Box 610
Holbrook, AZ 86025-0610

Dear President Swarthout:

This letter is accompanied by a copy of the Multi-Location Visit Report completed following Dr. Jeffrey Bailie's visit to Northland Pioneer College. The pattern of operations at the locations visited appears to be adequate and no further review or monitoring is necessary.

Within the Multi-Location Visit Report, you will find brief comments on instructional oversight, academic services, adequacy of assessment of student performance, student services, facilities, and marketing and recruitment information. I encourage you to consider these comments as advice and suggestions for continued improvement of the additional locations.

Thank you again for your flexibility and hospitality in arranging the Multi-Location Visit, which fulfill federal regulations related to multiple off campus locations. The completed report will be included in your institution's permanent file.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Multi-Location Visit or its report, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Patricia Newton-Curran
Director of Accreditation Operations
email: pnewton@hlcommission.org
phone: 800.621.7440 ext. 146

Enclosure

Multi-Location Visit Report

Institution:	Northland Pioneer College
Ad. Location #1:	Show Low Welding, 1320 East Thornton Road, Show Low, AZ 85901
Ad. Location #2:	Springerville/Eager Center, 940 East Maricopa Street, Springerville, AZ 85938
Ad. Location #3:	St. Johns Cosmetology Program, 955 W13 West, Suite B, St. Johns, AZ 85936
Ad. Location #4:	Taylor Area Fire Science, Northern Arizona Training Center, 1840 Papermill Road, Taylor AZ 85939
	(please include Additional Locations Name, Street, Town, State, Zip Code)
Date Reviewed:	April 22 – 23, 2013
Evaluator Name, Institution, & Title:	Dr. Jeffrey L. Bailie, Ed. D. Professor, Kaplan University

Instructions: In order to document effective administrative systems for managing multiple additional locations, please complete the following. For each item, check **adequate** or **attention needed**, and indicate in Comments the institution's strengths and/or opportunities for improvement in controlling and delivering degree programs off-campus. If comments pertain to a specific location, they should be included along with the identity of that location.

Overview Statement. Provide information about current additional locations and the institution's general approach to off-campus instruction. Describe the growth pattern at the institution since the last review of off-campus instruction. Provide information about the involvement of external organizations or other higher education institutions.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

The mission statement of Northland Pioneer College is: "NPC creates, supports and promotes lifelong learning." Toward the advancement of their mission, the college delivers academic instruction by way of multiple locations situated in two counties in rural Northeast Arizona. The service area encompasses 21,000 square miles of territory and includes various means to serve the educational interests of a diverse population including face-to-face, closed circuit television (CCTV), and Web-based instruction.

Recent reviews include a multi-location visit to the Hopi, St. John and White River Centers conducted in April of 2008, and a comprehensive visit by the Higher Learning Commission in October of 2009. Since these visits, the institution has continued to expand with regard to program enrollments and corresponding ancillary support services available to NPC students, staff, and constituents.

During this visit to the four locations, documents, reports, plans, manuals and marketing materials produced by the college were collected and coupled with on-site interviews of members representing the college administration, instructional division deans, center managers, the Apache County Coordinator, academic program chairs, advisors, faculty, office staff, and students. Additionally, the minutes of multiple entities representing the interests at the locations under review were examined. Based on the information collected during this visit, it was determined that continuity in instructional delivery is preserved at off-campus locations are evidenced by:

- The college has a sound history and reputation for providing career and technical training program offerings in a geographically dispersed rural setting by way of multiple sites (campuses, centers, and locations).
- As a whole, students who were interviewed during the visit reported satisfaction with the quality of instruction provided, program outcomes, and (in particular) the connectedness they feel with local staff, their faculty, and the college. Also, given the potential limitations associated with the distributed nature of the small communities served, the students are most appreciative of the college's commitment to providing learning opportunities at the local level.
- The faculty and staff that were interviewed reported that there are regular opportunities to attend in-service, department meetings, and professional development activities. Face-to-face engagements with college leaders, members of the administration, and fellow colleagues also occur on a routine basis.
- The college offers a compliment of courses though an interactive video system that connects the multiple sites. A full complement of course offerings are available through the college's CCTV system, largely taught by full time faculty members.

Overall, there was no apparent discrepancy noted in the level of service provided with respect to consistency in the instructional delivery or quality of student learning. Interviews with students, faculty, program administrators and related staff support the position that the institution strives to provide the same quality learning experience and service at all locations. Throughout the visit, details collected made it amply clear that that Northland Pioneer College exercises suitable oversight of academic programming at the locations being reviewed.

Northland Pioneer College partners with several area organizations including vocational high school districts, such as Northern Arizona Vocational Institute of Technology (NAVIT), in the provision of career-training courses to qualified secondary students. NPC promotes the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC), which articulates the block transfer of general education credits to Arizona State University, University of Arizona, and Northern Arizona University. NPC also works in unison with governmental entities, including local municipalities, Apache and Navajo Counties, a variety of legislative entities, regulatory bodies and oversight agencies for the State of Arizona, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to name a few.

Institutional Planning. What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively plans for growth and maintenance of additional locations? Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is adequate. Describe whether the financial planning and budgeting process has proven effective at additional locations.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

Northland Pioneer College collaborated with various stakeholders to author, and subsequently operationalize, their 2013-16 Strategic Plan. Included with the plan is a list of strategic initiatives proposed to set the course for continued sustainability of all of the institution's locations. Also, the 2013-16 NPC Capital Budget and the Facilities Master Plan provides added insight on the college's plans to prepare for and address college-wide facility needs in the future. Major facility needs and improvements included in this plan are addressed through a comprehensive planning and design process that involves input from multiple stakeholders. As evidenced by information included in these documents, the college has responsibly planned for the ongoing support and maintenance of the current program facilities, including appropriate contingencies for future growth and expansion. Evidence suggests that NPC maintains quality institutional and academic programs and is properly positioned to respond to future opportunities and challenges.

Those interviewed during the visit, and related material gathered in conjunction with the site visit, reveal a strong consensus that the strategic and budget planning process supports the institution's mission statement, purposes and core values through realistic and achievable goals and objectives. The college continues to position itself to tactically manage a variety of certificate, diploma, and degree programs offerings in multiple locations and delivery formats well into the future. Further, there appears to be a genuine consideration for future shifts student demographics, demand for degree programs, and employment opportunities, and this is widely reflected in the decision-making processes. Long range planning, feasibility and market research are among the methods NPC incorporates into its planning processes, and evidence supports continued efficacy in this regard.

Facilities. What evidence demonstrates that the facilities at the additional locations meet the needs of the students and the curriculum? Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; handicapped access; and other (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.)

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

It was found that the location descriptions included in the Northland Pioneer College Multiple Off-Campus Sites Report (March 20, 2013) filed with the reviewer in preparation for the visit were accurate. The onsite review of each location found the classrooms and labs to be properly equipped, adequately staffed, and the physical environment to be conducive to learning. The locations included:

Show Low Welding: Student services and administrative support are provided to the 5,000 square foot welding instruction facility by the White Mountain Campus, which is located three miles away from the Show Low Industrial Park site. The facility is owned by NPC's JTED partner and houses twenty welding booths, two large fabrication areas, a classroom, tool room and a faculty office. There are two ADA compliant restrooms at opposite ends of the building, one for men and one for women. There is also a small locker/break/changing room available for students. Students and staff interviewed offer no concerns relative to facility use, convenience, safety or access to customary services.

Springerville/Eagar Center: The College leases 14,000 square feet of a Round Valley Unified School District building in Springerville. The leased space includes ten general use classrooms, a science classroom/lab, a computer classroom/lab, two multimedia classrooms, and one video classroom. In addition, there is a student lounge and a common area available to students and the public. A TLC classroom includes space for students to work and test. Offices for the center manager, advisor and a full-time faculty are included in the facilities, as is an additional office for visiting faculty and staff. Storage space is also ample. A reception/center office assists students and the public as they enter the building. Four ADA-compliant restrooms are found in convenient locations throughout the facility. Students and staff interviewed offer no substantial concerns relative to facility use, convenience, safety or access to customary services.

Saint Johns Center: NPC leases 7,500 square feet of space from Apache County in Saint Johns. Two general classrooms, along with a computer classroom/lab, two multimedia classrooms and one video classroom are supported by a library, a testing area, and a student/staff lounge area. The facility also provides office spaces for the center manager, advisor and the Apache County Coordinator adjacent to the center office space; there is also a mail room in this office suite area. The Center also houses the office for the Apache County Coordinator. The Center has two ADA compliant restrooms. Students and staff interviewed offered no concerns relative to facility use, convenience, safety or access to customary services.

The Saint Johns Center provides student services and administrative support to the 10,000 square foot welding and cosmetology instruction facility situated less than two miles from the Center and located in the Saint John's Industrial Air Park. The cosmetology portion of the facility is licensed by the Arizona State Board of Cosmetology and includes twenty client stations plus six manicure stations and two pedicure massage chairs. A multimedia classroom and a locker for each student are also provided along with two ADA compliant restrooms for student, client and employee use. The welding portion of the facility provides eighteen welding booths, a large fabrication area, a general classroom, a tool room, a faculty office, plus a large multi-use room used for plastic welding classes, lockers, breaks, and a changing room. There are two ADA compliant restrooms in the welding area; one for men and one for women. Students and staff interviewed offered no concerns relative to facility use, convenience, safety or access to customary services.

Taylor Area Fire Center/Northeast Arizona Training Center: The College has recently begun operation and control of the non-profit partnership entity, which owns a 20-acre site with a 5,000 square foot classroom/office facility, a four-story burn tower, and a driving track. NPC's law enforcement academy and fire science courses are housed at the facility. The classroom/office facility includes two multi-purpose classrooms, one multimedia classroom, a break room, faculty and administrative offices, and storage. ADA compliant restrooms for men and women are available to all users of the facility. Students and staff interviewed offered no concerns relative to facility use, convenience, safety or access to customary services.

Instructional Oversight. What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively oversees instruction at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, faculty qualifications, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

Northland Pioneer College relates that programs of instruction are administered through the Office of Vice President of Learning and Student Services. In addition, Divisional Deans are responsible for direct management of program offerings, the assurance of policy adherence, and uniformity in program outcomes. The deans, program chairs, and department chairs maintain regular contact with program and center staff and routinely visit sites with programs under their individual purview. They work collectively with faculty and campus managers to ensure consistency in program quality and course offerings. Other department chairs, overseeing specific course level offerings, might communicate by phone and e-mail with campus managers and faculty at the sites.

Consistency in curriculum is realized through the use of common course outlines (locally referred to as 3035 forms) used by all faculty teaching a particular course. Syllabi are collected and reviewed by Deans and Department Chairs to ensure that all syllabi are congruent with the course topics, objectives and learning outcomes articulated in the course outlines. Course delivery to multiple sites through the CCTV system by program faculty also lends to an assurance of the standardization of academic offerings.

Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support. What evidence demonstrates that the institution has appropriately qualified and sufficient staff and faculty in place for the location, and that the institution supports and evaluates personnel at off-campus locations? Consider the processes in place for selecting, training, and orienting faculty at the location.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

According to information provided by the Vice President of Learning and Student Services, Deans certify and evaluate all faculty in accordance with recognized selection protocol and faculty qualification policies. NPC's Procedure 2925 outlines the institution's standard for minimum faculty qualification. Deans are responsible for certifying the credentials of all faculty members teaching throughout the institution, and qualifying evidence is validated by the NPC Office of Human Resources. The standards for certification are consistently applied and do not vary by location. In addition, faculty credential standards for some of the programs visited must also abide by additional programmatic accreditation standards (i.e. cosmetology, fire science, and welding).

According to the Dean of Career and Technical Education, full-time and adjunct faculty members teaching at centers all participate in the same semester review process as all other faculty. Deans select courses for student evaluations and classroom observations. Adjunct faculty members who have taught for more than one year periodically submit a self-evaluation that is reviewed by the Dean. Student evaluations of faculty teaching effectiveness and adjunct faculty self-evaluations are conducted in accordance with standard institutional practice, and individually reviewed by Deans. The Deans provide feedback to all adjunct faculty members.

Personal interviews with program chairs and faculty support a general compliance with institutional policy regarding faculty selection, qualification, and evaluation. In addition, individual faculty consistently related that they felt they receive the level of attention and supervision necessary to complete their assigned duties. In fact, two program chairs

(representing two different programs at two different locations) remarked that they felt that their jobs were “a dream come true.”

Student Support. What evidence demonstrates that the institution delivers, supports, and manages necessary student services at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

Students reported satisfaction with the level of learner support made available at the locations reviewed during this visit. An interview with a full-time advisor verified that advisors are available to serve students at all campuses and centers, and that they regularly visit each of the program locations according to an establish schedule. Tutoring is offered based on individual need, and can be arranged (dependent of qualified tutor availability) either on-site or via the distance education network. In the fall of 2012, NPC implemented regular group tutoring utilizing the CCTV network, as well as specific site-based group sessions. Subjects are selected based on expressed learner need, the history of high tutoring demand, and are available free of charge to all students. Disability Resources, Career Services, and Financial Aid services are available by phone, email, or face-to-face appointment. Financial Aid staff also visits each center on at least a monthly basis.

The library provides access to a compliment of subscription databases for all NPC students at all campuses and centers. An integrated catalog system allows students and faculty to view the expansive online holdings and to place a request for an item. In addition, students may access these resources from home and other locations with online access. Other services such as links to writing assistance, research guides, and online resources are provided through the library homepage. A library orientation is available for all students.

Evaluation and Assessment. What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

In response to previous concerns pertaining to the scope of the institution’s initiative toward the assessment of student learning (noted in prior visits), NPC entered the HLC Academy for Assessment of Student Learning in February 2008.

Since this time, the college’s approach to assessing student achievement and leveraging the results to modify course content, offerings, pedagogy, and learning environments has become an operative standard. Detail collected through interviews with administrative staff, academic officers, program management, and faculty reflects that the institution has an operational plan for the assessment of learning. Further, discussions with various personnel denoted the

importance that the college has placed on formal evaluation and assessment through multiple measures and at various levels within its operations, including at the locations that were a focus of this visit. Northland Pioneer College has an institutional assessment plan in place, and the plan includes multiple data points collected from all of its locations. Specifics of the plan were reviewed and discussed with a full range of personnel during this visit. The 2013-16 NPC Strategic Plan offers further evidence that NPC embraces a culture of assessment and evaluation.

Continuous Improvement. What evidence demonstrates that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at its additional locations? Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of additional locations and ensure alignment of additional locations with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

A three-year capital budget is currently providing Board approved direction for facility development and improvement. The budget is based on consultations among the Director of Facilities, maintenance staff, center staff and the Vice President for Administrative Services. NPC has recently obtained a Facilities Master Plan to address college-wide facility needs. The facilities master plan specifically assesses adequacy of existing space, providing both a forum for assessment and a plan for improvement.

Each NPC campus and center hosts an annual Community Outreach event, open to the public and stakeholders. In addition, each campus and center hosts a Student Focus group annually. These events provide a forum where comments and suggestions are received. NPC encourages comments and suggestions. A foundational aspect of the development of the Facility Master Plan was open participation in the process. Input was obtained from students, faculty, staff, community members and governmental entities through forums and other interactive methods.

Marketing and Recruiting Information. What evidence confirms that the information presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications is accurate?

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

A review of the NPC Website indicates that comprehensive information about academic policy, programs, services and sites is readily available to the extended learning communities served, and the general public. A wide variety of materials were collected and reviewed during stops at each location, including a standard compliment of class schedules, marketing materials, and informational brochures that are being disbursed by the college. Posters and signs appropriately affixed to bulletin boards throughout the facilities were also examined. The institution presents materials that accurately describe its relations with the Higher Learning Commission, its related governing bodies, and the programs and services that it offers.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Select one of the following statements. Include, as appropriate, a summary of findings.

- Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations appears to be adequate, and no further review or monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission is necessary.
- Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations needs some attention as defined in this report. The institution can be expected to follow up on these matters without monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission. The next scheduled comprehensive review can serve to document that the matters identified have been addressed. **[Identify specific areas needing organizational attention.]**
- The overall pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations is inadequate and requires Commission attention. **[Identify the specific concerns and provide a recommendation for Commission follow-up monitoring.]**

Note: If the institution has been granted access to either Expedited Desk Review or Notification for Additional Locations, then complete the appropriate form.

Expedited Desk Review for Additional Locations Approval Form

(MACRO Web Application Approval)

Please complete these five questions
ONLY if an institution has been granted access to the
Expedited Desk Review for Additional Locations approval process.

- Yes No The institution has three or more approved active off-campus additional locations.
- Yes No The institution has tested experience in creating and managing multiple additional locations.
- Yes No The institution has a Statement of Affiliation Status that does not restrict the development of additional locations
- Yes No The institution has a state agency relationship that allows for the development of off-campus additional locations.
- Yes No The institution is in good standing with the Commission (i.e., no significant Commission monitoring affecting additional location administration and no sanctions within the last five years).