Middle States Self-Study

A Comprehensive Self-Study Report Submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

December 2015

Inspiring every day.
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Certification Statement:

Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and Related Entities Policy

(For use by SUNY Community Colleges)

Reviewed and Affirmed July 16, 2015

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and the “Related Entities” policy.

This signed statement should be attached to the executive summary of the institution's self-study report.

Monroe Community College

(Name of Institution)

The State University of New York represents that this institution operates within the program of the SUNY System. The undersigned hereby certify that SUNY recognizes the Commission’s compliance requirements for this institution and will uphold State University’s policies pertaining to MSCHE Standards and Requirements of Affiliation.

(Campus President)  25/15

(Chair, Campus Board of Trustees)  12/7/15

(Chair, SUNY Board of Trustees)  11/9/15
Executive Summary

In the 10 years since MCC’s last Middle States accreditation self-study, the College has undergone a great deal of change. In order to best understand the collective impact of these changes, MCC chose to conduct a comprehensive self-study, examining all areas of the College through the lens of MSCHE’s Standards of Excellence. Drawing on the contributions of 14 Study Teams and over 150 MCC faculty, staff, and administrators, this self-study report demonstrates that MCC meets all 14 Standards. This report also supports 15 recommendations which are elaborated on throughout this self-study and summarized here.

**Standard 1: Mission and Goals**

In launching our latest Strategic Plan in 2012, MCC also adopted a new Mission statement that has been transformative, and clearly instrumental in driving decision-making at all levels of the College. The directions and goals of the strategic plan in turn were developed through a collaborative process involving the entire campus community and are consonant with the Mission in advancing the College to new levels of institutional effectiveness and student learning success. While no recommendations emerge from this standard, the Study Team determined that the College would benefit from continuing efforts to increase the visibility of the Mission statement.

**Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal**

MCC fosters a climate of integrated planning and best practices whereby planning and improvement processes are clearly communicated as well as provide for constituent participation and incorporate the use of assessment results. The process for developing the Strategic Plan creates an environment that encourages broad representation and engagement. The use of planning tools, budget management and assessment activities is strong and conducted on an ongoing basis. A clear strength of MCC’s planning process is the level of flexibility that each area has in the development of annual strategies. Each division is driven by different needs, and strategies can be tied back to the strategic directions. MCC’s planning structure, resource allocation, and institutional renewal efforts effectively support the College’s Mission and goals. While the College is strongly positioned in this area, the Study Team noted a recommendation to require divisions to create a consistent annual reporting process across the College, which as appropriate, aligns with the annual budgeting process.

**Standard 3: Institutional Resources**

MCC’s Mission and Strategic Plan provide the framework for the management and allocation of the College’s resources—financial, human, facilities, and technology. The Study Team found that MCC effectively utilizes institutional resources in support of the Mission. No recommendations emerge from this standard; however, a challenging budget climate will require that the College continue to closely monitor all of these areas for effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability.

**Standard 4: Leadership and Governance**

MCC has a long history of shared governance involving the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, and student government organizations. Moreover, MCC’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The Study Team determined that
MCC’s shared governance process is designed to achieve the Mission of the College, but recommends that the College establish and publish an evaluation cycle to review and update college-wide policies.

Standard 5: Administration

After a review of institutional documents and interviews with the President and her staff, the Study Team concluded that MCC is in compliance with the fundamental elements of Standard 5. The Chief Executive Officer provides the leadership and expertise necessary to guide the College toward the attainment of institutional goals. The Study Team recognizes that the administrative leadership of MCC has been through transition at the senior administrative and mid-management levels, but that the current administrative leaders regardless of longevity and status of position are qualified to carry out their divisional responsibilities and functions. While no recommendations emerge from its review of this standard, the Study Team suggests that the College consider developing a succession-planning framework.

Standard 6: Integrity

MCC adheres to the highest standards of integrity in service of our Mission. The Strategic Plan highlights this guiding value: “We believe in promoting an environment of honesty and authenticity, in being accountable and ethically responsible for our policies and actions, and in exemplifying a high standard of civility.” In its review, the Study Team found that MCC demonstrates a commitment to integrity through activities, policies, and procedures as well as our adherence to professional, ethical standards regarding treatment of and interactions with its constituencies. The Study Team recommends that the College develop an Intellectual Property policy as the currently implemented policy is outdated.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

MCC’s Strategic Plan establishes a framework of institutional assessment, with the four directions and supporting goals providing a coherent context for assessing institutional effectiveness. The development of the Institutional Effectiveness Model at MCC illustrates the College’s journey towards data-informed priorities and goals in the areas of institutional assessment and the assessment of student learning. Each division of the College is engaged in assessment using evidence-based or formative assessment tools with institutional metrics to measure effectiveness. The College’s institutional assessment is comprehensive as evidenced by the participation and support of faculty, staff, administration, and students in these efforts. The Study Team recommends implementing a report card to support communication of assessment to the entire College community.

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

MCC has focused on strengthening Enrollment Management Services, specifically Admissions, in order to more fully meet the Mission and address challenges inherent in the changing nature of higher education. MCC is committed to student success and providing the necessary leadership and aligning strategic resources with current enrollment trends. In addition, the College has made a commitment to focus on student retention initiatives, bringing together services that are currently in place and identifying new opportunities to improve student success and graduation rates. MCC’s faculty and staff continue to collaborate and support both new recruitment and current student retention initiatives. The Study Team recommends that a review of transfer credit procedures be completed, as well as a strategic enrollment plan that addresses student retention.
Standard 9: Student Support Services

In the course of the self-study, the Study Team found that MCC’s student services reinforce and extend the College’s Mission beyond the classroom, thereby broadening students’ educational experience. From admission to graduation, support services are in place to promote goal completion. As a result, the College is adequately responsive to the challenges of providing a variety of services to a student body that is diverse in both interest and needs. The Study Team recommends that MCC continue developing the assessment cycle that is already in progress and follow-up on the findings of the MCC Liberal Arts Degree Programs committee.

Standard 10: Faculty

MCC supports a dynamic learning environment through its continued efforts in recruiting and hiring of qualified and diverse faculty and other professionals. In assessing how effectively the College communicates and implements evaluative procedures for retention, promotion, discipline, and grievances to all faculty including adjuncts, the Study Team found that all academic departments are implementing contract language in a fair and equitable manner. With regard to its findings involving professional development support, the Study Team found that the College clearly meets the standard in encouraging and providing support for professional development activities to advance teaching and learning. In its final analysis, the Study Team does not offer recommendations, but does encourage the College to make tenure materials readily available in electronic format to help both those going through the process and those providing assistance during the process, and to continue its diligent efforts to build diversity among its faculty and professional staff.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

MCC’s focus on teaching and learning is obvious when exploring our educational offerings; from programs such as Dual Enrollment and Transitional Studies to the Honors Institute and Service Learning, MCC students have a variety of courses, programs, and other opportunities to serve their academic and personal goals. The College is continually looking for ways to improve offerings, support the Mission, and provide the best educational opportunities possible for its many students. MCC develops and implements plans for improvement as needed; library resources respond to the needs of students and programs; and innovations continue to be developed as MCC continues to do what we do best: adapt to the needs of the community and provide a high quality education, all in the service of fulfilling the Mission. The Study Team found that the College needs to make course learning outcomes more readily available to prospective and current students. In addition, as noted in Standard 8, the Team determined that a review of the transfer evaluation procedure needs to be periodically conducted and reviewed.

Standard 12: General Education

MCC provides a General Education Program that supports the goals of diverse learners and includes preparation for both transfer and career paths. The MCC General Education Program is designed to meet both local MCC General Education requirements (MCC-GER), as well as those established by the State University of New York (SUNY-GER). The College demonstrates compliance with the fundamental elements of General Education, but the Study Team determined that MCC should prioritize updating and approving a General Education Program.
Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

Due to MCC’s strategic focus over the last five years, many of the institutional areas covered by this standard—developmental curriculum, workforce development and career education, and additional instructional sites—have been among the most dynamic at the College. The College has sound assessment methods for identifying underprepared students and has developed a rigorous sequence of developmental courses geared toward student academic success. The expansion of workforce development and career education programs, punctuated by the creation of the Corporate College and the leveraging of partnerships that extend educational experiences beyond the walls of the traditional classroom, are also strengths of the College. The Study Team recommends that MCC should implement the Open SUNY quality rubric guidelines to support assessment of distance education.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

MCC’s focus on student learning is demonstrated by various assessment procedures and practices. The College engages in regularly-scheduled, planned, and purposeful student learning assessment activities to evaluate degree programs and assess student learning in general education courses. Academic assessment continues to be a faculty-driven and faculty-centered process. Through the College Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) Committee, the College’s primary policy-making group on academic assessment, faculty interests in academic assessment continue to be represented. The Study Team determined that there needs to be more transparency regarding closing the loop with an emphasis on timeliness and curricula actions stemming from assessment.
Introducing Monroe Community College

In 2011, Monroe Community College (MCC) celebrated our golden jubilee. In this opening chapter, we introduce the MCC of today: our character, students, size, and governing structures. We also highlight significant recent initiatives at the College. Finally, we describe our comprehensive approach to the Middle States self-study.

“Inspiring every day”

A valued member of State University of New York (SUNY) system, MCC is a dynamic and comprehensive postsecondary institution located in Rochester, New York. Established in 1961, MCC was conceived with a noble yet single-minded purpose: to provide the community with desperately-needed skilled nursing professionals. In just a few short years, though, MCC changed the face of educational access in the Greater Rochester area forever. In the words of Dr. Samuel Stabins, one of MCC’s founding Trustees and the College’s first Board Chairman, MCC is where “any student in Monroe County who is motivated and has the capacity to take on community college studies will be and should be admitted.” Throughout our accomplished history, MCC has continued to embrace Dr. Stabins’ promise to our community, especially to students. Our tagline—“Inspiring every day”—echoes this legacy of access and the many ways we motivate students to achieve every day.

Key Facts

In 2014-15, MCC served a diverse student population of over 32,841. Many of these students represented first-generation and low-income learners: 34% were aged 25 or older and 37% were minority students; 23% of Monroe County area high school graduates begin their college educations at MCC. Currently, 58% are enrolled in transfer programs, 20% are enrolled in career programs, and 21% are undecided about their academic plans. Our 2013 graduates transferred to 189 different colleges, and 90% of our career graduates who are employed full-time remain in the Greater Rochester area, many beginning careers in the growing fields of advanced manufacturing, optics, technology, communication, and healthcare.

MCC offers 100+ transfer, career, and certificate programs at four instructional sites. The largest majors include Liberal Arts and Sciences (General Studies), Business Administration, Criminal Justice, and Nursing. Partnerships with a number of school districts tackle such issues as college readiness and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) recruitment, providing support and resources for many first generation, low-income, and underrepresented students. Our commitment to diversity enables students to embrace global responsibility and inclusive excellence. While our dual admission agreements serve as exemplary pathways to transfer, our maturing Honors Institute serves academically talented and highly motivated students. Additionally, MCC’s service-learning initiative sends over 1,800 MCC students into the community each semester. Honoring our promise to serve the workforce needs of the region and to reinvigorate our engagement with local business and industry, in 2010, MCC launched a new division to focus exclusively on workforce development. These examples hint at the scope of MCC’s educational programs, commitment to the values of access and excellence, and stature as an invaluable regional resource.
MCC’s Instructional Sites

The College’s Brighton site is located on a 300-acre park-like setting at the junction of Interstate Highways 390 and 590, just outside the city limits of Rochester. The 17 buildings offer learning environments that support active, collaborative, and engaged teaching and learning and include a 500-seat theater, an athletic complex with an indoor turf field, and a large multi-purpose campus center. A child care center and four residential halls, housing some 770 students, are also located at this site.

MCC’s Damon City Campus (DCC), situated in the heart of downtown Rochester, draws on the dynamic geography of its location. DCC is the home to the Human Services, Criminal Justice, and Education programs. It is a vital and visible presence in the slow but steady renaissance of the downtown area. In fall 2017, the culmination of decades of conversation and planning will be realized when MCC opens our new, permanent downtown campus at the historic Eastman Kodak International Headquarters site on State Street and Morrie Silver Way.

The Applied Technologies Center (ATC) is a 55,000 square-foot technical training facility located approximately one mile west of the Brighton campus. Opened in 1997, it houses three technical programs directly related to regional needs: Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Machining; Automotive Technology; and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning. A.A.S. degrees and certificates created by the ATC’s close ties to local industry through advisory boards and partnerships have put it in the regional and national spotlight as the instructional site has hosted recent visits by Vice President Joseph Biden and Dr. Jill Biden; former Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis; and H. Carl McCall, Chairman of the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Finally, MCC’s Public Safety Training Facility (PSTF) is a regional emergency training complex owned by Monroe County and the City of Rochester and operated by MCC. Here, in addition to offering degree and certificate programs, the College trains police, fire, and emergency-medical personnel. For professional and volunteer firefighters, the PSTF offers aircraft simulations, burn buildings, and other fire training props. Police officers and recruits learn and refine skills in a crime scene, a firing range, and TEAM/Tac simulators. Abundant medical resources are also available for EMS training.

MCC’s Governing and Leadership Structures

Since its inception, MCC has been governed by a Board of Trustees that sets policy and institutional priorities; the president of the College leads the institution in working toward those priorities. The Board of Trustees is comprised of nine community leaders and one student. Four trustees are appointed by the Governor of New York; five are appointed by the Monroe County Legislature, the College’s local sponsor; and a student trustee is elected annually by his or her peers. This process follows the provisions of New York State Education Law.

The Faculty Senate, MCC’s academic governance organization; the Faculty Association, the union for teaching and professional staff; and the Civil Service Employees Association, the union for local government employees and state workers, together play important roles and participate appropriately in the overall leadership of the College.

Mission

Monroe Community College is a dynamic learning community where access, excellence, and leadership are the College’s hallmarks. Our Mission is to educate and prepare diverse learners to achieve scholarly, professional, and individual success within a local and global context. The College serves as a catalyst for innovation, economic development, lifelong learning, and civic engagement.
Vision

Monroe Community College will champion opportunity, innovation, and excellence to transform lives and communities.

Recent Initiatives

In the interval between the last decennial accreditation, MCC has launched a number of initiatives that have profoundly shaped the nature of the College. While many other changes over the last decade could be highlighted, here we identify a few recent initiatives that have had comprehensive impact on the College, beginning with our current strategic plan.

Strategic Planning Initiative

The last several years have marked a major turning point for MCC, and the College’s current Strategic Plan, *Fulfilling the Promise*, has provided the College with an opportunity not just to move the institution forward but also to take it in a new direction. MCC’s Strategic Plan is both visionary and practical. Breaking from the tradition of lengthy plans with difficult-to-determine outcomes, the College’s current Strategic Plan is designed both to chart MCC’s future and to provide a means of measuring accomplishments, with greater focus on four core initiatives, or directions, related directly to everyday practice at the College: Learning First; Workforce Education and Career Pathways; Partnerships; and Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Accountability. These four directions are also dynamic, outcome-based, and firmly grounded in evidence. The strategic plan is nimble enough to be able to respond to unanticipated opportunities and threats. At MCC, we purposefully align our five-year strategic planning cycle to follow directly on the heels of Middle States reaccreditation efforts.

College-Readiness Initiatives

MCC acknowledges we are in a truly watershed moment for public education in New York State and the country, a moment driven by mounting concerns about student performance and college-readiness. Over the last several years, MCC has taken several significant steps in an effort to improve college readiness, including the fostering of new, stronger partnerships to support incoming student populations as well as the designing of new dual enrollment initiatives that focus on creating concrete career and transfer pathways.

The SUNY and City University of New York (CUNY) community colleges, the state’s only open access institutions, already have strong and productive histories of collaborating with their local K-12 districts, but MCC has scaled up some key aspects of these relationships to yield significant improvements in college-readiness. One partnership aimed at improving college-readiness is the Early College High Schools. In 2010, MCC was honored to be among 11 SUNY institutions to launch Smart Scholar Early College High Schools (ECHS). Our partnership with the Rochester City School District’s (RCSD) Early College International High School represented the first ECHS not just in Rochester but in the entire nine county Finger Lakes Region. Students at the Rochester ECHS have the opportunity to earn up to 20 college credit hours prior to high school graduation with enrichment activities that promote a “college-going” ethos from day one. The quick success of this venture allowed MCC to partner a second time with RCSD to expand the high school, but two years later, the Early College International High School remains the sole example of this innovative practice both in the city and region.

Like many community colleges, MCC partners with local public and private high schools to provide students the opportunity to complete college classes well before graduation. In 2014-15, MCC’s High
School Dual Enrollment (HSDE) program addressed college readiness by serving 4,668 students through high school and faculty partnerships that provide dually-enrolled students with an introduction to college-level rigor and expectations while still in high school. Five new dual enrollment courses and two new schools were also added to our HSDE. Internal processes and marking of the program have been significantly enhanced. To address financial barriers to participation, MCC has offered the “Inspiring Every Day Scholarship,” which underwrites tuition for low income students. As the community’s college, MCC is committed to moving the needle on student success.

Workforce Development Initiatives

Fulfilling our promise to support the economic development of the region, in 2010, MCC created the Division of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services (EDIWS). Led by a newly-created vice presidency and shaped largely by one of the four core directions of the College’s Strategic Plan, this robust workforce development division combines the noncredit training offered through the MCC Corporate College with credit-bearing programs including stackable credentials and career pathways. Designed to anticipate and respond to the needs of the regional and national workforce by taking an innovative approach, EDIWS provides workforce solutions and helps to close the regional skills gap.

MCC has also become a state and national leader in the use of data to drive workforce programming, connecting what students learn to what they can earn. Using this data-driven approach, MCC has accelerated and expanded programs in areas of greatest need, such as Precision Machining. The College has also used data and surveys of industry partners to justify beginning new programs, such as the Clinical Laboratory Technician/Medical Laboratory Technician associate degree program, which provides students the credential that has recently become mandatory for employment in the field. A favorable job market with growth opportunities makes this a promising option for students interested in this health care specialization.

Partnership Initiatives

Partnerships comprise one of MCC’s strategic directions, and they support many of the College’s recent developments and future initiatives. Community partnerships aid MCC in improving college readiness. Additionally, with the support of the MCC Foundation, MCC partners with East High School and the JP Morgan Chase Foundation to create a seamless pathway for inner city students from high school graduation to college-level courses. Most recently, MCC has partnered with RCSD to create a new grade 9-14 Pathways in Technology Early High School (P-TECH) Rochester. This six-year program integrates MCC’s Information and Network Technology A.A.S. into the high school experience. P-TECH Rochester students are matched with a business mentor, take college classes, and gain professional work experience during their high school years. After six years, graduates will earn both a New York State Regents diploma and an associates’ degree from MCC.

Additionally, MCC’s Save for Success is a five-year collaborative program between ESL Federal Credit Union, MCC, the MCC Foundation, and PathStone Corporation. The program allows eligible students from the Rochester and the Finger Lakes region a chance to invest in their futures by saving up to $375 and having their savings matched 8-to-1 for a maximum tuition grant of $3,000 at MCC. In addition, students will receive financial literacy training and one-on-one assistance with financial and life skills planning. The program assists with tuition, books, equipment, and related expenses.

In the last several years, MCC’s leadership has built industry partnerships and used real-time labor market information to drive workforce education. MCC has been selected as a finalist for an American Association of Community College award that recognizes outstanding college-corporate partnerships.
One such partnership is MCC’s work with the Corning Incorporated Foundation to help create educational opportunities in the optics field for area students and provide a pipeline of skilled workers for optics companies.

In addition, MCC is also an active participant in The Democracy Commitment, a national initiative aimed at increasing the engagement of community college students in civic learning and democratic practice. Through this initiative, the College prepares students to be informed, active, and mobilized citizens in their communities. Community-based work has included voter registration drives and efforts to increase juror diversity.

**New Downtown Campus Initiative**

MCC leaders and community members have long held a vision of a permanent college campus in downtown Rochester, one that meets the needs of an urban population and reflects the aspirations, goals, and dreams of our students. After a process and discussion spanning two decades of starts and stops, on February 12, 2013, the Monroe County Legislature approved the purchase of five buildings formally part of the Kodak complex in downtown Rochester.

At present, plans to make MCC’s new downtown campus a dynamic learning environment are underway. Planning and design began in fall 2014, construction began fall 2015, and in 2017 the new campus will be fully operational. The downtown campus on State Street will provide 21st Century learning environments and much-needed community and collaboration space for our students. In addition to the programs that already exist at the current Damon City Campus, the new downtown campus will include workforce development programs, career and technical education programs, and “program clusters” ranging from pre-college programs to transfer programs to four-year institutions. MCC is also in talks to expand the number of university partners with a presence at the new downtown campus, providing a pathway to the baccalaureate for Rochester residents.

**Globalization Initiatives**

MCC is currently meeting the challenge of preparing global citizens through a multi-dimensional, comprehensive strategy. MCC participated in the American Council on Education (ACE) Internationalization Laboratory to provide a firm foundation for its plan. A college-wide Internationalization Task Force was formed and charged with developing strategies to infuse a global dimension into teaching, learning, research, service, and outreach. The laboratory work with ACE has facilitated a process of full campus engagement. In 2014, the Office of Global Education and International Services (GEIS) was created to provide a greater system of support for students and faculty. In addition to strengthening MCC’s existing international partnerships, such as our collaboration with the College of Science, Technology, and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago, and supporting MCC’s study abroad programs, GEIS has served as the liaison office with SUNY’s internationalization efforts. Recent successes have included study abroad grants for MCC faculty.

**Roadmap Academies Initiative**

In January 2013, MCC was one of ten community colleges selected by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) for participation in Phase Two of the Developing a Community College Student Roadmap Project, joining 11 institutions from Phase One. Through participation and mentoring in this program, MCC created the Roadmap Academies, a student enrollment and retention model that creates student cohorts according to academic interest and enrolls them into one of six “Schools”: Arts and Humanities; Business, Hospitality, and Entrepreneurism; Community Engagement and Development; Health Sciences and Physical Wellness; Social Sciences and Global Studies; and
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The model organizes a student’s experience along a clear, intentional pathway into and through the College and provides personalized support via cross-functional school support networks. Throughout the process, students will participate as full partners in navigating their own educational experiences. The Academies Model borrows from the successes long demonstrated in community colleges by other student-cohort learning experiences, such as those in health and technical programs, where student retention and success typically exceeds that for the general student population.

Moving to the Academies Model has many benefits for both the College and our students, including simplifying the enrollment process for students, providing wrap-around services to address retention and persistence, streamlining marketing and communications, and creating a single degree coding/reporting system. The evidence base for pathways programs has been underscored by Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggers, and Davis Jenkins in Redesigning America’s Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success (2014). MCC’s adoption of this model was spurred by the increases in student success experienced by other community colleges in the AAC&U Roadmap Project. The College will implement the MCC Academies Model for all students entering in fall 2016.

The Self-Study Design

Nature and Scope of the Self-Study

MCC determined a comprehensive self-study model was most useful to the institution. A comprehensive self-study offers opportunities for a fresh look, especially as the College undergoes changes in leadership, budgetary challenges, and exciting new initiatives since its previous decennial review in 2006. Leadership changes have included the appointment of the current President in 2009, an added position of Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services Division in 2010, a new Vice President of Student Services in 2014, a new Executive Dean of MCC’s Damon City Campus in 2015, and a new Provost and Vice President of Academic Services in 2015.

This self-study also occurs within a complex context for higher education. Community colleges especially face the demand to serve a growing diversity of students, more of whom are underprepared academically and at-risk socio-economically—all while receiving less state funding and more calls for accountability. As at most community colleges, MCC’s enrollment has declined from the peaks seen in 2009-10, leaving fewer resources to address our comprehensive Mission and bringing the need to align expenditures with enrollment. Despite the challenges of this landscape, MCC—a college with a tradition of and sustaining commitment to innovation—has embraced the opportunities embedded in this new reality of higher education. This self-study has played a significant role in identifying and better understanding MCC’s strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities both for scaling success and improving practice.

The Self-Study Process

Preparations for MCC’s self-study process began in spring 2013 when President Kress appointed an Associate Professor of the English/Philosophy Department and an Associate Director of the Career and Transfer Center to co-chair the Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee. In planning with College leaders, MCC adopted a comprehensive self-study model.

The President appointed the members of the Steering Committee. This group met formally for the first time in late January 2014 and weekly for the 2014-15 academic year either as a full committee or in subgroups. The membership of the Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from a diverse group of faculty, professional staff, and administrators. The College appointed the Director of Planning and the
Director of Institutional Research to provide support for the self-study process. The Steering Committee developed a self-study timetable, outlined a communication strategy, developed research questions, and made recommendations for Study Team chairs.

In February 2014, the co-chairs put out a call for campus-wide participation in the self-study, and by March 2014, the chairs and members for 14 Study Teams, one for each standard, were constituted. Each Study Team had an assigned Steering Committee member who served as a liaison. These liaisons attended Study Team meetings to answer members’ questions regarding the self-study process. The Study Teams met throughout the 2014-15 academic year, collected data, conducted interviews, and submitted draft reports. Members of the self-study used the M-Drive, an internal college portal, to facilitate communication and information–sharing among its members as they wrote, organized, monitored, and amended the team reports.

In summer 2015, the Steering Committee built upon the work of the Study Teams to compile the self-study report. Regular updates on the process to the College community were accomplished through presentations to the Faculty Senate; college-wide events; and the MCC Daily Tribune, the College’s electronic means of communication. In October 2015, a draft of the self-study report was shared with the campus community. Members of the community were encouraged to provide feedback. The comprehensive and inclusive process behind this self-study reflects the comprehensive and inclusive College it documents.
Monroe Community College’s Mission is well-defined and reflects the core tenets which guide the institution. The Mission provides guidance for the strategic planning process which enables us to articulate objectives, create mission-consistent goals for the future, and advance the College steadily toward achieving those goals. This chapter analyzes the College’s responsiveness to the Mission and goals as well our inclusive planning process.

**FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

**A Collaborative Review Process**

MCC has a mature strategic planning process including both internal and external participation (see Standard 2). During the latest strategic planning process and Mission review, a 16-person steering committee was convened, consisting of representatives from across campuses and sites. As part of its yearlong work, the committee compiled feedback from internal and external constituencies, including faculty, staff, students, public and private stakeholders, county lawmakers, local business leaders, and school superintendents. Drafts of the Mission and Strategic Plan were shared widely, giving all constituencies an opportunity to provide input with final approval by the Board of Trustees. Committee members and members of the college community were able to access this information via the College’s planning website.

Out of this collaborative review process emerged the resulting Strategic Plan, *Fulfilling the Promise*, and a new Mission, focusing on different aspects of our work at the College as priorities and times change. Overall, the College embodies all the strongest qualities of an institution that lives the Mission. MCC’s Mission is the foundation for the goals set by the College.

**Responsive Mission Statement: The Core Tenets**

A review of the College’s Mission, vision, and values is conducted every five years to correspond to reaccreditation activities. Since 2006, the College’s Mission has twice undergone revision. The first review of the Mission incorporated a recommendation that grew out of the 2006 institutional self-study to include the tenets of leadership and innovation. In 2012, internal and external stakeholders were engaged in a second review of the Mission. Subsequently, MCC’s Board of Trustees approved the following Mission statement:

> *Monroe Community College is a dynamic learning community where access, excellence, and leadership are the College’s hallmarks. Our Mission is to educate and prepare diverse learners to achieve scholarly, professional, and individual success within a local and global context. The College serves as a catalyst for innovation, economic development, lifelong learning, and civic engagement.*

MCC’s Mission statement drives decision-making at the College. The core tenets reflect institutional values and goals as outlined in the College’s current Strategic Plan.
Access

Access to higher education is a priority at MCC. This commitment can be seen through our affordable tuition which remains one of the lowest tuition rates within the State University of New York (SUNY) system in addition to our diverse student population: 49% of MCC students are Pell eligible, 36% of students self-identify as minority, and 21% of students take at least one class online.

Excellence

The prominence of “excellence” in the Mission statement reflects the College’s continued commitment to institutional improvement through assessment best practices as evidenced by the comprehensive manner in which the College assesses and reaffirms the success and effectiveness of our educational programs.

Leadership and Innovation

MCC has long functioned as a state leader, a role that has continued and expanded. The College has a leadership seat on the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council whose charge from the governor is to increase the economic vitality of the region. President Kress is a member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the American Association of Community Colleges. The College also provides leadership on multiple SUNY initiatives, including Open SUNY, SUNY’s Diversity Council, and a 30-college SUNY-wide consortium that successfully competed for a Department of Labor grant; this grant provided $14.6M to NY State to provide workforce training in Advanced Manufacturing.

MCC’s commitment to innovation is exemplified in our thirty-year tenure as a Board member of the League for Innovation in the Community College. MCC's Honors Institute and the Academy for Veterans Success are additional examples of scholarly and creative innovation driven by Direction One: Learning First. The Honors Institute is the home for MCC's most academically talented and highly motivated students and the Academy for Veterans Success provides support to veterans as they transition from military to civilian life and navigate higher education.

Scholarly, Professional, and Individual Success in Local and Global Contexts

The Mission’s focus on the rich academic experience at MCC captures our commitment to teaching and learning. This is exemplified by MCC’s annual Scholars’ Day, which has highlighted and recognized the undergraduate research of our students mentored by MCC faculty. The Mission’s emphasis on a global context enabled MCC to participate in the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Shared Futures initiative and partner with the American Council on Education’s Internationalization Laboratory. This two-year collaborative initiative culminated in the 2014 establishment of the Global Education and International Services (GEIS) office, charged with overseeing the needs for global education and services for international students. The GEIS office also works with internal stakeholders and external partners to help faculty internationalize the curriculum.

Economic Development

MCC’s redefinition and reimagining of workforce development has been demonstrated by the launch of a new college division in 2010: Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services (EDIWS). This new division ensures that a wide variety of career-focused credit and non-credit programming is responsive to real-time industry needs. MCC’s realization of this aspect of the Mission has been lauded by leaders from Vice President Joseph Biden and Governor Andrew Cuomo to Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks and Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren. Most significantly, through programs like the Opportunity Agenda grant-funded accelerated Precision Tooling Certificate, MCC has connected students to sustaining economic futures.
Lifelong Learning

The College’s commitment to lifelong learning for its students, employees, and community is demonstrated in multiple ways, including the design of innovative teaching strategies to help students develop a love of learning, ongoing professional development for faculty and staff, and tuition waivers for senior citizens. One significant example of MCC’s support for continued professional development began in 2011 with the dedication of a full-time Coordinator position of the Teaching and Creativity Center (TCC). Over the last several years, the TCC has developed a variety of new initiatives across the campus, including workshops, conferences, cohort-based programs, and faculty development services.

Civic Engagement

MCC has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll by the Corporation for National and Community Service in recognition of higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community partnerships and service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. The College was also one of the initial signatories to The Democracy Commitment, a community college initiative to increase student civic engagement and awareness.

The Strategic Plan as a Living Document: Directions and Goals

The strength of MCC’s Strategic Plan focuses on four tightly-integrated core directions. These directions are informed by assessment and capitalize on identified opportunities and challenges of the College. The directions are Learning First; Workforce Education and Career Pathways; Partnerships; and Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Accountability. Each direction is guided by three goals, and, together, the goals and directions inform how MCC lives out our Mission. Additionally, the directions address how our work moves the College forward across disciplines, departments, and divisions. Finally, a set of strategic planning metrics enable the College to measure progress on directions and goals. Listed below are a few of the ways in which individual divisions and departments respond to the College’s Mission, strategic directions, and goals.

Direction One: Learning First

The first direction and set of goals focus on student learning. The first priority, to “increase the goal accomplishment of individual learners,” was evidenced in 2012-13 when the Transitional Studies department implemented a large-scale comprehensive redesign of developmental language instruction by realigning its learning outcomes across courses and with ENG 101: College Composition learning outcomes. This new sequencing of courses has reduced the amount of time needed to complete the Transitional Studies program by reducing this path from three to two courses while addressing the reading needs of students in greater depth.

Direction Two: Workforce Education and Career Pathways

Direction two focuses on programs that are industry-driven and responsive to community needs. EDIWS created MCC Corporate College to offer over 100 short-cycle and non-credit programs to meet the needs of business and industry. EDIWS also launched Career Coach, a dynamic, interactive online tool free to the community. Since its launch, MCC’s Career Coach has been adopted locally by Junior Achievement, which has built a curriculum around it; by BOCES, (the vocational arm of New York high schools), as a student research tool; and by local guidance counselors, who use it in career counseling.

Direction Three: Partnerships

Direction three addresses initiatives and community partnerships, especially those focused on educational success. In response to the goal to “pursue and strengthen partnerships to increase the percentage of
college-ready learners,” Academic Services, with support from MCC’s Education Department, launched the Horizons Summer Enrichment program in 2011 to combat students’ decline in academic engagement and performance in the summer by providing low-income children from the Rochester City School District with a unique combination of academic, social, cultural, wellness, and recreational learning experiences. A total of 95 students participated in the program during summer 2015. The program reports that 90% of students made gains in reading skills while no reading skill losses were indicated for any students. MCC is the first community college to begin a Horizons program in the nation.

Direction Four: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Accountability

In an effort to enhance institutional effectiveness, the fourth direction includes goals that cultivate a culture of inquiry and assessment as well as promote sustainable best practices. The Academic Services Division addressed the goal to “advance institutional effectiveness and organizational efficiency through assessment and evidenced-based decisions” when it successfully advocated in 2013 that MCC implement the Voluntary Framework of Accountability sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) to improve measurement of student learning and employment-related outcomes. To help the College meet the goal of developing “best practices that are environmentally responsible and sustainable,” the Office of Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Accountability implemented the Green Office Program in 2012, which promotes awareness and sustainability habits in college offices. The goal is to have 75% participation by 2016-17. As of 2015, 55% of college offices have become certified as Green offices.

While this summary of the four directions provides only a snapshot of our Mission-based decision-making, the Study Team recognizes that the Strategic Plan is, indeed, the Mission in action. It guides MCC in institutional improvement and creates a dynamic relationship that is essential in keeping MCC competitive in a challenging budgetary and increasingly outcomes-based higher education environment.

Communication of the Mission: Getting the Word Out

Communicating the College’s Mission and goals is important internally and externally to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the direction and the initiatives of the College. The College shares the current Mission through various avenues, including President’s Office press releases, newsletters, presentations, and web pages. Despite these communications, the Study Team found that the Mission was neither easily accessible nor universally known by all constituents, due, in part, to the length of the Mission statement itself. Capitalizing on this early finding, the College has increased visibility of the Mission as evidenced by its appearance on important College documents, such as Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees agendas, as well as on placards in administrative offices and on job descriptions.

During its review, the Study Team also found that a search on the College’s website produced several department mission statements. These unit mission statements preceded the institutional Mission on a web search. This early finding has since been addressed in two specific ways: first, the College has provided education regarding the difference between the College’s Mission statement and department purpose statements, which support the College Mission; secondly, the College refined a search of the Mission on the College’s website so now it appears first.

STRENGTHS

- MCC’s Mission clearly reflects our institutional goals and values.
- MCC’s Mission is reviewed during a regular, five-year strategic planning cycle that involves broad internal and external input.
- MCC’s Mission and goals drive planning and decision-making across all units from how we design and deliver programs to how we allocate resources.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

- Consider a shorter, one sentence, Mission statement that is more easily recognizable and memorable.
- Continue to promote the need for departments to differentiate between purpose statements of the department and the Mission of the College.

Recommendations

- None noted.
OVERVIEW

MCC’s key institutional planning initiatives are aligned with the College’s Mission, vision, and Strategic Plan. Decision-making is data-driven and based on assessment results to assure accountability, sound resource allocation, and institutional renewal. This chapter analyzes how planning, resource allocation, and assessment are used to maintain institutional quality.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Institutional Planning: An Integrated Process

MCC’s planning and resource allocation processes are mature, on-going, and fortified by assessment activities. As set forth in Standard 1, the institutional Mission statement guides all major decision-making at the College. Using the Mission as its foundation, the College’s Strategic Plan is operationalized through division goals and department strategies (see figure 2.1). A more detailed graphic of the relationship between institutional planning and institutional effectiveness is provided in Standard 7.

![Fig.2.1 MCC’s Integrated Planning Approach](image)

The Facilities Master Plan, Technology Plan, Recruitment Plan, and other operational plans are created in support of the Mission and Strategic Plan, informed by data from Institutional Research and resourced, as appropriate, through both operating and capital budgets. Assessment practices ensure that planning efforts stay on track and lead to institutional renewal.
Strategic Planning

Over the years, MCC has developed a mature and refined strategic planning process involving four stages.

Stage One addresses the strategic thinking phase in which Political, Economic, Social, and Technological (PEST) analyses and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analyses are performed. Additionally, this phase examines the institutional culture and reviews and updates the College’s Mission. Institutional Research is integral in providing data and analysis.

Stage Two establishes a set of strategic directions and goals which are shared with the college community and external stakeholders for feedback, revised, and then adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Stage Three represents the ongoing implementation and assessment of the Strategic Plan. Strategies are developed at the division and department level and then are integrated into planning and budgeting.

Stage Four is also ongoing as the College assesses and demonstrates accountability using two primary tools: iDashboard and Compliance Assist. These tools have enabled MCC to quickly display progress on important metrics (see Standard 7). Throughout the duration of the Strategic Plan, these tools provide a sound record of institution, division, and department goals and their results. Progress is regularly communicated to the college community through presidential forums and annual division reports as well as in the President’s Report to the Community.

Strategic Plan: Fulfilling the Promise

MCC’s five-year strategic planning cycle follows our Middle States reaccreditation activities. The current Strategic Plan, Fulfilling the Promise, is more focused and specific than previous plans and allows the College to measure success, identify threats, and respond to new opportunities. Key college constituencies and external stakeholders are involved in the strategic planning process to ensure that the college community is given the opportunity to provide input prior to the adoption of the plan by the Board of Trustees (see Standard 1).

Strategic Directions

While the previous plan featured seven broad directions with outcomes that were difficult to measure, the current plan is much more concise, targeting only four tightly-integrated areas of emphasis, or “directions.” Over the last several years, these strategic directions have outlined a clear framework for reshaping the work of the College.

Goals

Previous plans, while robust, contained too many goals and strategies at the division and unit levels. The current Strategic Plan promotes greater goal-strategy alignment because there are fewer goals (3 per direction, 12 in all). The breadth of prior strategic plans also limited MCC’s ability to assess progress in meeting strategic goals. The current plan addresses this challenge.

Assumptions

MCC’s Strategic Plan includes a set of assumptions for each strategic direction and attending set of goals. These assumptions provide an environment for the directions and goals as well as a touchstone for year-to-year review. As assumptions change, so might the goals. This is especially important in the current rapidly-changing higher education environment.
Metrics

Progress in meeting each goal is tracked by specific metrics. Taken together, these measures provide a comprehensive portrait of the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and the College.

In reviewing the planning process for formulating the Strategic Plan, the Study Team concluded that the four stages of development and implementation; the participation of a broad contingency of faculty, staff, and administrators during the plan’s development; and regular communication of the plan’s progress demonstrate best practices. In fact, MCC was an invited presenter on our strategic plan process and dashboard metrics at the Association of Community College Trustees Annual Congress (Seattle, 2013).

MCC’s Strategic Plan in Action

An example of how the parts of the Strategic Plan work together can be illustrated by our efforts to reduce energy costs in support of Direction Four: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Accountability. Goal 3 is to “Develop and integrate programs and best practices that are environmentally responsible and sustainable.” For example, we generate our own electricity and thermal energy from a combined heat and power plant. The majority of energy purchased at the College is natural gas to power this plant. Utilizing key metrics including BTUs per square foot, MCC’s Facilities Department partners with a panel of experts to implement strategies to anticipate market trends and make buying decisions using energy futures and other cost-saving strategies. Aggressive buying and focused conservation efforts have resulted in significant reductions in both energy use and cost at the College. With an annual goal to reduce consumption by one percent each calendar year, the results continue to be noteworthy with the target exceeded for each year from 2010 through 2014. From a financial perspective, natural gas and electricity costs have been reduced by 13% from FY2010 to FY2015, with savings reallocated to meet other demands in support of institutional renewal. During FY2015, the College hired an energy manager to develop and implement additional environmentally responsible and sustainable energy practices.

Operational and Unit Planning

Operational and unit planning (see Standard 7) involve the day-to-day implementation of the strategic directions, prioritize resource allocation through detailed action plans, and establish a timetable for goal accomplishment. To better assure that the College engages in integrated planning, in 2013 the President launched the Planning Coordination Council, a representative oversight group with membership drawn from the multiple planning entities across the College and from our shared governance stakeholder groups. The committee’s charge is to assure that MCC’s planning processes are fully integrated and mutually supportive, that the College can document its efforts along these lines to assure institutional effectiveness, and that data/outcomes generated through the multiple processes are “fed back” into the overall picture to inform resource allocation in support of the Strategic Plan.

In addition to building community awareness and fostering communication, the work of the Planning Coordination Council has led to two enhancements: the creation of a guiding document for division and department purpose statements as well as the development of a template for operational and unit plans. Both of these documents are now available for College use and have been incorporated in the Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and Plan.

MCC’s key operational plans include the Facilities Master Plan, Technology Plan, and Recruitment Plan. Additionally, critical committee and department plans include areas guiding Sustainability, Instructional Technology Services, Library Services, Computing, and Communication and Network Support. As evidenced below, the team’s review revealed that these planning documents showed certain commonalities: they are well developed, inclusive, and action-oriented. Operational plans are tied back to the College’s Strategic Plan, implemented through annual unit strategies, and resourced as deemed appropriate. The Study Team review also indicated that unit strategies are monitored and annual action
plans updated according to practices established within each respective division (see Standard 7). However, year-end results are not always aligned with the budget process.

Key Operational Plans include the following examples.

**Facilities Master Plan:** The 2013-18 Facilities Master Plan (FMP) is comprised of a group of projects that support the College’s Mission and goals set forth in the Strategic Plan. The FMP identifies over $70M in capital investment and property preservation over a five-year period and shows enabling projects and funding expectations. An additional five-year view beyond 2018 was also included to set forth a long-range capital vision for the College. The FMP exhibits clear alignment with the Strategic Plan and incorporates upfront data analysis and assessment. Developed through a highly collaborative process, the FMP combines the best efforts of architects and engineers as well as MCC administrators, faculty, and staff. The planning team conducted a workshop to glean input from over 100 students and other campus stakeholders. The resulting plan provides a greater focus on the student completion agenda in support of institutional renewal and student success.

**Recruitment Plan:** The annual Recruitment Plan (RP) is used by the College to assess progress in achieving enrollment goals and planning for the future. The RP establishes action plans, enrollment targets, and retention strategies to position the College most effectively within the locally competitive higher education market (see Standard 8).

**Technology Plan:** Technology Services at MCC develop secure and dynamic systems to meet the needs of the college community encompassing both onsite and online communities, locally and globally. The current Technology Plan addresses the dual challenges of competing demands and emerging resource constraints, and provides greater transparency and stronger links to strategic plan initiatives. This plan provides critical focus to stimulate technological creativity and innovation.

**Resource Allocation: A Collaborative Approach**

MCC’s concerted efforts to secure appropriate financial resources as well as use those resources efficiently has been a long-standing practice. Strategic planning guides the budget process. In turn, the budget process serves as an annual and institution-wide review of how resources are allocated and establishes revised priorities for the coming fiscal year. Strategies are developed that detail what will be accomplished to achieve goals each year. These strategies, together with outcome measures, provide strong links between both the operating and capital outlay budgets. Since the College’s last self-study, the budget development process has been modified to ensure the institution’s Strategic Plan better drives resource allocation. It calls for a far more collaborative approach, the use of enhanced analytics for budget development, and greater flexibility in support of institutional renewal.

Evidence supports that the impact of the College’s resource allocation process is best illustrated in the regular assessment and allocation of institutional set-aside funds. In addition to other strategies for assigning responsibility for innovations and assuring accountability, this resource pool includes funds that are “set-aside” to meet both college-wide initiatives as well as targeted programs in support of Direction One of the Strategic Plan. Developed during the annual budget cycle by the vice-presidents, this pool of dollars includes discretionary funding for key student-focused projects (e.g., Academies Model, Global Education and International Services, Virtual Campus).

**The Budget Resource Committee**

The College has strengthened transparency and collaboration in budgeting and resource allocation at the College. In the past, the budget plan was developed through an iterative process among the Board of Trustees, the President, the Chief Financial Officer, and the division vice presidents. While these leaders still bear the ultimate responsibility for resource planning at the College, a key part of MCC’s integrated
planning process now involves significant input from across the institution. This more collaborative approach has been accomplished through the operation of the Budget Resource Committee (BRC). Established in fall 2009 and made up of 35 rotating, cross-divisional members of the college community, the BRC has three primary charges: to create a “big-table” approach in which all stakeholders are represented and varied so divergent perspectives can be heard, to integrate the planning and budgeting processes, and to identify and communicate college-wide resource allocation priorities for consideration during the annual budget process.

Since its inception, the BRC has effectively engaged more than 100 faculty, staff, students, and administrators in establishing budget and other recommendations for consideration by MCC’s senior leadership. As demonstrated below, this new approach to budgeting has improved the integration of the overall planning process, improved the transparency of resource allocation through wider college involvement, and increased the use of assessment results in budgetary decisions. In 2015, Institutional Research administered a survey that sought input from 90 current and former members of the BRC and the President’s Staff that demonstrates that the BRC continues to foster transparency and collaboration across divisions. This assessment also revealed that there are opportunities for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the committee including proposals for both maintaining and improving upon current strengths as well as recommendations for addressing challenges, including suggestions regarding sharpening the focus of the BRC’s annual charge, bolstering faculty participation, strengthening communications, and recasting committee size and composition.

Assessing the Budget Development Process

Due to a rapidly-shifting fiscal environment that is punctuated by fluid county demographics, an increasingly competitive local higher education marketplace, and a tightening of state and county dollars, MCC is keeping its budget-development processes strongly positioned through assessment. Additional instances of how assessment of the budget development process is ongoing at the College include the following examples:

**Board of Trustees’ Budget Workshop**: At the President’s suggestion, beginning in FY2013, the President’s Staff and the Board of Trustees enhanced the budget planning process by incorporating a formal retreat to deepen their understanding and involvement in budget development, tuition-setting, and resource allocation. The inception of this retreat allowed for a more transparent and focused budget process that considers not only the state of the College, but also local and national enrollment and labor trends. Assessment of the retreat’s effectiveness is informal and ongoing, with positive feedback from the Trustees. The 2015 Budget Workshop reflects the third cycle of this more collaborative and data-rich meeting of college leaders. It is now a regular component in the College’s budget planning process. In 2015, the President began providing the college community with the information shared with the Board to further strengthen transparency and communication.

**Alignment of Budget Requests and the Strategic Plan**: Through review of divisional budget submissions, it was evident that prior years’ budget documentation often did not include reference to the College’s Strategic Plan as set forth in the instructions. In response, the distributed budget instructions for the 2015-16 budget included a condensed Strategic Plan outlining the directions and goals. Revised expense detail schedules included highlighted columns for assigning Strategic Plan references. Budget letters from the President to the vice presidents provided additional focus. Review of budget support recently completed for the FY2015 shows that nearly all submissions include documented linkages between the Strategic Plan’s directions and goals and departmental budgets.

**Open Lines Review**: As part of our commitment to institutional planning, resource allocation and sustainability, MCC has instituted a number of practices and procedures to guide our activities. One such process is the Open Lines Review, which occurs on a regular basis. The purpose of the open lines review process is to evaluate positions that become available due to dismissals, retirements, and
other separations from service. When a position becomes vacant, the President’s Staff meets to review the openings and to determine whether filling the position will further the College’s Mission. In addition to determining whether to fill a vacant position, the review process also looks at the allocation of resources. If one division or department has an open line, that line might be transferred to another department that has a need but lacks the resources to fill that need. These decisions are guided by student enrollment and student completion needs. The College supports the programs that help students realize our Mission and vision of student excellence, career pathways, and student success. This sharing of resources and continuous review process allows us to ensure that we are using our resources, both personnel and budgetary, in the most effective way.

The College continues to learn from planning practices that budget development not only sustains and improves current programs and services, but, in its role as an annual assessment tool, is also responsive to changing resource demands.

Integrated Planning and Resource Allocation Lead to Institutional Renewal

In addition to changes in the planning and budgeting processes discussed above, other examples of institutional renewal resulting from integrated planning and assessment efforts include the examples that follow.

Facilities Enhancements

An early BRC recommendation was realized when the College completed a formal redesign of the Brighton campus “front door” which opened formally September 24, 2014. Resourced from capital funds, the $3.6M “Parking and Loop Road Improvements” project remade the campus entrance, strengthened the pedestrian footprint, created convenient free parking for visitors, improved signage, and provided improved traffic flow and access to the campus. These improvements offer a more welcoming environment for prospective students and demonstrate that MCC’s planning and resource allocation is tied directly to Directions Two and Three of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Enrollment Management

Also developed from a BRC recommendation and in support of Directions One and Four of the Strategic Plan, in 2012 the College initiated a Buffalo Noel Levitz comprehensive study. This study of key student intake processes serves as an example of assessment and the resulting institutional renewal. All implementation plans resulting from this final report’s recommended actions were required to incorporate a formal assessment component. Since FY2012, funding of key recommendations has been included in the College’s annual budgets.

Closely related to this initiative was the 2013 hiring of the Assistant (now Associate) Vice President of Enrollment Management to help coordinate and integrate key student service functions across divisions (e.g. Financial Aid, Registration and Records, Admissions). The creation of this position was recommended by the Budget Resource Committee and supports Direction One and Four of the Strategic Plan.

Technology Services

Microsoft (MS) Project is used to prioritize, justify, and rank technology projects at the College in support of Direction Four. Past projects were not similarly evaluated and the College had difficulty in establishing priorities and assigning resources to proposed projects. The new template is used to rank projects according to criteria that link back to the Strategic Plan, assess project impact on the College, determine compatibility with existing systems and software, and assign the cost of ownership. A web
content management system, called Typo 3, and the new website design projects are two recent examples of initiatives being tracked and managed in MS Project.

**North Academic Building Elimination**

As part of the FMP process in 2012, regional demographics and enrollment projections were examined to determine their implication on the space needs of the College. One result was that the College eliminated a long-standing $64 million North Academic Building project (office and classroom space) in favor of a combined $55 million Learning Commons/Library project. This shift in priorities accomplishes two key objectives: First, it allows the College to replace a 48-year old Library with a 21st century version, as well as repurpose the existing Library space to meet future office and classroom needs. Second, it enables the upfront phase-in of the new downtown campus at the historic Eastman Kodak site. Purchased in June 2012, the site is expected to open fall 2017 and provide the College with several benefits, including the following:

- As indicted by an independent engineering cost analysis, the Kodak site will cost Monroe County and New York State taxpayers $10M less in construction costs than a similar renovation at the current location in the former Sibley building.
- The Kodak site offers a safer environment for students, staff and faculty. It will provide the College with the space it needs to grow in a location that will support the College's Mission of providing a convenient and cost effective education to residents of Monroe County and providing training for the region's workforce.

These renewal efforts capture MCC’s vitality and illustrate how planning processes support the institution’s Mission and Strategic Plan.

**STRENGTHS**

- MCC has a long history of comprehensive and strategic planning that includes development, implementation, and assessment of five Mission statements and Strategic Plans over the past 25 years.
- The planning processes at the College reflect a record of measurement and outcomes assessment to update action plans and make informed decisions.
- Strong collaboration between planning, budgeting processes, and Institutional Research support the accomplishment of the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Suggestions**

- Improve communication to college constituents related to planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal.
- Implement a campus-wide effort to encourage the use of the Institutional Effectiveness Handbook as an available resource for developing purpose statements and guiding other planning activities.

**Recommendations**

- Create annual reports for each division recording improvement efforts and results and ensure they are aligned, as appropriate, with the annual budgeting process.


OVERVIEW

MCC’s Mission and Strategic Plan provide the framework for the distribution of resources at the College. Financial, human, facilities, and technical resources are allocated using data-driven assessment. This chapter analyzes how the College uses institutional resources in support of our Mission.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Financial Resources

MCC’s operating revenues are derived primarily from three sources: the State of New York; the County of Monroe, MCC’s local sponsor; and student tuition. New York education law requires a proportionate share of funding from these three sources. Since the College’s beginning, this funding distribution has been modified by the legislature to allow for up to 40% from the state legislature and up to 26.7% from the local sponsor, with student tuition to make up the remaining 33.3%. While MCC does not meet this distribution (see Table 3.1), it is worth noting that across the 30 State University of New York (SUNY) community colleges covered by this distribution model, few achieve the levels set for either state or sponsor contributions. This has led to increases across the system in the percentage of costs borne by students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Sources</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student tuition and fees</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Sponsor¹</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Contribution of Gross Operating Revenue, 2013-2014

¹ includes charge back, out-of-state tuition revenue, and other revenue in lieu of sponsor contribution

State Funding

This funding, known as base aid, is based upon total enrollment expressed in fulltime equivalent students (FTEs). For FY2015, New York State provided $2,497 per FTE, down from a high of $2,675 per FTE in the FY2009 budget. Subsequent cuts at the state level reduced the rate to a low of $2,122 for FY2012. Rates are slowly being restored (see Table 3.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate per FTE</th>
<th>FY2011</th>
<th>FY2012</th>
<th>FY2013</th>
<th>FY2014</th>
<th>FY2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,060</td>
<td>$2,122</td>
<td>$2,272</td>
<td>$2,422</td>
<td>$2,497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Full-time Equivalent Student Base Aid

Local Sponsor Funding

Despite fiscal challenges for the County of Monroe, sponsor support of MCC has been growing each fiscal year from $16.7 million of operating revenues in FY2011 to $18.9 million of operating revenues for FY 2014 and FY2015 (see Table 3.3).
Table 3.3: Funding from Local Sponsor

### Student Tuition and Fees

Total revenues from tuition and fees have fluctuated based upon the size of budget and respective revenue commitments from both the state and local sponsor. The College is particularly sensitive to this portion of the budget in light of recent declines in enrollment from peak numbers in FY2010. As noted earlier, state funding is based upon the number of FTEs. While the state has made efforts to increase base aid, reductions in FTE enrollment from the peaks achieved during the recession continue to modify the impact of state support (see Table 3.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY2010</th>
<th>FY2011</th>
<th>FY2012*</th>
<th>FY2013</th>
<th>FY2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTE Enrollment</td>
<td>16,246</td>
<td>16,047</td>
<td>14,686</td>
<td>14,496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The College implemented an expanded drop for non-payment process and a registration deadline effective September 1, 2011 which accounts for a portion of the drop in FTEs between FY2011 and FY2012.

Post-recession enrollment declines likewise are driving reduced student revenues. Despite its diligent efforts to compensate for this revenue loss through cost containment and reduction strategies, the College has been forced to increase its tuition and fees at incremental rates since FY2011 (see Table 3.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time tuition per year</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,060</td>
<td>$3,140</td>
<td>$3,240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: MCC Tuition

Any increase in tuition is carefully scrutinized by executive leadership, discussed with student governments on the Brighton and Damon City campuses, and ultimately reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees before being approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Minimizing the impact on student tuition and maintaining operational efficiency continue to be strong incentives in annual budget development as demonstrated by MCC’s commitment to keeping both tuition and the annual operating expense per FTE among the lowest in the state:

- The average full time tuition for all 30 SUNY community colleges in FY2014 year was $3,960. However, MCC’s full time tuition in that year, $3,240, was the 2nd lowest of the 30 SUNY community colleges.
- In FY2014, MCC’s annual operating expense per FTE was $8,308. This was the 6th lowest; the average operating expense per FTE for all 30 SUNY community colleges in that year was $10,157.

One of the first steps in creating a budget is knowing what the enrollment may be like in the following fiscal year. The enrollment projection process reviews five models that takes into account unemployment, size of the high school graduating class in Monroe County, trends in students’ education status (e.g., first-time, transfer, returning, continuing), age yields from Monroe County, and annual enrollment data patterns. A committee composed of vice presidents meets twice a year to review these models and add any information that exists outside the model assumptions (e.g., new programs) that may impact enrollment. At the second meeting, held in spring after the census date, a consensus is reached on a
budget number that is considered achievable and necessary to run the College after discerning the data presented from the enrollment modeling process.

Other Revenue Sources

Despite enrollment and fluctuating state aid challenges, the College has remained fiscally strong. MCC’s integration of planning, budgeting, and resource allocation has facilitated our ability to mitigate against the strong economic headwinds facing higher education (see Standard 2). Other diligent efforts taken by the College to moderate tuition increases and identify offsetting resources include grant acquisition, donations, and overall fiscal resourcefulness, including the following examples

Grant Activities

Through the efforts of the Strategic Resource Development and Grant Management Department, MCC increased our focus on obtaining federal grants in support of the institution’s Mission and goals. During each of the last five years, an average of 60 active externally-funded projects at MCC was used to supplant the College’s traditional operating funds:

- In 2012, MCC received a $2M Title III, Part A, Strengthening Institutions Program: Building A Culture of Engagement and Success Grant from the United States Department of Education. MCC is directing the funds toward enhancing the student first-year experience and refocusing how transitional studies programs are delivered. The primary objective of doing so is to strengthen retention. The work done in the development and implementation of this grant created the basis for an Academies Model (see Standard 8) that will be launched in fall 2016. This grant has also provided $60,000 for classroom improvements and $88,000 for retention software.

- MCC is the lead SUNY Community College for a $14.6M SUNY Training and Education in Advanced Manufacturing grant from the Department of Labor awarded in 2013. While this grant was issued as part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training program and focuses on the creation of curricula to be shared across the SUNY system, $400,000 has been allocated for equipment replacement and upgrades in MCC’s Technical Education programs.

- The Xerox Foundation provided multi-year funding to the MCC Foundation. These funds are focused on supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. A portion of the funds provide scholarships to STEM students while the other portion of funds is made available to faculty and staff in an internal competition. STEM Projects that have been approved support professional development, student/faculty research opportunities, mentoring/tutoring programs, and activities to promote the STEM disciplines to potential or current students who are under-represented in these disciplines.

Fundraising

MCC’s Foundation was established in 1983 as a separate non-profit corporation with the expressed intent of securing donations from private individuals, corporations, and alumni to support student scholarships, endowments, and targeted campus initiatives. The results have been noteworthy:

- In January 2014-15, the Foundation transferred $530,988 to the College for scholarships, bringing the annual total support to $848,647. This represents a 14 % increase from the previous year.

- The Foundation obtained nearly $90,000 in new and refurbished equipment for the optics lab.

- For the renovation and expansion of the Dental Hygiene Clinic, the Foundation’s efforts resulted in a $700,000 grant.

- The Foundation also received a $200,000 Assets for Independence Grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, which was matched by $200,000 in philanthropic funds. Together these funds are providing an 8-to-1 match for the college savings of low income MCC students in the Save for Success program.
The MCC Association

The MCC Association, Inc. was established as a separate not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of New York to advance and promote co-curricular programs and auxiliary services that support student success. It is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Monroe Community College. The funding for the Association is derived from student life fees, funds from the operation of the college bookstores, revenue from food service vendors, and room and board from the residence halls. The MCC Association also provides funding for the following auxiliary services to assist students:

- Operation of the residence halls
- Day-to-day operation of the day care center
- Day-to-day operation of an intercampus shuttle bus service
- Financial resources for guest speakers, lectures series, cultural events, and exhibits
- Financial resources for numerous student clubs and organizations
- Financial resources for all the athletic teams

In addition, the MCC Association has been able to assist MCC with capital improvement projects as indicated in the following examples:

- Contributed $900,000 toward a synthetic turf outdoor soccer field in 2005
- Contributed the entire cost of a new $1.5M synthetic turf baseball field in 2012
- Committed to contribute $1.8M toward the Association managed areas (e.g., bookstore, food service) of MCC’s new downtown campus

Fiscal Resourcefulness

MCC has addressed successive years of tight budgets by utilizing a number of different strategies as illustrated by several priorities within the operating budget. Additionally, to support a SUNY system-wide initiative, MCC makes it a priority to contract with Minority Women Business Enterprise. These initiatives include the following examples.

- **Aligning Personnel with Enrollment:** Strict measures have been put in place to review every vacancy that occurs through retirement, employee transfer, or employee separation from the institution. The decision to fill any vacancy is reviewed by the President’s Staff and ultimately approved or denied by the President.

- **Budget Resource Committee (BRC):** In 2009, the College developed the BRC to better achieve the directions set forth in the Strategic Plan in light of environmental challenges (see Standard 2).

- **Shared Service Initiatives:** MCC is an active participant in various initiatives across SUNY and among public and private colleges in upstate New York to streamline processes and capitalize on the collective purchasing power of these organizations. For example, MCC has joined with other SUNY campuses to purchase maintenance, repair, and janitorial supplies from WW Grainger, saving the College approximately $8,000 to $10,000 per year. An additional contract for joint elevator maintenance made with other SUNY colleges will save MCC $10,000 annually. Finally, MCC, Western NY SUNY State campuses, and two other community colleges will implement eProcurement in 2016 which will save the College a projected $152,000 per year.

- **Workforce Flexibility:** Many departments throughout the College have developed shared workforce arrangements including Student Accounts, Registration and Records, Financial Aid, and Admissions which share phone and window coverage during meetings and events; the Career and Transfer Center and Educational Opportunity Program Offices assist the Advisement and
Graduation Services office during peak times; Registration and Records has assisted with Placement and Testing office support; and the Damon City Campus Registration and Financial Services Office assists the Brighton Financial Aid Office with financial aid verifications.

Annual Audit

The College financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and are audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm. Internal controls at MCC remain strong with management oversight. The College maintains an Internal Audit and Compliance Officer, who reports directly to the President (see Standard 6).

Human Resources

In FY2014, 82% of the College’s $126,900,000 budget was allocated for salaries and fringe benefits for college personnel. Directions One and Four in the College’s Strategic Plan provide the guiding principles that ensure all new hires are appropriately qualified for the positions they hold and that College personnel maintain a standard of excellence throughout their careers. A recent wave of College retirements coupled with current enrollment declines have made hiring decisions all the more important to minimize the impact on the institution’s operating budget while sustaining MCC’s culture and commitment to excellence, innovation, and diversity.

Because personnel costs are the largest portion of the budget, the College uses the same approach to staffing as we do for other resource allocation. As with the budget process, the review of open positions (explained in Standard 2) considers the College’s Strategic Plan and ensures that we are staying true to our Mission while ensuring appropriate resource allocation.

Continuous Professional Development

Funds are set aside annually in the operating budget specifically for the professional development of MCC’s workforce. This allocation of resources underscores the College’s commitment to “promote the professional and career development of its employees in support of an environment of continuous improvement and excellence,” according to Direction Four of the Strategic Plan. This expenditure provides resources for numerous initiatives within the College to build on the excellence of our current and future workforce:

- The Employee Development Series, Teaching and Creativity Center, First-Year Faculty Series, Adjunct Faculty Orientation, and Student Services Mid-Management Initiative Team represent a small fraction of the opportunities available to develop, educate, and maintain the quality and integrity of employees at MCC. For example, evaluations of the Teaching and Creativity Center programs and workshops, which allow the sharing of resources across disciplines as well as encourage pedagogical discussions between faculty with differing levels of experience, indicate between 89% and 100% of participants “agree” or “strongly agree” that the programs or workshops they attended would be helpful in their futures.

- The Support Staff Professional Development and Planning Council (SSPD&PC) provides quality professional development opportunities for support staff at MCC. The Co-chairs of SSPD&PC attend the quarterly shared governance meetings as representatives of the Council. They provide the direct communication link of the Civil Service Employees Association membership with respect to opportunities, events and needs of the support staff population. This group works directly with the President’s Staff to implement and follow the directives and initiatives of the Strategic Plan. Sessions are offered throughout the year (e.g., “Frontline Customer Service in Higher Education: 10 Key Responses to Diffuse Frustration & Anger”). Evaluations are completed by participants and used to determine future topics.
• The Instructional Services group provides numerous opportunities for all staff and faculty to further their skills. For example, faculty teaching online in the virtual campus receive a systemic approach for development. They are required to participate in a three-level training program in online pedagogy and the learning management system, which is provided asynchronously. Course evaluations are included at the end of each session to ensure that the content is meeting the needs of the faculty. Instructional Designers, Librarians, and Multimedia Specialists assist faculty with the intricacies of online pedagogy and course design. Faculty also have opportunities to participate in continuous trainings on the more advanced functions of the learning management system and current trends in online learning.

• The President’s Office provides Essential Discussions, one-day colloquia exploring urgent topics that shape the postsecondary agenda. Attendees include faculty, staff, and students from MCC; colleagues from other SUNY campuses; representatives from the 19 Rochester area colleges; partners from local school districts; and business and community leaders. These events consist of presentations and remarks by some of the field’s leading voices on college achievement, innovation, and workforce education. Topics have included “STEM: Preparing Our Nation’s Future Innovators;” “Learning by Design--New Students, New Classrooms, New Technologies;” “Closing the Skills Gap: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education;” and “Black Male Achievement in Higher Education.”

Facilities

MCC is home to a variety of facilities fundamental to the operation of the institution and support of the College’s Mission:

• The Brighton campus has 17 academic buildings including classrooms, laboratories, academic and administrative offices, learning centers, libraries, a greenhouse, a theater, public safety offices, facilities operations, child care facility, four residence halls, and athletic fields.
• The Damon City Campus is currently in leased space in downtown Rochester. However, a newly-developed downtown campus is expected to open in fall 2017 and will be home to the Human Services, Law and Criminal Justice, and Education Departments.
• The Applied Technologies Center houses the Automotive Technology; Precision Tooling and Machining; and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning programs.
• The Public Safety Training Facility is used for training police, fire, and emergency personnel and administered in joint partnership with Monroe County, the City of Rochester, and the College.
• The leased space for the Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services (EDIWS) division includes the offices to manage this rapidly-growing division as well as several classroom spaces for workforce development.

Planning for funding Brighton and Damon City Campus modification and construction is described in the College’s Facilities Master Plan (FMP). As noted in Standard 2, the FMP addresses conditions, needs, and preservation of each building. It also establishes the physical needs of the College and is the mechanism for subsequent capital funding requests from Monroe County and New York State.

Examples of recent projects that were envisioned during the Facilities Master Planning process include:

• The total renovation of Building 9 on the Brighton campus was completed in 2012 and funded through the county and state. This LEED gold project resulted in a variety of changes including nine additional general classrooms; state-of-the-art labs for Radiologic Technology, Engineering Technology, Construction Technology, and Optical Systems Technology; an innovative prototyping lab; a greenhouse; and the addition of four Advanced Learning Environments, spaces which are technology-rich, flexibly-furnished classrooms. The repurposing of existing spaces minimized the expense of the construction.
Along with other upgrades on campus such as the reworking of mechanicals, window replacements, and installation of occupancy-based lighting controls, MCC has reduced energy consumption per square foot by 18% between 2008 and 2015.

In 2013, five buildings from the Eastman Kodak office complex were purchased for the future home of the College’s new downtown campus. Phase one of renovation was completed in spring 2015, including interior demolition and hazardous materials remediation. Phase two will encompass the renovation of approximately one half of the over 500,000 square foot facility. The new downtown campus will open in fall 2017 and provide a permanent home for downtown anchor programs and allow for enhanced opportunities for our students.

The FMP also addresses future updates and renovations such as the planned summer 2016 renovation of the campus theatre and the addition of a new integrated learning commons in the out years of the plan.

Central to the College’s commitment to excellence is the continual assessment of classroom facilities and equipment. The Classroom Committee, a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate Planning committee, evaluated classroom conditions, conducted surveys with faculty, and provided recommendations before the renovation of Building 9. With continued support from the Classroom Committee, experimental seating was evaluated by faculty and students prior to purchase with several rooms being retrofitted for the 2014-15 academic year. This partnership demonstrates the College’s commitment to updating classroom seating to provide more moveable options, thereby, facilitating new teaching methods, more interaction between students, and discussion-driven classes.

In addition, the College uses Ad Astra, a room scheduling software program, to help optimize room utilization and scheduling. This software program helps ensure a more effective master schedule and allows the College to make decisions regarding rental space for classroom facilities. The Office of Academic Learning Environments tracks the room utilization of classrooms across the campuses, and creates a comparison spreadsheet to check building utilization semester to semester.

Given the College’s responsible and sustainable support of institutional resources, it is not surprising that MCC scores well in comparison with our peers. In 2008, SUNY commissioned a study to uniformly and systematically assess its 64 colleges’ ongoing capital facility renewal needs. The study revealed that MCC significantly surpassed our sister colleges in terms of the general condition of its facilities.

Technology

Technology is a vital part of the College’s commitment to student learning. As noted in Standard 2, the College’s technology plan ensures access and support to staff, libraries, students and faculty, classroom technology, and learning spaces.

The College provides online resources and internet access, including wireless access, to all students, faculty, and staff; maintains and replaces technology infrastructure as needed; ensures upgrades and implementation of new technology; maintains the College website; maintains a help desk for students and faculty; offers technical support and professional development workshops for faculty; and coordinates the implementation of Blackboard, the College’s learning management system. Ongoing installation and upgrades to higher bandwidth wireless access points ensure access for students and staff who utilize the recent explosion of cell phones, tablets, and laptops available for the exchange of information.

Faculty has been strongly supported in the use of technology. Instructional designers with the Instructional Technologies group help faculty enhance their instruction in both Blackboard and within the Faculty Innovation Center. In addition, the new Virtual Campus Center, which includes a lecture capture studio funded through a Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Grant, was launched in 2015 to support MCC’s expanding online presence and participation in Open SUNY.
Students are satisfied with MCC’s facilities and services; in the spring 2013 SUNY Student Opinion Survey, students indicated they were satisfied with computers and technology services, building conditions, classrooms, internet availability, athletic fields, and labs. Students were especially satisfied with the availability of online services, library resources and services, learning centers, and library facilities.

STRENGTHS

- MCC’s careful use of physical resources has minimized the impact on the College’s operational budget by not over-building in previous years when demographics showed enrollment would decline. Capital dollars that could have been used to construct additional buildings were allocated for the renovation of existing structures.
- A strong Facilities Master Plan provides the framework for the College to meet the future needs of the institution.
- The technology available for use by faculty, staff, and students provides the resources necessary to support MCC’s Mission.
- MCC’s grant activities have secured significant indirect funds for the College as well as increased national recognition through partnerships.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

- Continue to advocate to county and state legislatures the need for future increased funding to minimize the impact on student tuition.
- Continue to carefully manage employee headcount, ensure that all decisions around job replacements are scrutinized, and, whenever possible, make hires that reflect a diverse workforce.

Recommendations

- None noted.
Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

OVERVIEW

In previous chapters, we have examined how MCC works to manage our human, physical, technical, and financial resources in a prudent manner. For all of the parts of an intricate institution to work together efficiently and in accordance with the Mission, a system of leadership and governance must develop and execute that focus with insight, integrity, and clarity. In this chapter, we examine the degree and quality to which the College achieves the Mission and Strategic Plan through a culture of shared governance and transparency.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Updating Written Documentation around Shared Governance

MCC believes participatory decision-making results in better decisions and broader understanding of and support for those decisions. In 2013, a group composed of representatives from administration, the Faculty Senate, student governments on both the Brighton and Damon City campuses, and the support staff began discussing how to codify MCC’s history of commitment to shared governance. An outcome of this discussion was the creation of a formal shared governance policy, written collaboratively among these stakeholders. In 2013, getting this foundational document in place was a priority, and at its August 4, 2014 meeting, the Board of Trustees adopted the College’s first Shared Governance policy.

While the Shared Governance policy has helped to concretize how individual constituencies understand their duties, responsibilities, and authorities, other formal documents at the College that speak to governance, such as the Board of Trustees’ Policy Manual and Bylaws and the Faculty Senate Bylaws, were not always updated to reflect current institutional practices. In its review of the College’s official governing documents, the Study Team found that some of these documents employ inconsistent or outdated language when defining the roles and responsibilities of faculty, staff, and administration. Capitalizing on this early finding, the College began a process to update our formal documents and policies to ensure consistency, accuracy, and currency; this information is now provided on the College’s Policy website.

Shared Governance: Constituencies and Roles

There are five constituency groups that make up the shared governance framework at MCC: The Board of Trustees, administration, Faculty Senate, support staff, and students.

Board of Trustees

MCC’s system of shared governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body, the Board of Trustees, which has sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the Mission of the institution. At present, our ten-member board reflects a diverse and inclusive collection of community perspectives. The board consists of eight men and two women from varied professional backgrounds. The chair is a corporate banker and the vice chair is an owner of a small business with previous experience in a Fortune 100 company. Three lawyers, one retired college professor, a high-ranking city government official, the president of the Monroe County Legislature, a corporate executive of a retail business, and a student complete the board. Two members are African-American and one is Latina. The Board is also enriched by emeritus trustees, including a founding trustee who served as board chair. Collectively, the members
demonstrate a significant commitment to our community’s well-being, sitting on the boards of philanthropic, political, and non-profit organizations. This provides for a Board capable of reflecting constituent and public interest with sufficient expertise to assure the Board’s fiduciary responsibilities.

The Board meets approximately seven times each calendar year, beginning in February. Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public, and all documents, including agendas and meeting minutes taken and approved at such meetings, are considered public records and made available online through the Board of Trustees website. An announcement in the MCC Daily Tribune follows Board meetings and details activities and decision-making. The Board’s Policy Manual includes information regarding the Board’s role and responsibilities, any conflicts of interest, and matters requiring Board approval or certification, such as:

- Approval of curriculum and changes of educational policy
- Approval of College Mission and Strategic Plan
- Change in fiscal policies
- Budget and real estate transactions
- Final building construction plans
- Certification of the College’s compliance with Middle States requirements of affiliation and accreditation

To ensure that the Board is properly informed of its responsibilities, policies, and procedures, each Board member is required to attend a mandatory orientation led by the chair and vice chair with support from the President and the Chief Financial Officer. As stated in New York State Education Law Article 126, Section 6306, another responsibility of the Board is to hire the President and evaluate performance on an annual basis. The College’s current president, Dr. Anne Kress, was first appointed on July 6, 2009. Dr. Kress’s contract has been extended by the Board of Trustees twice since her initial appointment; the current contract end date is August 31, 2019. Annually, the Board formally assesses the President’s effectiveness in meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan as well as sets performance goals for the President.

The membership of the Board of Trustees for MCC is defined in the New York State Education Law Article 126, Section 6306, Administration of Community Colleges - Board of Trustees. Five Board members are appointed by the Monroe County Legislature and four members are appointed by the Governor of New York State from the residents of Monroe County. Each of these nine members serves a seven-year term. The tenth member of the Board is a student who is elected by and from the student body to provide input regarding decisions that affect them. The student serves on the Board for one year and has the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as all other Board members. Vacancies on the Board are filled by the authorities responsible for the original appointment. Honorary or emeritus trustees are elected by the current voting trustees to the Board to serve as non-voting for an indefinite term. At present, there are ten honorary trustees and one chair emerita who serve the Board in a non-voting, advisory capacity.

In order to assess the areas of strength, self-improvement, and determine its top three priorities, the Board of Trustees performs a self-assessment every two years in executive session according to criteria provided by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). The Board engages in professional development and education through active participation in the ACCT and New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT) events, newsletters, and workshops. Several MCC Trustees have presented at the annual ACCT Congress and been honored by NYCCT for their leadership.

**Administration**

MCC’s administration is comprised of a variety of officers and administrators as demonstrated in our organizational chart. The President has an extensive list of duties including providing direction and
support in maintaining the integrity and efficiency of the academic governance and collective bargaining processes as well as assuring compliance with College policies, state, and federal regulations, and requirements of accreditation agencies. The President also assigns duties and responsibilities to other college officers and administrators (see Standard 5).

**Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate is the representative governing body of the faculty and professional staff. As such, it is offered the opportunity to address the Board of Trustees at each meeting. Full- and part-time personnel holding academic rank and all professional staff are voting members of the Faculty Senate; adjunct and emeritus personnel are non-voting members. The standing committees of the Faculty Senate are Academic Policies; Special Committee on Administrative Affairs; Curriculum; Planning; Professional Development; and Nominations, Elections, and Governance. Standing ad hoc and subcommittees include Placement Testing and the College Assessment and Program Evaluation Committee. The names of these committees and subcommittees convey the scope and nature of the Senate’s governance responsibilities and areas of expertise. The Faculty Senate maintains a website with an extensive collection of resources including links to bylaws, resolutions, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes as well as descriptions, criteria, and eligibility for professional leaves and awards. The Curriculum Committee also has a website with a variety of resources in conjunction with the Curriculum Database.

The Faculty Senate regularly engages in self-assessment. One change resulting from such a process was the dissolution of the Curriculum Projects Subcommittee. In 2012, the Curriculum Committee was split into two separate subcommittees, Curriculum Projects and Curriculum Proposals, in order to separate duties such as curriculum proposal approvals and course learning outcomes (CLO) approvals. Originally, the Special Projects committee was convened when course learning outcomes for all courses were being entered into the Curriculum Database and needed to be reviewed. When this process was complete, it was determined that there was no longer a need for the separation, and a single unified Curriculum Committee was reformed in the fall 2014. Additionally, the Senate conducted an extensive review and revision of the bylaws and resolutions during fall 2014 and spring 2015 semesters; the Faculty Senate anticipates this will continue to be an ongoing process with the purpose of staying current with policies and procedures.

**Support Staff**

The Support Staff Professional Development and Planning Council serves as a voice to Administration and the Board of Trustees on behalf of the College’s civil service employees. This group allows support staff the chance to address the Board regarding recent professional development activities and their efforts to further and support MCC’s Mission and Strategic Plan. Leadership of the Support Staff Professional Development Committee and Planning Council is selected by their peers. They provide the direct communication link of the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) membership with respect to opportunities, events, and needs of the Support Staff population. The Support Staff Professional Development and Planning Council work directly with the President’s Office to implement and follow the directives and initiatives of the Strategic Plan of the College. MCC’s inclusion of this group in its definition of shared governance reflects the College’s understanding of the critical role our support staff play in creating a positive learning environment that promotes student success.

**Students**

Students are represented by two campus-based governance groups who are charged with representing the student body; delivering programming; and promoting positive relationships among faculty, staff, administration, and students. The two groups meet regularly and share their meeting agendas and minutes in the *MCC Daily Tribune*. The office holders of the Student Governance Association (SGA) are elected by students on the Brighton Campus. The office holders of Student Events and Governance Association (SEGA) are elected by students on the Damon City Campus. Governing documents for both SGA and
SEGA are available online through the Student Government page under the “Student Life and Leadership” section of the MCC website.

Both SGA and SEGA conduct summer orientation and leadership training. Annual informal self-assessments are performed by the two student groups, and a review of the constitution and/or bylaws is performed on an as-needed basis. Both groups revised their bylaws and constitutions—SEGA in spring 2012 and SGA in spring 2015.

Reflecting the spirit of shared governance, the Faculty Senate also accepts student representation on various committees. Academic Policies may include two voting students; Curriculum includes two students, one voting and one non-voting; and Planning includes two students, one voting and one non-voting. These student representatives are appointed by the Student Government Association president and approved by the Student Senate.

The Governance System at MCC: Continuous Improvements

Over the past several years, the governance system at MCC has made significant improvements in response to various assessments. In addition to the new Shared Governance Policy noted earlier, the College has made other such improvements to its governance system:

- As a result of a recent review of Board of Trustees policies, the President’s Office created a policy website to promote transparency. This work also led to a schedule for reviewing and updating policies on a regular basis. All policies are now being standardized in presentation and format to make location within the website more manageable and to assure greater ease of understanding. Part of this review will be the identification of a “review calendar”—a cycle for regular review and, if necessary, revision and updating of MCC policies. This policy website will further enhance transparency within the college community and will assist administration in maintaining current and accurate practices.
- The Board is informed throughout the year at its monthly meetings on the College’s financial status and prioritized resource needs and allocations. Based on this information, the Board may offer comments and assistance as needed. This is another example of a new procedure put into place to better inform the Board of financial matters of the College and illustrates the execution of ongoing assessment practices.
- In March 2014, the Board of Trustees added a Shared Governance Update at the beginning of each of their meetings. Updates may be provided by the Faculty Senate, SGA, SEGA, and the Support Staff Professional Development Committee. This update is another way in which the Board is kept current on the status of shared governance at the College.
- As a result of the self-study process, the president of CSEA was added to the shared governance council.

The following recent College initiatives demonstrate the effectiveness of shared governance in practice:

Proposed Reorganization

In April 2014, the President presented the College with a proposal for a new organizational structure. Highlights of this reorganization included the dissolution of the Educational Technology Services Division, title changes to certain administrative positions, and movement of specific departments into new divisions. As outlined in the College’s shared governance documents, the President shared this proposal with the Special Committee on Administrative Affairs (SCAA) of the Faculty Senate, which followed its bylaws in reviewing the proposal and offering recommendations. Based on surveys, open forum discussions, confidential interviews, and private and public letters, SCAA recommended some aspects of the reorganization be implemented but that others be considered a work in progress until there was more information and consensus with the college community to move forward. The President
accepted this recommendation. In response, President Kress identified a significant challenge that surfaced during the SCAA review: outdated, nonstandard, and incorrect job descriptions. The ad hoc Committee for Job Descriptions was formed and charged with reviewing, updating, and standardizing MCC’s administrative job descriptions to better reflect current responsibilities and needs of the College. This committee was co-chaired by the College President, the Faculty Senate President, and the Faculty Association President. The committee began its work in 2014, developed a standardized job description template, and applied it to all Vice President, Associate Vice President, and Assistant Vice President job descriptions. The committee is continuing its work and currently working on the Dean descriptions. This ongoing process demonstrates significant shared governance collaboration.

Observance of Veterans Day

Spring 2014 semester discussions on the academic calendar focused on the importance of the College’s recognition of Veterans Day. MCC, recognized as a military-friendly institution, has some 800 veteran and military students along with a history of nationally-recognized collaborations in service of these students. After consideration, the Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate recommended that the College consider observing Veterans Day which was supported by the Executive Committee and the resolution was passed by the entire Faculty Senate. The student government bodies were likewise in support of the recommendation. While the College administration agreed that the College should be closed on Veterans Day, there were contractual concerns with treating this day as a paid holiday. The Faculty Association worked with the Faculty Senate to discuss these issues with Administration, and the result was a memorandum of agreement that the College would observe a paid holiday on Veterans Day for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years. Working together within MCC’s shared governance structure, all stakeholders were able to support our College’s student, faculty, and staff veterans and honor their service.

STRENGTHS

- MCC has a long history of shared governance involving the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, and student government organizations.
- MCC’s structures of shared governance are constructed to incorporate the views of all constituencies.
- Students have the opportunity to participate in college-wide committees.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

- Continue to develop and maintain a comprehensive institutional policy website, with the goal of improving transparency and accessibility for internal and external stakeholders.

Recommendations

- Establish and publish an evaluation cycle to review and update college-wide policies.
OVERVIEW

Since the last institutional self-study, the administrative leadership of MCC has gone through a transformation, both at the senior administrative and mid-management levels. This chapter analyzes MCC’s strategic leadership structure, performance accountability, and communication strategies.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Presidential Leadership

The primary responsibility of the President’s Office is to lead the College toward the achievement of our Mission and goals and to carry ultimate responsibility for administration of the institution. Therefore, the Office of the President coordinates college-wide support including Marketing and Community Relations, MCC Foundation, Damon City Campus, Institutional Compliance, and Human Resources and Organizational Development. The officers of the College report directly to the President and represent Academic Services, Administrative Services, Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services, and Student Services, as illustrated in the organizational chart for MCC.

In May 2009, Dr. Anne M. Kress was approved by the State University of New York Board of Trustees as the fifth president of Monroe Community College. Her appointment was effective July 6, 2009. Dr. Kress has an extensive academic background that has prepared her for the role of MCC President as indicated in her CV. She came to MCC with a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Florida as well as a master’s degree and two bachelor’s degrees.

Dr. Kress’s leadership is consistent with the presidential qualifications outlined in the Presidential Search profile prepared by Academic Search, Inc. which assisted with the search for the president in 2009. Dr. Kress was noted as a dynamic leader with high ethical standards, personal integrity, a strong strategic mindset, and strong interpersonal skills. An inclusive leader, she engages the voices of stakeholders at all levels in formal and informal ways. This leadership approach is evident by her strong focus on shared governance at MCC; it was under her leadership that the College adopted its first shared governance policy and that the leaders of these stakeholder groups were added to the Board of Trustees agenda. Dr. Kress also created the Budget Resource Committee, which provides college-wide stakeholders with input on the budget and resource allocations, and established a Planning Coordination Council to facilitate communication across planning silos. To establish a stronger context for college dialog on key topics in higher education, the president created the “Essential Discussions” series which has brought in leading national and local voices to address issues from college completion and learning spaces to minority male success.

Dr. Kress has extended this strong leadership and communication approach to her external leadership in the Rochester community. She established a new budget advocacy practice of meeting with the majority and minority caucuses of the Monroe County Legislature, in addition to Monroe County Leadership, throughout the budget process. She also created monthly updates on key MCC activities and initiatives to assure accurate and timely communication. In recognition of her knowledge and skill in this area, Dr. Kress has also been called upon by SUNY to provide budget testimony and advocacy at the state level. She has also been asked to play key leadership roles by a broad diversity of stakeholders: Governor Cuomo (as a New York Power Authority Trustee), the New York State Regents (as co-chair of a Blue Ribbon Commission on Career and Technical Education), the New York Federal Reserve (as a member of the Upstate Advisory Council), and the American Association of Community Colleges (as a Board
Dr. Kress has also taken on significant community leadership roles at organizations that support MCC’s Mission and goals, such as the United Way, the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative, and the Greater Rochester Enterprise.

Since her inauguration, Dr. Kress has helped to lead MCC toward the achievement of our Mission and goals:

- Central to the College’s Mission on serving the full diversity of the Rochester community, in the community, Dr. Kress secured full funding and all approvals for the new downtown campus when two decades of previous attempts to do so had fallen through.
- Dr. Kress led the charge to establish a new division at the College, EDIWS, in support of the College’s commitment to economic development. In a short time, this division has evolved into a national leader, setting the stage for workforce development and labor market information-driven programming. This distinction is evidenced by the 2013 visit from Vice President Joseph Biden to celebrate the accomplishments of workforce development at MCC.
- Dr. Kress’s commitment to student learning and scholarly success, essential tenets of the College’s Mission, is demonstrated by her leadership of increased funding and support to MCC students, including the Save for Success program that offers substantial tuition assistance to students who commit to saving for a part of their college bill.

Dr. Kress’s accomplishments reflect the College’s Mission, goals, and values and demonstrate that she possesses the credentials, experience, and skill set to lead MCC.

**Administration and Staff**

MCC’s organizational structure consists of five divisions: Student Services and EDIWS are led by Vice Presidents, Academic Services division is led by a Provost/Vice President, and the Administrative Services Division is led by a Chief Financial Officer/Vice President. The fifth division, the President’s Division, is led by the President. Within these divisions, the structure is generally hierarchical with occasional matrix elements as indicated in the organizational chart. The senior leadership at MCC comes with significant experience in a community college setting with expertise in their respective areas. Each VP serves an essential function by leading and directing important areas of service to faculty, staff, and students. Senior leadership is appropriate and well-situated at the College to support operations effectively.

Since the President’s appointment in 2009, key organizational changes have taken place in the administration of MCC. These changes were enacted to create efficiencies at the College and further support the Mission. In addition, the College has experienced turnover of senior leadership due to retirements and external job advancements. Throughout, MCC has continued to maintain services, begin new and innovative programs, and provide divisions with the autonomy and responsibility to lead decision-making efforts for day-to-day operations. For example, MCC’s participation in several innovative academic programs has spanned changes in provosts. The American Association of Colleges and Universities Roadmap Project and Title III grants began under interim Academic Services leadership provided by Assistant Vice President Kimberley Collins, continued under Provost Michael McDonough, and, when he left for a presidency, they were sustained and furthered under interim leadership provided by Vice President Emeritus Jeffrey Bartkovich. Both programs continue under Provost Andrea Wade. In all cases, the programs have achieved their goals thus far.

As the environment in higher education has shifted, the make-up and responsibilities of the administrators who comprise the President’s Staff have shifted as well. The title changes are reflected in the College’s organizational charts from 2008-09 and 2014-15. An illustration of this point is the title change from Director, Human Resources to Assistant to the President, Human Resources and Organizational Development. The scope of this position was broadened to reflect the need for increased and more
centralized staff professional development. Within this increased responsibility, the Assistant to the President designed and offered the Employee Development Series to develop mid-level managers at the College. This program provided training to improve management skills for supervisors and aid in succession planning.

**Administrative Decision-making**

In this dynamic higher education environment, MCC has recognized the need for continuous assessment and identification of initiatives to support the efforts to remain competitive and current in our services for students and institutionally effective in our organization. Administrative actions support the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan, and they are guided by fiscal responsibility. While the President and her Staff place a high priority on advocating for and cultivating institutional resources, they also operate within today’s fiscal reality in higher education. An example of this reality can be seen in the president’s memo, “Aligning Budget with Enrollment” (November 11, 2014). Benchmarking MCC’s resource allocation and institutional results to the data from other colleges is an ongoing process within President’s Staff, which holds retreats at least twice each year to consider MCC’s data, assess college outcomes, and plan actions to improve results.

The Administration has made a major impact in assuring the Strategic Plan informs the work of the College and is reported out in clear, measurable outcomes. There is now an expectation that data and analysis provided by Institutional Research will be used to guide and support decision-making. This expectation includes MCC’s use of metrics embedded within iDashboards to report publicly to the Board of Trustees on Strategic Plan progress. Chairs and Deans use the daily Student-Faculty Ratio report to support their review of the master schedule.

Most significantly, administration uses data to inform strategies related to student success. Triggered by faculty concerns regarding the limited success of students who registered late, administration reviewed data on student outcomes. Based on this review, the College implemented an expanded drop for non-payment process and a registration deadline effective September 1, 2011 (FY2012). The purpose of the expanded drop for non-payment was to ensure that students had the financial resources, including financial aid, to pay their tuition bills. The College was not only looking to reduce bad debts but also to reduce the number of students who owed the College money at the end of a semester – thus sending them to collections and placing them on registration hold for future semesters. The purpose of implementing the registration deadline was to improve the academic success of students. Data show that registration closer to the start of a semester (even after the start of the semester) reduces the likelihood of academic success.

Key performance indicators were tracked several years preceding FY2012 and several years thereafter. Since FY2012, the College has experienced favorable trends in bad debts and student performance:

- Bad debt reserves established to cover possible non-payment of students’ account receivables were reduced by $577,000 to 1.3% of student revenue versus the previous reserve of 2.1% of student revenue.
- The number of students sent to collections, placed on registration holds, and the timing of financial aid awards were each improved for all categories.
- Student GPA results on average also increased: 4% in fall 2012 versus fall semester 2010 and 4% in spring 2013 versus spring 2011.

However, there was also an increase in the number of students dropped for non-payment as well as an increase in accepted applicants who did not enroll at any college. In an effort to better manage the enrollment impacted by these new initiatives, the College has since extended the registration deadline, provided extra time for students to cover their bills, and excluded “low-risk” financial aid applicants from the drop process all-together.
In general, the intended outcomes show favorable trends. The key performance indicators will be tracked on an ongoing basis to continuously improve the process as necessary.

**Administrative Assessment and Evaluation**

The effectiveness of MCC’s organizational structure is regularly reviewed to assure it meets the College’s Mission, size, and complexity. For example, as institutional responsibilities associated with compliance broadened and deepened, the role of the Internal Auditor was expanded to address this need. This position is now charged with Institutional Compliance and Internal Audit. This approach to managing compliance allowed the leveraging of our internal expertise. The Internal Auditor and Compliance Officer now convenes targeted teams on focused compliance matters (e.g., distance learning verifications), serves as the single point of contact on complex compliance issues (e.g., Veterans Administration program approvals), and coordinates MCC’s ethics compliance through various programs (e.g., the Whistleblower Policy, MCC Ethics Hotline).

Other structural changes have resulted from college-wide assessment of gaps and areas for improvement. The most recent is the move of Enrollment Management to the Student Services Division. Committees of service providers reviewed internal processes over several years and recommended better alignment of services. These reports also recommended the realignment of Advising and Graduation Services which were combined in January 2014. The overall goal of the shift and alignment of Enrollment Management has been to take a more holistic approach to enrollment: focusing not just on recruiting students but also supporting their retention and completion.

To assure that MCC’s administration is working in concert in fulfilling the College’s Mission and achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan, the President’s Staff meets bi-monthly, the vice presidents meet as a group with the President monthly, and individual members of President’s Staff meet with her once a month. This ongoing communication allows for timely, formative evaluation of performance, progress, and projects.

The President herself receives an annual formal evaluation from the Board of Trustees using a format adapted from the Association of Community College Trustees. In addition to broad areas of organization and financial leadership, the Board sets specific areas of emphasis for the president and includes these goals in her evaluation.

**Special Committee on Administrative Affairs**

Another method MCC uses to assess administrative services is through the Special Committee on Administrative Affairs (SCAA), a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. SCAA makes recommendations regarding the appointment or selection of administrative officers in positions including the President, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, Executive Deans, and Directors. In doing so, SCAA may elect to conduct its own search or participate on the College search committee. SCAA is also involved in various other administrative changes including reorganizations, redefinitions of administrative or academic offices and departments, and the addition of new positions.

When SCAA receives a proposal for an administrative change, the committee reviews the proposal, rationale, and any supporting documentation. SCAA may elect to gather additional information, conduct interviews, or hold open forums. The committee then prepares a response and any recommendations. For example, in 2012, the former Student Services Vice President submitted a proposal to establish an Advisement Services Center by merging the Graduation Office and Brighton Campus Advising Center staff. SCAA reviewed the proposal, gathered information, and conducted interviews. The committee determined the proposal was in the best interest of students and provided a stronger use of staff and resources than did the existing configuration. SCAA provided a memo to the proposer with additional recommendations which were addressed through the implementation phase. The relationship between
SCAA, MCC’s Administration, and the Board of Trustees demonstrates shared governance throughout the organization and ensures assessment of and input into administrative decision-making.

**STRENGTHS**

- The implementation of iDashboard has assisted with defining progression toward strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- The formation of a new division, EDIWS, allows for a more cohesive workforce/strategic allocation and technical and career education design.
- Engagement of the college community through embedded processes like SCAA demonstrates a high level of engagement regarding evaluation of administration.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Suggestions**

- Develop a succession planning framework for administrative leadership.

**Recommendations**

- None noted.
Standard 6: Integrity

OVERVIEW

MCC adheres to the highest standards of integrity in service of our mission. The Strategic Plan highlights this guiding core value: “We believe in promoting an environment of honesty and authenticity, in being accountable and ethically responsible for our policies and actions, and in exemplifying a high standard of civility.” This chapter examines how the College demonstrates a commitment to integrity through our activities, policies, and procedures as well as our adherence to professional, ethical standards regarding treatment of and interactions with our constituencies.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Fair and Impartial Student Grievance Processes

Student Complaints Resolution Process

MCC is committed to providing speedy and fair resolutions to complaints brought from students about the College. Handling student complaints has always been a priority for MCC, but prior to 2014, complaints were resolved within individual offices or forwarded from the President’s Office to a vice president. In an effort to handle concerns in a systematic way, MCC has moved towards a formal complaint process for students. The Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities ensures that all formal complaints are documented and handled within a reasonable time period as noted in the student complaint resolution procedure. Students are encouraged to express their concerns by phone, by email, or by letter to the College within 30 days. Complaint records are retained for five years using the confidential Maxient software system.

Academic Grievances and Appeals

The College has a long tradition of providing students with the right to due process in matters concerning grade disputes and student academic freedom; these rights are promoted through the Student Academic Grievance Procedures. These procedures are available in the college catalog, in academic departments, and in the Advising Office; faculty also are encouraged to share academic grievance information on course information sheets and when students raise academic concerns. These procedures protect students against improper academic evaluation and fall under the responsibility of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Services; the Academic Services Assistant Vice President (AVP) is responsible for ensuring consistency of procedures.

The academic grievance process begins with the informal step of encouraging students to work through the concern with the instructor and department chair. If students are dissatisfied with the dialogue with the department, they are assigned an Academic Grievance Advisor through the Provost’s Office and assisted in filing a formal grievance. Academic Grievance Advisors are trained annually by Academic Services regarding how to support students with filing the paperwork; they also serve as neutral resource regarding academic concerns. The first formal step in the grievance process is a facilitated discussion with the academic dean, the faculty member, department chair, and the student. Most grievances are resolved at this stage. In the 2014-15 academic year, 16 academic grievances were filed in the Provost’s Office. Of those, two grievances moved to the second stage, which is a formal academic appeal hearing. An analysis of the number of cases filed indicates that most concerns are handled at the department or division level. Documentation of grievances is maintained for six years in accordance with the New York State Education Department’s records retention schedule.
Academic Dishonesty Appeal Process

MCC’s statement on academic honesty indicates that students are expected to adhere to intellectual honesty and integrity and outlines what violates this principle including plagiarism and cheating. When issues related to academic honesty are not resolved to the satisfaction of the student, the College ensures due process for both the student and the faculty member. The formal process to appeal begins when the student submits an appeal in writing to the Student Services Vice President requesting a hearing. An Appeal Board is convened consisting of a faculty member and a department chair, both from departments outside that of the faculty member involved in the action; a member of the Faculty Senate Academic Policies committee; a full-time professional staff member from Student Services; and two members of student government. The Appeal Board reviews the facts of the case; hears testimony from the student, the involved faculty member, and any advocates brought by those involved; reviews the disciplinary action taken; and renders a binding decision to uphold, reject, or modify such action.

Student Conduct Disciplinary Sanctions Procedure

The College is committed to fair and impartial processes related to student conduct and alleged violations of institutional policies as evidenced by our handling of complaints from both students and staff of alleged non-compliance with institutional policy. During the 2014-15 academic year, the College conducted a review of its student code of conduct and recognized areas of deficiency, including regulations related to alcohol and other drugs, guidelines for the handling of sexual misconduct, and notification requirements as set forth by various federal and state governing agencies. Furthermore, it was determined that the appeal process should be revised. Changes addressing these issues are reflected in the 2015 student handbook.

In response to faculty and students expressing a desire for a better understanding of the judicial process, the College adopted a Student Conduct Policy, which was also adopted by the Board of Trustees. Additionally, student conduct regulations were revised to include a detailed description of the conduct process, and new information related to sexual misconduct was included to meet current requirements from SUNY.

The College continues to work with students, faculty, and staff to assess these processes to ensure that not only are the processes fair and impartial, but also that they are understandable as well as national standards and federal and state regulations.

These examples demonstrate the College’s responsiveness to regulatory changes that impact the college community and our commitment to providing a fair appeal process. They also show how the College periodically assesses policy to ensure integrity.

Title IX

In April 2011, Title IX legislation and guidelines for educational institutions were established by the United States Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Accordingly, MCC appointed a Title IX Coordinator in 2012 who reports directly to the Vice President for Student Services. This coordinator works on investigations directly with a team consisting of an assistant coordinator, 11 deputies, and 10 investigators. Recently, the College has moved to hire an Assistant to the President for Title IX and Inclusion to comply with guidance from the 2015 Dear Colleague Letter. The person who holds this position will be responsible for educating the college community regarding Title IX issues, investigating Title IX claims, and ensuring that the College is in full compliance with Title IX.

An example of MCC’s responsiveness to Title IX legislation can be seen regarding the SUNY Policies on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response; these policies were established to assist SUNY colleges in operating under uniformed policies and included specific guidelines on policy language and reporting.
MCC integrated these policies into all College processes. Title IX personnel continue to seek varying ways to educate students, faculty, and staff of the requirements of Title IX and related legislation. Additional compliance evidence includes the following:

- In 2014, the Title IX/Sexual Harassment website was enhanced to include processes related to anonymous reporting, protection, accommodations, and advocacy events.
- The College has ensured that staff is fully trained in the new regulations related to sexual violence on campus and is working to develop appropriate policies and procedures supporting the rights of victims of sexual violence and ensuring that all complaints are handled appropriately.

**Fair and Impartial Hiring, Evaluation, and Dismissal Practices**

MCC is committed to fair and impartial practices in hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees. Personnel policies are applied equitably and consistently across the College in accordance with adopted collective bargaining agreements. The College’s Affirmative Action Officer works with designated Affirmative Action Coordinators, one from each division, to support MCC’s Affirmative Action Plan.

The primary purpose of the Affirmative Action Plan is to provide accessible employment opportunities to all qualified applicants. Our goal is to ensure that the demographics of our workforce mirror the demographics of our students. The College’s Affirmative Action Plan provides a snapshot of the demographics of the workforce and allows us to identify areas where we are lacking in diversity. Throughout this analysis, the Office of Human Resources and Organizational Development can take steps to target its recruiting efforts to attract a diverse group of candidates.

Throughout the search process, an Affirmative Action Coordinator reviews the work of the search committee to ensure that all candidates are fully considered for each opening and will question, where necessary, why a diverse candidate was passed over in the process. Additionally, the College’s Affirmative Action officer signs off on each search process to ensure that the affirmative action goals and priorities of the College are met.

**Hiring**

When hiring professionals, the College uses a rigorous search process to ensure that the best qualified individual for the open position is hired (see also Standards 3 and 10). First, the qualifications necessary for the job are determined, and the job posting is created to communicate required qualifications, preferred qualifications, and a description of the position requirements. The opening is then posted on the College website. A search committee is convened and trained in the College’s hiring protocols. Part of this training focuses on the need to be wary of unconscious bias and reminders that it is important to have an open mind when evaluating candidates. The search committee creates an applicant evaluation grid based on the job description to ensure that all applicants are equitably considered for an interview. In an effort to further ensure the integrity of the interview process, the search committee is required to develop interview questions asked of each candidate to ensure consistency and the integrity of the hiring process. A question regarding diversity and the candidate’s experience working in a diverse work environment is asked in every interview to ensure that the applicants selected through the process share the College’s commitment to diversity.

After interviews are completed, recommendations are made by the search committee to the vice president of the division with the opening. As part of those recommendations, search committee chairs are given information regarding reference checking protocols and are expected to conduct reference checks. Upon receipt of the committee’s recommendations, the vice president of the affected division makes the final decision regarding who is offered the position. Vice presidents are encouraged to conduct their own screening of the recommended candidates to ensure that they agree with the recommendation of the search committee. Once the vice president makes this decision, the Office of Human Resources and
Organizational Development contacts the successful candidate to request that official transcripts be sent in to verify his or her educational background. Appointments are not taken to the Board of Trustees until the transcripts confirming the degrees are received.

Evaluation

MCC believes that every employee deserves feedback and input regarding their performance; accordingly, we have adopted regular evaluation procedures for all employees. These evaluation procedures are intended to be a fair and objective review of the individual employee’s job performance, providing both positive feedback and constructive criticism. While the goal of the evaluation process is the same for both faculty and staff members, the evaluation process differs based on the collective bargaining unit to which the employee belongs.

Faculty and professional staff members are evaluated according to the collective bargaining agreement which outlines how often evaluations occur and what criteria are used for evaluation. The Faculty Association and the College recently negotiated a modification to the Annual Faculty Development Report. The purpose of the report is to have faculty and staff members reflect on their past year’s work and experience at the College and to develop a personal plan for professional development.

Support staff, represented by the Civil Service Employees’ Association (CSEA) also has a clear evaluation process. Supervisors and managers are expected to objectively review an employee’s performance and to work with the employee to develop an improvement plan or to identify goals for personal and professional growth. Employees are rated in several categories, including attendance and dependability, job knowledge, quality and quantity of work, initiative, flexibility, and judgment. The evaluator is asked to identify the employee’s major strengths and weaknesses and to provide suggestions for improvement.

Dismissal

The College’s dismissal procedures are also governed by the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the employees in question. Both agreements recognize the importance of due process when making decisions regarding dismissal. For example, under the Faculty Association agreement, a tenured faculty member may not be terminated without charges and an opportunity to be heard. A hearing on the charges is held by a faculty committee that then makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees (BoT) regarding the charges and the faculty member’s dismissal. The BoT may either act on the recommendation of the committee or send the recommendation back with objections and ask the committee to review those objections. After all of the due process steps have been exhausted, the BoT makes the decision which is final and is only appealable in a court of law.

While support staff employees do not have tenure, they also have a property interest in their position with the College and have due process rights. The CSEA agreement states that employees cannot be disciplined or discharged without just cause. Additionally, prior to taking action against an employee, the College must provide notice of the action to be taken and the specific reasons for that action. Employees who disagree with the discipline or discharge may file a grievance under the collective bargaining agreement. Access to the grievance procedure provides for due process for that employee, as they are able to appeal the action taken to the Director of Human Resources and, if they are not satisfied with the outcome of that appeal, they are able to appeal to an arbitrator.

By providing our employees with an opportunity to appeal decisions related to their employment and to be heard, either by a faculty committee or an outside arbitrator, the College is honoring the employee’s property right in their job. While the College applies its own fair and impartial process in making decisions related to employment, the existence of due process procedures assures that the College has just cause for any actions.
Sound Ethical Practices and Respect for Individuals

MCC has a Policy on Conflicts of Interest with required annual disclosure that extends to employees and trustees. The College has a culture of promoting ethical practices and respect for individuals consistent with our value of integrity:

- The MCC Ethics Hotline was established in 2009 to foster a safe and ethical environment for the College, MCC Association, and MCC Foundation. Information from this hotline is tracked by the Internal Auditor, who reports directly to the President. Hotline data are used to identify weaknesses and make improvements to policy and procedures.
- MCC developed Institutional Review Board guidelines approved by the Faculty Senate in 2008 to ensure ethical conduct for research involving human participants. An annual report is submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Services consistent with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services standards.
- Beginning in January 2012, the College promoted cybersecurity awareness and performed vulnerability scanning of systems and networks. In September 2013, the College appointed a Chief Information Security Officer, and in January 2015 the College developed an online Cybersecurity Awareness course for employees and hired a Network Security Specialist.

The above examples and the fact that the Compliance Officer and Internal Auditor reports directly to the President illustrates the College is responsibly and proactively taking measures to ensure sound ethical administrative and research practices. Robust enhancements are continually made to protect college constituent information. The annual independent external audits speak to the accuracy of data and strong system of internal controls that protect MCC.

Equitable and Consistent Treatment of Constituencies

The College is committed to treating all employees fairly and respectfully, regardless of their position or title. While the College is subject to three collective bargaining agreements, Faculty Association, the Civil Service Employees’ Association, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, our goals are to maintain a working environment that is respectful and welcoming to all and to have consistent rules of equal treatment and fairness. Employees follow the chain of command when bringing concerns forward regarding their working environment and treatment in the workplace. Consistent with our approach to student grievances, the College encourages faculty and staff to resolve their differences with their immediate supervisor. If they are unable to resolve their differences at that level, then an official grievance may be filed. Each collective bargaining agreement contains a grievance procedure that employees may utilize if they feel that their rights under the contract have been violated or they have been treated unfairly.

Climate of Academic Inquiry and Engagement

MCC’s climate of academic inquiry and engagement is fostered by policies that provide clear and specific support for academic and intellectual freedom as clearly outlined in The Faculty Resource Handbook. The College also endorses the Statement of Academic Freedom from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and their Statement on Academic Freedom as outlined in the 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure. MCC uses these guidelines as a framework, which is reinforced in both the Faculty Association contract and the Faculty Senate bylaws.

Institutional Commitment to Protecting Intellectual Property Rights

Upon review of intellectual property rights policy, it was determined that MCC was working with outdated language from an older policy manual. The SUNY Board of Trustees is in the process of updating their policy and the expectation is that MCC will adopt a new policy to conform to
The College community (including but not limited to vendors, visitors and guests) may not be subjected to harassment that is prohibited by law, or treated adversely or retaliated against based upon a protected characteristic.

A culture of diversity and civility is promoted across the College community in keeping with this expectation, including the following examples:

- **The Diversity Council**, established in 2005, celebrates diversity and promotes an inclusive environment at MCC. Various programs, diversity film series, art exhibits, and music are offered throughout the year on a range of diverse topics based on input from program surveys.
- Since 2006, the MCC Civility Committee has coordinated programs that encourage respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration, including events on such topics as morality and politics, speaking out against violence, and raising awareness of civility.
- The Dr. Alice Holloway Young Faculty Internship Program was founded in 2002 to encourage talented individuals from underrepresented groups to consider a community college teaching career and to enhance the educational experience of MCC students. Over 100 individuals have participated in this program and 69% were subsequently employed by the College and 20% were successful candidates for full-time positions.

These examples illustrate MCC’s commitment to diversity and civility by providing resources, services, and programs to departments that promote and foster respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration.

**Honesty and Truthfulness in Advertising and Marketing Materials**

The Marketing and Community Relations Department (MCR) ensures the integrity of all college documents related to public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting, and admissions material. The department embraces the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Principles of Practice and the State University of New York Council for University Advancement mission.

Publications for prospective students are generally reviewed by MCR or Public Safety (as deemed appropriate), and materials for employees and prospective employees are reviewed by Human Resources. College publications are available, print or electronic, to prospective and current students. The College's
web site is ADA compliant. MCC’s website also includes, in an easily accessible format, the required Student Right to Know information.

The public has direct access to MCC’s Institutional Research site to fact check information, and the College annually publishes documents disseminated to the public that include MCC facts and outcomes. For example, the MCC Facts publication offers an annual overview of College data and the “What Happened to the Class of …” series provides information on the transfer and career outcomes of MCC graduates.

Accuracy of information on department web pages is the responsibility of the authoring department. Time-sensitive pages, such as parking information, are updated either by the originating department or by Information Technology staff. As recommended in the 2006 Middle States report, the College implemented a new Web Content Management System. MCC makes it a priority to provide numerous methods of communication to internal and external constituencies.

Assisting Student Graduation within the Published Program Length

All degree and certificate programs have a published four-semester curriculum (e.g., Business Administration, Cinema Studies) that map out all course requirements within that established timeframe. These requirements include a mix of major, general education, and elective coursework. Students are also given a Degree Works report detailing their program of study. This report can be run by students on demand to reflect current enrollment. The annual college catalog also communicates course offerings by semester so that students are able to plan ahead to complete their degree programs. In addition to day, evening, and weekend course offerings, the College has ample online course offerings to provide students with greater access to key courses. In rare instances students who are faced with difficulties in registering for specific courses required for graduation may work individually with departments to look at the option of waivers, substitutions, and independent studies to satisfy program requirements.

In addition, Enrollment Management and Financial Aid have automated several processes to expedite services provided to students, faculty, and staff. Students can now complete admissions applications online, complete a program change request online, and call an automated Financial Aid system to check the status of their aid package.

Reasonable Student Access to the Catalog

Since 2011, the College has offered our catalog online, making it easily accessible via the A-Z Index and search function on the College web site. The electronic/online catalog can be downloaded or printed in full or by section, allowing students to access as much or as little of the catalog as they need. The catalog is also available via MCC’s mobile app. Additions and revisions to courses that occur between annual publications of the catalog are noted on the Catalog Additions/Corrections web page. The availability of the catalog, information on specific information contained in the catalog, and updates/corrections to catalog information are announced to students in the MCC Student Tribune. According to the SUNY Opinion Survey in spring 2013, 69% of students were very satisfied to satisfied with MCC’s catalog.

Disclosure and Reporting Expectations

Responsibility for fulfilling Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and other regulatory requirements is assigned to appropriate management level staff. The Accreditation Liaison Officer is responsible for all reporting relating to MSCHE. The College also created a college-wide compliance approach to meet the demand for accountability and increased reporting.

MCC takes a proactive approach to fulfilling standards, regulations, reporting, and other requirements of regulatory bodies. Responsibility is clearly assigned, budget funds provided, and a commitment to compliance are followed. For example, the Student Services division has created a Compliance Calendar.
listing departments, tasks, due dates, and the person who is responsible for completion. A specific recent demonstration of an institution-wide approach to meeting a reporting requirement is the Biennial Review of Monroe Community College’s Alcohol and Other Drug Programs.

Information Provided to Students and Public Access

Student Consumer Information is available on the MCC website, including accreditation, graduation, transfer, retention, employment, student body diversity, and other outcomes. This data are readily available to prospective students and the public per the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). As required, MCC developed a Student Consumer Information webpage that is reviewed and updated annually by the Internal Audit and Institutional Compliance Office.

Integrity Evidenced in Institutional Policies, Processes, and Practices

In 2014-15, MCC created a website dedicated to Board of Trustees policies and associated procedures. The institution has a policy template and an annual review cycle. Shared governance partners are also part of the review process.

Policy development at MCC is a continuous process, often resulting in new policies and changes to existing policy. Recent policies that demonstrate the College’s commitment to ethical standards, equitable treatment, transparency, and integrity of information include:

- 2012-13: Password Policy, Information Technology Security Policy, and Investment Policy
- 2013-14: Arming Members of the Public Safety Department Policy
- 2014-15: Tobacco-Free Policy, revised Employee and Visitor Conduct Policy, and Shared Governance Policy

The Institutional Compliance and Internal Auditor reports to the President and conducts periodic assessment of institutional policies and procedures at MCC. The Auditor position is a unique position for community colleges, but it is an essential role at MCC to ensure integrity of policies at the College. The Internal Auditor performs audits that assess the accuracy of financial information, efficiency of operations, and compliance with regulations. The Officer also performs independent analysis to assist senior leadership with information about the implementation of policies and procedures.

STRENGTHS

- MCC is responsive to the rights and responsibilities of students, particularly in regards to due process in grievances.
- The institution emphasizes fostering a culture of civility and diversity across the college community.
- MCC’s Internal Auditor position is unique and supports the College’s internal control process.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

- Develop a regular schedule for reviewing and updating all college policies.

Recommendations

- Develop an Intellectual Property policy.
OVERVIEW

MCC’s Strategic Plan, *Fulfilling the Promise*, establishes a framework of institutional assessment, with the four directions and their supporting goals providing a coherent context for assessing institutional effectiveness. The development of the Institutional Effectiveness Model at MCC illustrates the College’s journey towards data-informed priorities and goals in the areas of institutional assessment and the assessment of student learning. Each division of the College is engaged in assessment using evidence-based or formative assessment tools with institutional metrics to measure effectiveness. The College’s institutional assessment is comprehensive as evidenced by the participation and support of faculty, staff, administration, and students in these efforts. This chapter analyzes MCC’s comprehensive institutional assessment planning process.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and Plan

The *Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and Plan*, developed by the Office of Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Accountability (IPEA) was created to provide a single comprehensive overview of MCC’s Institutional Effectiveness process. The handbook includes sections on

- The Institutional Effectiveness Model
- Planning definitions and components
- MCC’s Strategic Plan
- Compliance Assist
- Operational plans
- Institutional Research
- KPIs and dashboards
- Unit assessments and matrices
- Other institutional assessments

This document was completed and adopted in parallel with the Study Teams’ work and provides additional details on the practices discussed in this standard. The handbook is becoming an invaluable resource in continually improving our processes.

Institutional Effectiveness - Aligning Planning Across the College

For an institution as large as MCC, an organized, integrated, and sustained approach to assessing effectiveness is both a challenge and a necessity. Our approach is diagrammed in the Institutional Effectiveness Model (IEM) (see figure 7.1). Originally, created by the Planning Office in 2001 (now Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Accountability), the IEM was created in response to the SUNY Mission Review requirements. The IEM has evolved and now illustrates how the College integrates college-wide planning and assessment, while maintaining our commitment to evidence-based decision-making and closing the loop. The most recent iteration of the IEM includes SUNY’s “Power of SUNY” Strategic Plan and serves as a clear visual representation of the College's integration of its major planning initiatives. Our trilateral approach for assessing the College's overall effectiveness in fulfilling its mission consists of MCC’s Strategic Plan, the SUNY Strategic Plan, and the Student Learning Assessment framework.
Central to the IEM are the Mission and Strategic Plan, which are analyzed and discussed in full in Standards 1 and 2. Standard 1 demonstrates that MCC’s Mission and goals drive planning and decision-making across the College. Standard 2 elaborates on the evolution of MCC’s strategic planning process, collaboration, and close alignment of the strategic directions, college goals, assumptions, and the key performance indicators to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach throughout the institution. In a large, complex, comprehensive community college like ours, it is essential that the Strategic Plan be at the center of our work to assure coherence to the Mission statement and assessment. Our Strategic Plan is both informing and being informed by various operational plans and resource allocation.

**State University of New York**

As one of the 64 campuses of the State University of New York, MCC also supports the system’s strategic plan: the Power of SUNY. SUNY was born out of a commitment to provide opportunity and access, and designed to meet diverse needs across the vast geographic landscape of New York State. Its plan continues this mission, with directions, including SUNY and the Seamless Educational Pipeline that addresses college and career readiness issues central to MCC’s Mission and work in our community. For example, MCC was instrumental in supporting the Strategic Plans of SUNY and MCC through the creation of ROC the Future, a member of the New State Cradle to Career Alliance. The recently-created SUNY Excels performance system will further align campus performance plans with SUNY metrics to drive continuous improvement. Significantly, many of the SUNY measures related to institutional
assessment align directly with those MCC already uses, including metrics from the Voluntary Framework of Accountability and the Student Assessment Measures.

Student Learning Assessment Framework

The College’s overall assessment measures rest upon our commitment to support students in achieving their own academic goals. Stemming from faculty commitment to maintain oversight over the curriculum and pedagogy, the assessment of student learning that supports individual goal attainment is owned by the Faculty Senate and the faculty at large. They govern the processes, development of procedures, and the results of academic assessment. The Academic Assessment office supports faculty in the design and implementation of assessment and evaluation processes by working closely with assessment project leaders on campus. The Foundations for Student Success IV: Closing the Loop report submitted to the Faculty Senate by the College Assessment and Program Evaluation committee in 2011 describes MCC’s comprehensive academic assessment and evaluation process (see Standard 14).

Divisional Goals and Departmental Strategies

MCC is committed to a continuous improvement cycle incorporating measurement, evaluation, verification, and implementation throughout the organization. MCC manages college-wide and division goals using the software program Compliance Assist, managed by the IPEA Office. Compliance Assist tracks goals and strategies directly linked to the Strategic Plan. The program allows for periodic reporting on the progress, assessment, and outcomes by division and department. Information obtained from year-end reports is integrated into annual reporting and decision-making, providing divisions and departments with needed information to drive continuous improvement. The Study Team discovered that the adoption of Compliance Assist has streamlined a process that formerly included separate divisional databases and significant manual labor into an efficient, comprehensive, and sustainable approach that facilitates planning and assessment. A review of the Compliance Assist tool shows that departmental strategies and operational plans are directly linked to the Strategic Plan.

Closing the Loop

The College works to use assessment as tool of continuous improvement. Examples include the Enrollment Projections Budget Planning Committee, the responsiveness of Library Services, STEM Institutes, and programming for adjunct faculty,

Enrollment Projections Budget Planning Committee

The Enrollment Projections Budget Planning Committee is an example of a process that is sustainable, data-driven and that affects resource allocation across the College. The Enrollment Projection Planning Committee, comprised of the College’s Vice-Presidents, Institutional Research, Enrollment Management, and Administrative Services, meets regularly throughout the year to develop enrollment projections and monitor annual budget. Enrollment projection numbers for the coming year are used for

- Establishing the College budget and allocating resources across divisions and departments
- Setting the recruitment plan goals according to the approved budget. The goals are fed into the Marketing and Recruitment plan for the recruitment plan execution.
- Calculating tuition and fees for the projected year

The enrollment projections are monitored each fall/spring term and compared to the actual enrollment numbers in daily/weekly reports. Enrollment targets each term are updated with census and final end of term enrollment data.
Library Responsiveness

MCC Libraries implemented a new data gathering tool in September 2013. The tool tracks the number of transactions of library users, including research sessions, faculty course support sessions, and student technology assistance. This tool also collects student comments about how the library can improve their support to students. One comment consistently received regarded noise levels in the Leroy V. Goode Library on the Brighton Campus. Other recurring comments are in regards to the outdated Library building including the furniture. In response to these concerns, the LVG Library designated the third floor as the quiet floor and relocated the quiet computer lab (originally on the main floor) to the third floor. The library is tracking noise complaints from this floor to measure the effectiveness of this decision and through outreach efforts will educate students about this change in library space. Additionally, to help with modernization efforts, the Library invested in collaborative technology in three study rooms. The library has posted two electronic surveys in the study rooms where they are located to solicit student feedback. From these surveys, the Library will determine if more investments in this technology is warranted. This information will also help decide technology purchases for the new downtown campus. The data results will be available Jan 15, 2016.

STEM Institute

During the 2012-13 year, the Teaching & Creativity Center (TCC) conducted a needs analysis of MCC faculty to identify areas of opportunity for programs and services. This analysis, in combination with evaluations conducted at individual programs, suggested that there was a need for and an interest in intensive multi-day programming during which faculty could immerse themselves in a particular pedagogical topic or approach. As a result, funds from the Xerox Foundation were obtained during the 2013-14 year, and the TCC offered the first five-day Summer Institute in summer 2014 focusing on STEM and applied STEM. Twelve full-time faculty participated and the evaluations indicated high levels of satisfaction with the experience and high rates of faculty modifying teaching practice as a result of what they learned. This program was offered again in summer 2015 to twelve full-time and adjunct faculty. Following the first Institute, workshop components were revised and strengthened based on the evaluations from the first year. For example, source materials for backwards design were shifted to a framework created by Dee Fink, who had visited campus during the 2014-15 year. The sequence of workshops was also re-ordered to allow for a deeper engagement with material on active and collaborative learning as participants were beginning to consider how they would approach the redesign of their courses. Assessment of summer 2015 STEM institute will be used to plan future programming.

Adjunct Faculty Programming

Since 2003, the College has sponsored two annual professional development programs for adjunct faculty. In 2011-12 the TCC improved the evaluation of these events to drive programming decisions. Results indicated that adjunct faculty desired additional support and opportunities for community building. The TCC responded by developing a series of monthly evening workshops in the 2012-13 academic year, known as the Adjunct Faculty Suppers for Success. Due to the success of the inaugural events, this series was made a regular part of the TCC’s annual programming. Currently, 722 adjunct faculty have participated in 21 programs. Each monthly program is evaluated and the results are used to identify important topics for future workshops. For example, based on participant needs topics related to mental health and student motivation were offered. Data was also used to strengthen workshop design and implementation (e.g., incorporating varied facilitation strategies, inviting faculty facilitators from across the disciplines) and to incorporate some programs into each year’s series that model student engagement techniques.

Strategic Planning Metrics - iDashboard

With the most recent MCC Strategic Plan, the President proposed and the Board of Trustees approved high-level metrics to track the overall effectiveness of the Strategic Plan. In large part, this adoption was
informed by previous concerns expressed by Middle States regarding the Board of Trustees’ ongoing participation in strategic planning, especially their engagement in plan effectiveness. MCC has used the iDashboard reporting tool to provide the Board of Trustees and the college community with an accessible view on progress toward strategic planning goals (see figure 7.2). All goals and directions are measured relative to target values that are subdivided into three-color coded regions: Green, meeting or exceeding targeted value; Yellow, making close progress toward targeted value; and Red, making limited progress toward targeted value. Significantly, all targeted values were established as five-year metrics, meaning that the Board and the college community were looking for progress to the goals, but not attainment, until the five-year cycle ended. In this way, the entire design of the system was built upon continuous improvement.

Metrics and targets were established by the President and vice presidents with the assistance of Institutional Research, which assessed campus data, internal/external expectations and benchmarked peer institutions, and campus processes to inform leadership of reasonable and progressive targets. The direction and goals are presented graphically in a dashboard; movement of each direction of the Strategic Plan is reviewed by the President and presented to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis. Each of the visual dashboard items is backed by a longitudinal look at this same metric, allowing the College to identify trends and provide context for the results.

In some cases, such as the goals related to Direction Two: Workforce Education and Career Pathways, the College’s performance has exceeded the targeted outcomes. In other cases, performance that was once on track has declined. For example, a review of the performance on Direction Four revealed challenges related to staffing ratios were driving up costs. Specifically, beginning with the post-recession enrollment decline, the College needed to do more to manage the effectiveness of MCC’s master schedule and staffing. As a result, the Provost and the EDIWS Vice President began to play a more significant role in managing the master schedule. The President’s Staff implemented a periodic meeting on positions, putting in place more safeguards to assure that decisions on hiring both supported the College’s Mission and took place within budget realities. In addition to implementing controls on the cost side, MCC also invested in a series of actions focusing on enrollment and persistence discussed in detail in Standard 8. The level of detail supporting the dashboard metrics enabled the College both to assess and to allocate resources, both time and budget, to improving future outcomes.

The adoption of iDashboard has also enabled the College to clearly and consistently share the ongoing assessment of our progress in meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan. However, the self-study process revealed that the majority of the college community does not have access to view the dashboard and relies on administrative updates and communications. This is being remedied, and college-wide access in support of transparency will be available in the next fiscal year.
Benchmarking

In addition to self-assessment, the College uses additional data to assess the effectiveness of our programs and student satisfaction. Results are used to inform planning decisions and are another piece in the evidence-based decision-making process.

The College recognizes the right of students to express their opinions on the quality of courses and instruction; these opinions provide opportunity for making improvements in instruction and courses. Student feedback on course quality may include such areas as course design, resources used, course rigor, achievement of learning outcomes, or other related content. Student feedback on instructional quality may include such areas as instructional methodology, workload required by instructor, communication skills, pace and clarity of instruction, teaching pedagogy, or other related characteristics of instruction. The “Student Opinions of Course and Faculty” survey is distributed during even-numbered academic years to ensure that each course is captured in a survey cycle. Survey information is shared directly with faculty to support their own professional development, course improvements and requests for tenure and promotion. Department chairs are provided with survey results which may prompt revisions to degree programs and courses. Additionally, results are provided to the student government organizations to offer transparency in opinions on the quality of courses and instruction at MCC.

Another example of the way the College uses data to inform decision-making is the collaborative effort by the Mathematics and ESOL/Transitional Studies departments to create Flexible Pace Developmental Mathematics pathways. This effort was based on a recommendation to differentiate curriculum and course delivery methods to meet needs of students from the 2011 Transitional Studies Department Program Evaluation Report. Two non-credit mathematics courses were re-designed into a self-paced learning format that provides students the opportunity to learn at their own speed. Students move forward with concepts they understand and take more time with challenging material. This change allows students to move through a two-semester sequence in one semester. MCC’s Institutional Research report indicates the spring to fall 2013 retention rates were statistically significant between traditional and Flexible Pace mathematics sections (see Standard 13).

The College also uses national benchmarking to aid in the campuses decision-making process. MCC’s long-term commitment to benchmarking institutional effectiveness as part of the continuous improvement process will benefit the College in the new SUNY Excels performance improvement approach, which also relies upon benchmarking to guide metrics and institutional outcomes assessment.

MCC’s Assessment Structure

Reflecting the complexity and comprehensive nature of MCC, multiple offices across divisions share responsibility for assessment: the Office of Institutional Planning, Effectiveness and Accountability (Administrative Services division); Institutional Research (Academic Services division); and the Office of Academic Assessment (Academic Services division). Each of these offices provides leadership and expertise in their respective areas. The Office of Institutional Planning, Effectiveness and Accountability (IPEA) assumes a major role in the development of the College's Strategic Plan and other major planning efforts. The Office of Academic Assessment supports the academic assessment process as described fully in Standard 14. Institutional Research supports all segments of the college community with information for planning, policy analysis, assessment, and decision-making. The President’s Office provides the leadership and direction to ensure that the College’s planning and assessment processes are coordinated, sustained, and communicated through the Planning Coordination Council (see Standard 5).

MCC’s Key Operational Plans

The IEM identifies MCC’s key operational plans, including the Facilities Master Plan, the Recruitment Plan, and the Technology Plan. Standard 2 discusses how current versions of each of these plans were developed and shares examples of how each of them informs and is impacted by college goals and
resource allocations. The Standard 7 team examined the relationship of these plans to the Strategic Plan and how they are used in assessment:

**Facilities Master Plan**

MCC’s first Facilities Master Plan (FMP) was developed in 1974. The 2013-18 FMP resulted from an intensive, yearlong review completed by a 13-member steering committee that represented a broad spectrum of internal stakeholders from all campuses and divisions. The FMP is comprised of five strategic objectives that are aligned with the four core directions of the College’s Strategic Plan and informed by the recommendations found in the Serving Students Best report. The plan forecasts strategic investments in learning spaces and technology, including design plans for the new downtown campus and an addition to the Applied Technologies Center. The inclusion of main offices and instructional spaces for EDIWS is an example of Direction Two: Workforce Education and Career Pathways as well as Direction Three: Community Partnerships. This new space at the downtown campus will allow EDIWS administration to have closer collaboration with other disciplines, space to grow community partnerships, and provide enhanced workplace skills for both students and industries. Additionally, the new Loss Prevention lab space was created in response to industry needs. The area will include the most current equipment available in the Loss Prevention field in accordance with Direction Three.

On a day-to-day basis, the Facilities Department consults the FMP when managing requests for new spaces, renovations, upgrades, and repairs to the campus infrastructure to ensure that capital projects accommodate the FMP’s strategic objectives. To this end, the Facilities Department created a projects database; the department will use this data to inform the next FMP review process, creating a data-driven cycle of improvement. The Facilities Department documents all work conducted on campus and reports internally to the Vice President of Administrative Services.

**Recruitment Plan**

In 2013-14, MCC created our first strategic Recruitment Plan which is connected clearly to the Strategic Plan and attendant goals. The purpose of the Recruitment Plan is to provide clear goals and associated strategies and actions to achieve these goals. At the beginning of the fall semester, the Admissions Office will review the previous year’s Recruitment Plan to assess the impact of recruitment efforts. Based on the findings, any goals or objectives that have not been met become the foundation of the following year’s efforts to recruit students. The recruitment and enrollment management process is discussed more fully in Standard 8.

**Technology Plan**

MCC developed our first Technology Plan in 1997, and the cycle for this plan is tied to the Middle States review cycle. The current plan, the 2013-17 Technology Plan, explicitly ties its four goals to the four goals of the MCC Strategic Plan. The plan clearly defines an annual review process that includes college-wide representation. Standard 2 describes the project management process that was implemented to ensure that projects are evaluated and prioritized based on the College’s needs. The technology projects are consolidated and prioritized based on six drivers including cost effectiveness, increased productivity, compliance, strategic importance, technology compatibility, and user impact. A report is generated and presented every two months to the vice presidents for updates on current projects and consideration of new projects. This technology review process provides an ongoing assessment of current and proposed technology projects and their impact on key drivers and on the institution.

The College has also contracted with external reviewers to evaluate MCC’s technology infrastructure and services. The 2011 Moran Consulting Groups Report’s recommendations informed the redesigned project management process and the creation of a Business Analyst position to assess technology projects and ensure their alignment with institutional priorities.
The Study Team’s assessment of each of these plans determined that they do reflect the integration, assessment, and institutional effectiveness process depicted in the IEM.

**Examples of Institutional Assessment**

MCC is regularly assessing processes and practices to identify areas for improvement. Three examples of this include 100 Days Projects, focused on specific challenges that impact the institution; the EDIWS division’s ongoing performance assessment process; and the Institutional Readiness Assessment process, focused on MCC’s online learning program.

- In Fall 2011, Dr. Kress implemented the 100 Days to Innovation initiative which starts with the President’s Staff identifying institutional challenges directly related to the Strategic Plan that have an institution-wide impact. These challenges became the focus of a 100 day project with the goal of resolving the issue. These project proposals are measured against specific criteria which determine each project’s relationship to the Strategic Plan, impact on institutional resources and stakeholders, and ability to be completed in 100 days. Examples of completed projects include Enhancing the Student’s Experience – Student Account Creation Process, Web Template Implementation Project, and Competency Based Education. Each of these projects included summary reports documenting the project.

- Direct reports to the EDIWS Vice President who are funded under self-support budgeting participate in ongoing monthly meetings that include a review of performance data relevant to their specific role in the division. Quarterly performance reviews are also conducted for the Corporate College and the Office of Workforce Development business units in order to determine if budgets are on track to meet annual performance targets. If goals are not trending toward targets, a discussion and analysis process considers change in strategy and tactics to better ensure annual program goals will be met. Additionally, on an annual basis, staff are formally assessed in regards to workforce performance and goal achievement.

- MCC’s distance learning program has been the focus of ongoing assessment activities including the 2009-11 Distance Learning Assessment Initiative (DLAI-1) which presented multiple recommendations for improvement and the subsequent 2011-15 DLAI-2 report which documents the status of these recommendations (see Standard 14). Additionally, MCC recently completed the Open SUNY Institutional Readiness Review Process which is a self-study that evaluates 75 indicators across 9 categories of distance learning programs. This self-study provides a foundation for a comprehensive implementation plan to address areas for improvement. Combining these results with the DLAI-2 report provides MCC with a clear understanding of our current practices and future opportunities.

**Unit Assessment**

Unit assessment has evolved significantly at MCC. For many years, the assessment of non-academic departments occurred through the annual division and department goal creation, tracking, and reporting process. Each division used separate database systems to track their efforts and align them with the goals of the College. While this process did assess each department’s work as it related to the Strategic Plan, it was not a comprehensive assessment of the department.

For example, in 2011, in an effort led by the Office of IPEA, administrative units in each division of the College pilot tested an assessment process that was adopted from MCC’s well-established academic department assessment process. Each division selected several departments to complete the self-review and then provide feedback on both the effectiveness of the experience and of the instrument. This pilot led
to the conclusion that a one-size-fits-all approach was not appropriate to administrative units across divisions.

Based on this assessment, Academic Services, Administrative Services, and EDIWS each identified the key elements of the instrument that provided value to their organizations and adopted modified versions to meet their needs. Student Services chose to adopt an instrument specifically designed for evaluating student services operations. As illustrated in the Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and Plan, each vice president has developed a process and timeline for the ongoing assessment of units within their division. MCC’s four-stage assessment process (review, assess, evaluate, act) led to a revised administrative unit assessment solution that aligns with both division and institution needs. The process will continue to evolve as each division learns from the experiences of the departments completing the assessment.

For example, per the recommendation of the March 2011 assessment of the Payroll Department, the College has since converted the forms used in the hiring process from paper to electronic. The assessment discovered that over 40% of the paper forms received in Payroll for new part-time employees needed to be adjusted due to incomplete and/or incorrect data. In addition, 16% of these part-time employees missed their first paycheck as their forms were received late in Payroll.

The solution to this problem was the creation of a workflow in Banner to streamline the hiring of part-time hourly employees and student aides. This electronic solution includes required fields (which has minimized incomplete data), form status tracking (which has minimized delays), and data checking (which has minimized errors). The migration from paper forms to electronic has resulted in significant increases in the efficiency of the College’s hiring process as it relates to Payroll. Additional assessment will occur this academic year.

Unit/Department Operational Plans

In addition to the college-wide operational plans mentioned previously, the Study Team discovered that some units/departments are also developing operational plans. These plans inform and are informed by the unit assessment process and the structured approach to development of goals that ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan, including qualitative and quantitative performance measures (see Standard 2). One of the plans the Study Team reviewed that illustrates both the process and a financial outcome of such a plan was the MCC Library’s Operational Plan (OP). This plan was constructed to focus on aligning the strategic directions of their plan with the four directions of the College’s Strategic Plan.

The Library’s process in this effort offers a view of the synergies that result when individual departments intentionally integrate their operational plans with the College Strategic Plan. In support of Direction One: Learning First, the Library OP committed to updating Learning Spaces (D.1 Space) and to providing quality access to information (D.3 Systems) through the use of modern technologies (D.2 Resources). In collaboration with the MCC Foundation, the Library then secured a donation to support the needs of MCC students by creating a state-of-the-art active-learning environment. The room is a space where departments teach specialized classes and courses and where professional development opportunities are offered for faculty (D.4 Outreach). Bi-yearly the Library holds a half day retreat where it reflects on the progress of the OP to ensure it is maintaining its commitment to the College and the Strategic Plan. Yearly, budget planning in the Library aligns to the OP and ensures that the four directions of the College’s Strategic Plan are being addressed.

This plan is one example of how an integrated approach to planning and ongoing assessment leads to resource allocations that align with the Strategic Plan and goals of the College. The division of EDIWS and departments including Instructional Technologies, Communications and Network Services, Computing, and Information Technology Services have also developed operational plans. This is not a required outcome of the unit assessment process, but has been useful to these areas. These plans are shared on the IPEA Office web site.
MCC continues to bolster a collaborative and transparent culture around the institutional effectiveness assessment process. Compliance Assist and iDashboards provide a foundation to build further quantitative information in a central repository and to increase the MCC community’s engagement in data-driven assessments of the College’s mission and goals. The President regularly updates the Board of Trustees and the college community on MCC’s progress in meeting its strategic goals, with specific attention to the supporting institutional assessment metrics. Trustees receive regular updates on institutional initiatives, resource allocation, and other topics from the President and shared governance bodies to provide evidence that MCC is meeting standards of institutional effectiveness. Given the size and complexity of MCC, the flow of communication continues through vice presidents and deans, who provide updates to the college community in town hall meetings, division meetings, and annual reports. The IPEA office organizes liaisons for each division to communicate unit goals and assessment to the vice presidents. Additionally, the IPEA office, Institutional Research, and the Academic Assessment office each maintain robust websites that include assessment data and other relevant information.

While many efforts occur to promote transparent communication about institutional assessment, the College recognizes that review of annual goals and unit assessments could be improved and communicated more regularly to the college community and Board of Trustees. To this end, at the suggestion of the Planning Coordination Council, the College is in the process of developing an annual “MCC Report Card,” consisting of easily understood metrics to educate and better inform all members of the college community. Beginning in spring 2016, it will be released at the beginning of each calendar year.

**STRENGTHS**

- The Institutional Effectiveness Model is tied to the Strategic Plan and clearly communicates the relationships among areas as related to institutional assessment.
- MCC’s planning process is integrated and collaborative.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Suggestions**

- Refine the use of integrative tools to further enhance college-wide goal development, tracking, evaluation, and reporting processes.
- Develop an institutional repository where the College can store accreditation and assessment records to expand access to campus data.

**Recommendations**

- Implement the planned MCC Report Card and require unit plans to articulate activities taken to improve these metrics.
OVERVIEW

The College has made significant changes to enrollment practices since the last periodic review in order to more fully meet the Mission and address challenges inherent in the changing nature of higher education. This chapter analyzes the College’s enrollment practices and policies, communication strategies, and retention efforts in support of student success.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Student Admissions Support the College’s Mission

MCC’s Mission explicitly states a commitment to access and providing diverse learners the opportunity to achieve scholarly, professional, and individual success. As a full opportunity institution, MCC affords students an educational experience consistent with the stated Mission as illustrated by both our admissions policies and placement processes, available both in print and online. While some competitive health-related programs require additional prerequisites, the College is committed to providing access to higher education for those who demonstrate an ability to be successful. (Information on application deadlines, procedures, and prerequisites for health-related programs including Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Dental Assisting, and Dental Hygiene is provided in information sheets made available online).

Changes in Enrollment Practices to Fulfill Mission

In 2012, the College participated in an external review by Ruffalo Noel Levitz, a nationally recognized enrollment management consulting firm. This review process and analysis led to a number of significant recommendations to enhance how MCC attracts, engages, and admits students. The College has allocated resources to implement changes, including those found below:

- Implemented college-wide branding standards and created the “Inspiring every day” campaign that is shared by faculty, staff, students, and alumni
- Utilized technology to streamline the application process and enhance communication with prospective students at all stages of the enrollment process
- Recaptured lost enrollments by conducting a direct mail campaign and re-engaging prospective students through Open Houses, Admitted Student Days, and various targeted information sessions (see Tables 8.1 and 8.2)
- Redesigned the College website to allow prospective students to make better-informed decisions through a more user-friendly homepage
- Implemented Recruiter Customer Relationship Management module to support recruitment initiatives, establishing benchmark information for future analysis and assessment (Tables 8.1 and 8.2 demonstrate how Recruiter is used to measure recruitment efforts)

In spring 2015, Admissions saw the yield of admitted students to registered students increase by 1%. While that number may seem small, it is evidence that these changes are positioning the College for future enrollment success. In the meantime, we have a plan in place to assess the success of these changes. Admissions goals, strategies, and action plans are data-driven, emphasize increasing enrollment of various student populations and focus on continuing to better utilize technology to streamline the admission process for prospective students. In its review, the Study Team found the College’s ongoing
and updated admission practices demonstrate a commitment to our values of inclusiveness and excellence.

**Information for Prospective Students**

The college catalog provides current information on admissions requirements, transfer procedures, and details on financial aid. All academic program descriptions, program learning outcomes, and entrance requirements to the College’s degree and certificate programs are stated in the Programs of Study section of the online catalog and on the College website. (For more information regarding statements of expected student learning outcomes, see Standard 11 while information on institution-wide program assessment results can be found in Standard 14.)

Institutional performance measures, such as the *What Happened to the Class of…?* report outlining graduate career and transfer outcomes, are available both in print and online to current and prospective students. In accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), MCC also provides enrollment data, retention rates, transfer credit procedures, and financial information to the greater community on our Student Consumer Information webpage (see Standard 6).

Admissions adheres to the policies set by New York State Education Department, State University of New York (SUNY) System Administration, and the Federal Financial Aid Handbook. For example, MCC refers to SUNY and State Education Policy as it relates to the matriculation of homeschooled students. Further, MCC seeks the guidance of professional organizations such as New York State Association of College Admissions Counselors and the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC). For example, we adhere to the ethical principles set forth by NACAC in regard to recruitment and enrollment of students.

**College Website**

MCC’s website is the mechanism through which the College communicates with the public; as such, it serves as a primary source of information about topics such as academic programs, admissions processes, available support services, and financial aid. MCC’s Marketing and Community Relations Department conducts a regular review of the website content to ensure that information is accurate and up to date. We have devoted significant resources to redesigning the website to make it more informative, interactive, and easily navigable for prospective students. The 2010 website design was updated in 2013 to reflect the new college branding and has recently been updated after considerable input from students, faculty, and staff. MCC also has a presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and LinkedIn.

**Open Houses**

Open House, held each fall semester, provides prospective students access to the campus to meet faculty and staff; to learn more about MCC’s majors and degree programs; to tour our state-of-the-art facilities, residence halls, and Library; to interact with current students; and to learn more about student clubs and organizations, athletics, and campus life. Table 8.1 shows the conversion rate for the last two Open Houses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open House</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion Rate (%)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8.1. Open House Conversion Rate*
Admitted Student Day

Admitted Student Day, held each spring semester, enables students who have been accepted and are eligible to be enrolled for the upcoming fall semester the opportunity to speak directly to faculty and staff about majors and degree programs, attend workshops on financial aid, and tour specific instructional spaces. The 2015 Admitted Student Day saw the number of attendees nearly triple compared to the previous year (see Table 8.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion Rate (%)</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8.2 Admitted Student Day Conversion Rates*

Specialized Career Recruitment Events and Targeted Information Sessions

The College offers prospective students a variety of information and events designed to assist them in their decision-making process:

- **High-Tech Exploration Night**: Prospective students are provided the opportunity to explore MCC’s innovative engineering and technology programs and to talk to industry representatives in fields such as mechanical engineering, computer information technology, and optics. Attendance at these events has increased from some 175 attendees in 2009-10 to a high of 600-700 attendees in 2014-15.

- **Adult Students**: One–on-one appointments with an Admission Counselor are available for adults interested in returning to college either as transfer or first-time college students. These counselors provide assistance regarding career options and navigating the admission process. Evening information sessions are also held for adult students on topics ranging from general information on how to apply for admissions and financial aid to academic program specific workshops such as careers in STEM, careers in business, and services for veterans.

- **Partnerships**: MCC partners with the Office of Adult and Career Education Services (OACES) to improve educational and employment opportunities for Rochester City School District students. In this collaboration, MCC sits on the OACES Employment Services Group Advisory Committee and is developing a new workshop series to be held at OACES on topics such as time management, college success, adult learning, and test anxiety. Additionally, MCC will provide workshops on the MCC application process for students who are seeking their GED/Technical Assistance Support Centers and for students who are enrolled in the OACES ESOL programs.

MCC also has a multi-faceted partnership with RochesterWorks!. Admissions and Adult and Experiential Learning staff present “Pathways to Success for Adult Learners” monthly and hold appointments for adults interested in returning to college who need access to services related to applying for and retaining grant funding. Further, a representative from RochesterWorks! is located part-time at our Applied Technologies Center, and MCC Admissions hosts the RochesterWorks! Career Conference each January. This event draws close to 1,000 community members annually, brings unemployed workers together with employers, and promotes retraining opportunities.
Financial Aid

The MCC Financial Aid Office provides prospective students accurate and comprehensive information regarding student financial aid through a wide variety of communications. The office developed a [Financial Aid handout](#) and 7 Step Financial Aid Application Guide to help ease the application process for financial aid; both documents are found on the College website. Weekly Financial Aid workshops are also available for prospective and current students to receive assistance with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition, the office also provides outreach and supports admission and retention initiatives in various ways. Staff members participate in a wide variety of events such as SUNY Financial Aid Day, a FAFSA event sponsored by the Rochester College Access Network, College Goal Sunday at East High school, and a March Madness financial aid program sponsored by the mayor of Rochester.

In 2013-14, the Financial Aid Office took an aggressive approach to reduce MCC’s [Cohort Default rate](#) from 21% to 17%. This plan included contracting with American Student Assistance to address financial literacy and perform outreach to former students in repayment. The initial priority focused on delinquent borrowers and students who have gone through repayment in the past three years. In addition, the College changed its philosophy to limit student loan packaging to the minimum amount needed to cover students’ educational expenses. Any additional funds would need to be requested by the student through an online system that includes the impact of the increase on their estimated repayments in the National Student Loan Data System.

In spring 2015, the College implemented AcademicWorks scholarship software to provide students access to an online application and database containing hundreds of scholarships. Students can also apply for over 180 MCC scholarships; since its inception in September 2014, over 1,400 students have logged into AcademicWorks and completed a general application. Over $1M in scholarships were awarded through this process in the first year.

### Placement Requirements and Processes

Admissions staff use a variety of means to determine if a student meets the College’s admissions qualifications. High school and college transcripts, SAT and ACT scores, and ACCUPLACER scores are reviewed to determine mathematics and English placements that best support student success. All matriculated students not placed by other measures (see waiver criteria) take the ACCUPLACER placement test. The current [placement guidelines](#) can be found on the MCC website.

International and immigrant/refugee students’ admission are handled with understanding to accommodate for non-native English speakers. International students are required to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language exam for evaluation and placement into the appropriate English course. Immigrant/refugee students complete the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) to support placement into requisite ESL courses that support student success. [CELSA testing guidelines](#) are outlined on the MCC website, which also includes study guides and test-taking tips. International and immigrant/refugee students take the ACCUPLACER mathematics placement test to assess and place students into appropriate mathematics courses.

MCC’s Placement Testing Committee, an ad hoc subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee, meets regularly to consider issues related to the effective implementation of the placement testing program and to propose recommendations. Score guidelines are assessed and updated in accordance with reviewed and approved recommendations. For example, in 2012 the Faculty Senate approved a change to the [Testing and Placement Policy](#). The mathematics department, in conjunction with Institutional Research, analyzed high school grades and placement scores correlated with student success in placed or revised courses. The result led to the [recommendation](#) that students with a minimum score on
Regents exams be placed directly into correlated MCC courses with equal opportunity for success and, thereby, forgo placement testing. The new policy uses high school transcripts for initial placement which eliminates unnecessary testing and ensures that high school backgrounds are taken into account for all students. Students may request testing if they choose to challenge their initial placements based on their high school records.

Transfer Credit and Extra-Institutional Learning

Students who apply to MCC for transfer credit earned from other colleges, through Advanced Placement exams, or through dual enrollment programs from other colleges are required to submit these academic records to the Admissions Office for evaluation in collaboration with academic departments. International students are required to submit all foreign credentials to World Education Service for equivalency verification. MCC also awards credit for prior learning through the following agencies:

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- DANTES Testing Program (DSST Examination)
- Excelsior College Exams
- MCC Departmental Proficiency Examinations

For military veterans and family members, the College awards credit for military experience. Military experience is reviewed by the Office of Counseling and Veteran Services in collaboration with academic departments on an individual basis according to the American Council on Education (ACE) standards (see Standard 11). All academic credit is reviewed by academic departments and is administered by the Admissions Office, and students are notified via email of their transfer credit evaluation. MCC’s transfer credit process is published in the college catalog. The Transfer Student Guide is handed out during Open Houses, Admitted Student Days, and at targeted information sessions.

MCC is also engaged in a number of initiatives to assist students in obtaining credit for learning outside of traditional classroom models. We are collaborating with national leaders on related projects such as the ACE Alternative Credit Project and the Breakthrough Models Ambassador track with EDUCAUSE. These projects and our work on applied learning, competency based education, and prior learning assessment will be supported by our participation in the Federal Financial Aid Experimental Sites Initiative. All projects adhere to strict assessment protocols.

As the Study Team concluded its work, it became evident that MCC’s transfer credit procedure is not always clear or consistent. To remedy this confusion, a new transfer credit procedure is under development and a recommendation has been made at the end of this chapter to address the issue.

Pre-Enrollment Advising Support

MCC’s Admission Counselors maintain a recruitment territory in which they regularly visit area high schools and community agencies during the year. They meet with key influencers such as school and career center counselors, high school teachers, and community advocates to provide information on MCC resources available to help students choose the appropriate program of study to achieve their educational goals. Prospective and current students are encouraged to get involved in career planning as early as possible. The Undeclared major is available to students who want to take courses that target their different interests while earning general education credits. An Academic Advisement Specialist assists these students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals. In addition, students are encouraged to register for a two credit career development course (CDL 110: Career Development and Life Planning for the Undeclared Student) which includes self-assessments, career research, and guest speakers from various professions.
Dual Enrollment

MCC offers a robust selection of courses to high school students through the Dual Enrollment program. MCC partners with 35 local school districts and BOCES locations within the region. Courses are taught by a high school teacher, whose credentials have been reviewed and approved by the MCC academic department that houses the course. The teacher works closely with an MCC faculty member who has instructed the course on campus and who provides guidance on the philosophy, theory, and curriculum of the course. Students who register for the course earn MCC course credit that also counts toward high school graduation. In fall 2014, 4,314 high school students registered in this program. Additionally, MCC offers the “Inspiring every day,” Corning Optics, and XEROX STEM scholarships to high school students.

Support for Academically At-Risk Students

MCC considers students as “academically at risk” who are in at least one of the following classifications: first-generation students; mathematics or English placement one or two levels below college ready; Black, Hispanic, and other racial minorities; and first-time, full-time Pell recipients. The College has developed comprehensive processes and services to support all students appropriately regardless of academic preparation including the following examples.

Transitional Studies Placement

Based on ACCUPLACER test results, students are either placed in appropriate developmental reading, writing, and/or mathematics courses in the ESOL/Transitional Studies Department or placed in appropriate college level coursework in writing or mathematics. (For a complete narrative on the Transitional Studies program see Standard 13.)

Students enter the College with a range of academic support needs. MCC has responded to this need with a wide array of requisite supports that includes a continuum of developmental coursework which provides students with the opportunity to close the academic skill gap in either mathematics or reading/writing. Depending on the level of academic readiness, students will either be placed in the Transitional Studies program (TS01) and enrolled in a full course-load of developmental education classes along with the College Success Course or in the program of choice while taking a single developmental course that supports academic success. Students in the TS01 program, the most at-risk student population, receive individual advisement from faculty; tutoring services; small class sizes; differentiated instruction; holistic supports such as targeted counseling services, mentoring, learning skill workshops and services; as well as faculty trained learning assistants integrated within the developmental reading/writing course. Students have access to the following learning centers: Writing Center, Center for Academic Reading, Flexible Pace Mathematics Lab, and Academic Foundations Learning Center.

All students who are enrolled in a TRS course are automatically enrolled in the College Success Course. This course has been redesigned to be integrated with a comprehensive First Year Experience program and offers students open education resource textbooks that are specifically designed for MCC students and integrated within the MCC learning management system.

Academic Support

The College also offers a variety of additional supports for at risk students including college-wide tutoring, the Student Support Services Program, the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program, and the Educational Opportunity Program (see Standards 9 and 13).
MCC has made considerable progress in making access a priority. However, access without success (defined by college persistence and completion) is meaningless. For this reason, MCC has increased efforts on student success management and retention. These efforts have been intentional, driven by data, and tied directly to the College’s Strategic Plan and attending goals. Additionally, the College’s statistical analysis shows the retention rate trend has been flat, so in 2012, MCC applied for and received a $2M Title III Part A, Strengthening Institutions Program: Building A Culture of Engagement and Success Grant (Title III) from the United States Department of Education. The primary objective of the grant was to strengthen retention through systematized efforts. The retention initiatives resulting from Title III discussed below are Starfish Retention Software, First-Year Experience, and the Transitional Studies Program redesign.

**Enrollment Steering Committee**

The Enrollment Steering Committee was created to discuss, develop, monitor, and evaluate all aspects relating to the recruitment, retention, graduation, and support of MCC students. Using the College’s Recruitment Plan as one of its guiding documents, this committee is charged with achieving our institution’s desired enrollment, overseeing retention strategies, and improving student life and learning to ensure student success.

**Registration Deadlines**

Prior to 2011, MCC admitted students on a rolling basis. Beginning with the fall 2011 semester, the College instituted both an application and registration deadline based on internal research. The research indicated that those students who did their first registration closer to the first day of classes experienced a lower GPA. Therefore, in an effort to improve academic success (by increasing the GPA) and by extension improve retention rates, the College established an application deadline (two weeks prior to the start of classes) and a registration deadline (one week prior to the start of classes). Table 8.3 shows that there is an increasing trend in fall GPAs as well as an increase in the average GPA four years after the registration deadline implementation. However, starting fall 2011, the College also implemented a Financial Aid Course Eligibility process as well as increasing the number of drops for non-payment from two to five; these processes may have also influenced the GPA outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>2.218</td>
<td>2.256</td>
<td>2.218</td>
<td>2.188</td>
<td>2.256</td>
<td>2.270</td>
<td>2.315</td>
<td>2.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average GPA</td>
<td>2.220</td>
<td>2.286</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8.3: Fall term average GPAs.*

**Early Alert and Intervention Efforts**

MCC has early alert and intervention systems in place to identify students academically at risk, provide intervention strategies, improve retention and completion, and provide a platform for reporting poor attendance, low grades, and incomplete assignments. Two examples of these efforts follow:

- **The Veterans Early Alert Retention and Completion Project** was piloted in spring 2014 with full implementation the following fall. The purpose of this project is to retain students using military benefits. As a result of this intervention, in spring 2014, student veterans’ GPA went from 2.67 at the beginning of the semester to 2.74 at the end of the semester, an increase of 2.6%. Additionally, the Go VETS: Veterans Educational Tutoring Services program was also implemented in collaboration with Academic Support Services. In response to these efforts, student veterans’ GPA also increased: from 2.49 at the beginning of the fall 2014 semester to 2.79
at the end of that semester, a 12% increase. Additionally, no students using military benefits withdrew from the College.

- **Starfish** is an early warning and student tracking system, which will support retention efforts by efficiently identifying and supporting students who face academic challenges. Starfish will also improve communication, information sharing, and collaborative reporting to facilitate timely and immediate interventions. The system will support new, returning, and transferring students in successful college completion, which aligns with Title III goals of increasing achievement, persistence, and retention. Transitional Studies learners, student-athletes, and online students were part of the pilot implementation in spring 2015.

**First Year Experience**

The co-curricular **First Year Experience** (FYE) provides information and tools necessary for students to become proactive learners and to take personal responsibility for their entire educational experience. The College has implemented several enhancements to FYE to help increase student success as a result of the Title III grant. These enhancements include a new purpose statement with specific learning outcomes and updated programming. The College is currently defining assessment criteria for this project.

**Re-Designed Transitional Studies Program**

Students in the Transitional Studies (TRS) program and those who placed below college level English and/or mathematics have significantly lower retention and graduation rates. Identifying a need to help this subpopulation, MCC utilized Title III funds to redesign its remedial English by integrating reading and writing as well as by reducing the number of courses from three to two for the lowest-placed students to reach college level English. The grant also funded a blended computer learning lab to assist remedial mathematics students in a new Flexible Pace format (see Standard 13). Ongoing assessment of these initiatives shows statistically significant improvement in student outcomes and retention.

The College has implemented a number of initiatives around admissions and retention. Demographic projections and trends suggest that future populations of students will have greater need for services and support, financial as well as programmatic, in order to be successful. True access means being mindful of strategies promoting student success that reflect the needs of MCC’s student body.

**Implementation of the Academies Roadmap Model**

As a result of the numerous initiatives underway to address onboarding and retention success, the College has decided to implement a guided pathways model that brings the numerous initiatives together in a cohesive, research-based, larger institutional restructuring. With the support of the American Association for Colleges and Universities Roadmap Project, MCC is currently engaged in the second year of a three-year effort to redefine academic and student services cultures through the guided pathways model. This, the Academies Model, has been constructed to align the 100+ degree and certificate programs at the College within one of six Schools: Arts and Humanities; Business, Hospitality, and Entrepreneurism; Community Engagement and Development; Health Science and Physical Wellness; Social Sciences and Global Studies; and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The six Schools provide an inclusive “academic home” for every student. Regardless of level of preparation, each student will be placed on an academic/career pathway within each of the Schools and included in targeted social, career, and academic activities to support the classroom work.

An Academies team consisting of more than 100 faculty, administrators, and staff members have worked to lay the theoretical foundation and construct a multi-dimensional academic experience for students. Subcommittees are addressing advisement, assessment, high-impact practices, professional development, and onboarding processes from admission, orientation, and registration to engagement of enrolled students in order to provide a vast support matrix to maximize retention and increase student success.
The Academies Model has the potential to impact our full breadth and depth of services for student success from high school preparation and college readiness to freshman orientation and second-year retention. MCC will implement the Academies Model beginning fall 2016.

**STRENGTHS**

- The College has a comprehensive recruitment strategy to attract, engage, and admit prospective students.
- The College provides the necessary support to assist prospective students in making informed decisions throughout the admissions process.
- MCC provides multiple types of support for academically at risk populations.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Suggestions:**

- None noted

**Recommendations:**

- Develop an on-going strategic enrollment management planning process that includes a focus on student retention.
- Develop consistent and regular evaluation criteria for new retention efforts.
- Review the current transfer credit evaluation procedures to ensure that the College offers a standardized assessment of credits that is reviewed on an annual basis.
OVERVIEW

MCC offers student-centered services and programs to promote enrollment, retention, completion, and success; these services and programs are offered prior to admission through post-graduate standing and support the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan. This chapter analyzes how the College’s services promote students’ achievement of academic, career, and personal goals.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

MCC is committed to student development; that is, we intentionally seek to provide opportunities for individual students to grow socially, spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and occupationally. The Strategic Plan shows clear evidence of this desire in Direction One: Learning First, where all programs and services seek to maximize goal attainment of individual learners. To this end, the College recognizes that learning occurs outside as well as within the classroom. Units within the College see one of their primary purposes as offering services, programs, and educationally purposeful activities in order to build an inclusive, supportive, intellectual, and engaging environment for students, which augments classroom study. Through our many services, MCC works closely with a variety of constituents in the internal and external communities to enhance and create new partnerships which provide the groundwork for a student-focused learning community. Services are available for both distance education students and traditional on-campus students; however, services are not currently cohesive. As a result, MCC established a Virtual Campus following the model set forth by SUNY as an Open SUNY+ campus. The intent of this model is to aggregate all online student services into a single point of contact, concierge-style model for online student support.

Support services for students occur within each division of the College; services for students outside the classroom can be classified in three ways at MCC: enrollment management, student development, and additional academic support. Though there is potential overlap in these areas, the classification allows for synergy to occur as services are delivered in an organized manner.

MCC’s Diverse Student Body: Who We Serve

In order to best understand how MCC serves students, it is crucial to understand who we serve. Fall 2014 data demonstrates our diverse student population*:

- **Race**: 62% White; 20% Black; 9% Hispanic; 4% Asian; 3% Multi-racial; 1% Non-resident Alien
- **Enrollment Status**: 61% attended full time; 39% attended part time; 30% matriculated; 9% non-matriculated
- **Sex**: 47% male; 53% female (with a larger percent of females attending part time)
- **Age**: 34% under age 20; 33% ages 20-24; 13% ages 25-29; 21% ages 30 or older (the largest percentage of part-time students are ages 20-24 while the largest percent of full-time students are under 20)

*May not add to 100% due to rounding

MCC values diversity and provides equal opportunities for students and employees regardless of age, color, race, gender identity, religion, national origin, ability level, marital status, or sexual orientation. All educational programs are accessible to our diverse community, and we provide targeted programming and initiatives to nurture diversity. These include pre-collegiate Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Program grants and the [Child Care Access Means Parents in School Grant](https://www.gouniversity.edu/). This competitive grant was awarded to the Richard M. Guon Child Care Center on the Brighton Campus and is designed to help student parents persist with their course of study and graduate as soon as possible.
funds a significant portion of child care expenses for qualifying students. Diversity is highlighted further when considering these social and economic indicators for our students: sixteen percent have children, 11% are single parents, 49% are low income (Pell eligible), 3% have self-reported learning disabilities, and 36% have at least one parent with a Bachelor’s or degree or higher. Additionally, 8% of our students earned a GED; 46% have tested at two or more levels below college readiness; and 56% are first generation, low-income students.

In order to fulfill our Mission, MCC offers more than 100 diverse academic programs. Our highest enrolled programs are Liberal Arts and Sciences--General Studies, Business Administration, Nursing, and Criminal Justice.

This snapshot of MCC students demonstrates who we serve. Our students have individual goals, life experiences, and capabilities, as well as challenges and barriers which make a variety of support services essential.

**Enrollment Management Services**

Enrollment Management is focused on the recruitment of students and retention efforts which allow the College to meet institutional and system-wide goals. Areas classified as enrollment management services include, but are not limited to, Academic Advisement, Financial Aid, Registration and Records, and Student Accounts.

**Academic Advising**

As might be expected at a college of our size and complexity, the responsibility for academic advisement is shared between professional staff and faculty members. Academic advisement is required for new students, students with GPAs below 2.0, and students in specific programs (e.g. Visual and Performing Arts, Nursing, Dental Hygiene). Full-time professional advisors provide advisement in the advisement centers for the two largest program cohorts, Liberal Arts and Sciences-General Studies and Business Administration. A portion of the teaching faculty workload includes student advisement, and academic departments determine how their members participate in advisement activities. Many departments offer group advisement and registration programs for new students and individual appointments for those that are currently enrolled. Annually, the *Faculty Advisors Handbook and Guide to ADV 101* provides faculty advisors the most up-to-date information regarding academic advisement.

MCC recognizes that successful academic advisement programs help provide a positive student educational experience especially when implemented early in the enrollment process. As discussed in Standard 8, MCC is moving to an Academies Model which emphasizes a more focused advisement approach and organizes a student’s experience along a clear, intentional pathway from enrollment to completion. This model will address concerns raised in the *Liberal Arts Program Evaluation Report*.

**Financial Aid**

The *Financial Aid Office* provides information concerning Federal and State grants, loans, and scholarships. Staff provides assistance regarding all aspects of the process of applying for financial aid and offer workshops to further assist students. Annually, over 12,000 students receive some $100 million dollars in financial aid at MCC (see Standard 8).

**Registration and Records**

The Registration and Records Office provides students with online and in-person registration services, course requirement and pre-requisite advice, and transcript information, among other services. The office
is responsible for all notifications to students regarding class schedules, course cancellations, room changes, and final examination schedules.

**Release of Student Information:** MCC publishes its official Directory Information notification in the [college catalog](#). This information can also be accessed in electronic and paper-based formats including, but not limited to, the Faculty Handbook, course outline training materials, MCC website, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training seminars, and Banner training seminars. In addition, regular announcements appear in the *MCC Daily Tribune*, which serves as the primary communication tool for the college community. On an annual basis, the Vice President for Student Services reviews the policy and recommends any changes which are then communicated through the *Tribune*. Students wishing to release non-directory information are required to complete a FERPA waiver; however, non-directory information is only released if a FERPA waiver is available. The Registration and Records Office conducts FERPA training on a bi-annual basis to provide the latest changes to the law and to ensure institutional compliance.

**Student Accounts**

The Student Accounts Office is responsible for all aspects of tuition billing and payment collection for students. Staff members provide direct service to students, parents/guardians, and the public in person, over the phone, and via email regarding financial obligations to the College. This office is also responsible for processing refunds, tax credit reporting, and residency determination.

**Student Development Services**

Student Development Services offer support which will have a direct impact in the classroom and provide the necessary tools to help students be successful outside the classroom. The expected learning from these areas may include outcomes such as increased levels of social responsibility, greater awareness of self, better maintenance of health and wellness, and the development of a sense of civic responsibility. Key areas in this class of services include, but are not limited to, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Student Life and Leadership Development, Housing and Residence Life, Career and Transfer Services, Counseling and Veteran Services, Health Services, and others highlighted below.

**The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The College is committed to providing a safe and responsible learning environment for our students. In recent years we have seen a rise in student conduct cases for both academic and non-academic issues. Therefore, an examination of the student code of conduct and its processes was conducted. It was determined that the student code of conduct regulations needed to be thoroughly revised to address legislative changes and current trends in judicial affairs practices. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) was developed in 2015 to accomplish this goal. The OSRR serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff and administers the student code of conduct process, promote dispute resolution and ethical decision-making, facilitate the student judicial hearing process, and provide solutions in support of student learning. Other significant roles of the OSRR include serving as a resource for behavioral standards and civic engagement, overseeing student conduct education, and providing citizenship and civility education. Additionally, assessment of data prompted the College to form the multidisciplinary [Behavioral Early Alert Team](#) to assist students in distress. Among its several charges, this team formalized a process to report faculty concerns regarding mental health and/or learning environment disturbances.

Student Services utilizes Maxient’s Conduct Management software to manage the College’s student conduct system. This secure software system allows appropriate College personnel to intake reports, share information (on a need-to-know basis), and make notations in real time when a case is heard or modified.
Effectively Addressing Student Complaints and Grievances

College-wide policies, including Academic Regulations and Policies, Rights & Freedoms of Students, and Students’ Rights Regarding Their Educational Records, relating to student rights and grievances are clearly outlined in the Regulations and Policies section of the college catalog and addressed in Standard 6.

In an effort to address student concerns, MCC formalized the process for students to file complaints to the institution. The student complaint resolution procedure is designed to resolve problems for students who have concerns in and out of the classroom. Documented student complaints which come to the attention of the President or vice presidents of the College are reported to the College’s Ombudsman for follow-up. Documented complaints are formally tracked through the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities using the Maxient Conduct Management software system. This also ensures that complaints are addressed within a reasonable period of time.

Student Life and Leadership Development

The Office of Student Life and Leadership Development provides co-curricular programming and personal development opportunities for MCC students to enhance their classroom learning and develop valuable life skills, such as leadership, governance, and civility. There are over 50 clubs, organizations, and leadership programs at the College (e.g., Student Government, Model United Nations, Pride Alliance, Spanish Club). The Emerging Leaders program provides students an opportunity to apply knowledge obtained in the classroom and leadership skills developed through co-curricular training in educationally purposeful experiences. Upon student request, these experiences can be recorded on a Life Skills Transcript which complements a student’s résumé and academic transcript.

Housing and Residence Life

The Housing and Residence Life Office provides living and learning experiences for students who reside in the residence halls. Housing and Residence Life operates through the MCC Association, the non-profit organization that provides necessary financial and management support for student programs. For some students, housing may be the means to fully participate as a member of the MCC community, so staff members work to ensure students can take full advantage of the opportunities available. Residence Life partners with Counseling and Veteran Services, Health Services, and Public Safety to focus on students’ personal development and community connectedness and to increase awareness of resources on campus. These partners provide workshops on topics such as personal safety, conflict management, alcohol and other drugs, stress management, time management, study tips, and personal accountability.

Career, Transfer, and Job Search Services

The Career and Transfer Center is committed to assisting students in determining career paths and successfully accomplishing transfer and employment goals. Counselors are available to help students clarify educational, life, and career goals and assist students with the transfer process, which may include transfer school selection, course advisement for specific programs, writing college application essays, and completing applications. In addition, students have the opportunity to meet individually with admissions representatives from area colleges through the Advisor-in-Residence program. Further, MCC has 2+2 Dual Admission Degree programs that guarantee transfer to 27 different four-year colleges.

MCC also assists students with developing the tools necessary to enter the job market. Counselors help students learn about the job search process, assist with résumé and cover letter development, job search, and interview strategies. Students may take online assessments to identify their abilities, interests, values, and skills so that they can make informed career decisions. In addition, students can take credit-bearing courses to learn more about the career development process. Career fairs are held each semester to offer students the opportunity to interact with area employers seeking to hire current MCC students and
graduates. Employers can post job openings in our internet-accessible Job Connection database, to which MCC students and alumni have unlimited access.

The Graduate Transfer report shows the percentage of graduates who transferred full-time to continue their education was 50% in 2013. The Graduates Employment Report shows the percentage of career program graduates who were employed full-time in the same field they majored in at MCC was 57% in 2013.

Counseling Services

MCC counseling services seeks to support the College Mission by fostering an environment that is inclusive, supportive, and welcoming. The College provides a variety of counseling services to support the well-being of students by providing a secure environment where students can discuss difficulties or concerns they are experiencing.

The primary purpose of these services is to promote student wellness, which will enable students to be successful and fully engaged in all aspects of college life. Services provided include short-term personal counseling, outreach services, interpersonal growth and development educational programs, stress management and conflict resolution workshops as well as career counseling.

MCC counselors maintain a close relationship with the Monroe County Office of Mental Health. This partnership allows for appropriate referral services for students who require long-term personal counseling. Staff from both agencies meet regularly to ensure service needs are met as well as to ensure students are being treated effectively.

Health Services

Health Services is committed to providing student-centered, preventive services to promote the development and enrichment of personal health and wellness. The department offers a comprehensive health education service including a health risk assessment and a treatment plan regarding how to manage personal health concerns to promote student development. Students requiring medical support beyond the scope of service are referred to appropriate medical care within the community.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office coordinates and provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for admission to MCC. Students who self-identify to the SSD Office and then elect to request accommodations submit the required disability documentation and meet with a disability counselor/specialist who evaluates the request and engages in an interactive process with the student to determine what, if any, academic accommodations are warranted. The College ensures that admission, services, activities, facilities, and academic programs are accessible to and usable by qualified students with disabilities. MCC offers comprehensive services and is committed to aligning our practices with those recommended by the Association of Higher Education and Disability and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

SSD outlines the steps for requesting academic accommodations in a brochure and on the department’s website to make the registration process clear and accessible. The department also provides resources and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to develop their understanding of the services provided by the SSD Office and to enhance awareness and sensitivity when interacting with students with disabilities.
The various services provided by the SSD Office over the past few years have significantly enhanced the retention and completion rates for this potentially at-risk population. From 2010 to 2013, there has been an 87% increase in the number of students with disabilities graduating from MCC.

**Global Education and International Services**

The Office of Global Education and International Services (GEIS), established in 2013 after MCC completed the American Council on Education’s Internationalization Lab, serves as MCC’s centralized Office that coordinates all college-wide international efforts and as a resource for faculty, staff, and students. GEIS has facilitated a variety of co-curricular programs including International Education Week, the United Nations Interfaith Harmony Week, and a naturalization and citizenship ceremony for immigrant students and community members. GEIS has also updated, modified, and adapted policies and procedures to facilitate a more streamlined, student-centered admissions experience for international and immigrant students. Since joining the SUNY Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Network, six faculty members will be using a COIL module in one of their courses. With four COIL courses scheduled for 2015-16 this will allow over 80 students to have an international learning experience with peers from another country without leaving home.

**Veteran Services**

The Veteran Services Office provides a one-stop shop to students offering assistance in admissions, financial aid, advisement, registration, and military benefits counseling. This model was adopted in response to 2010 audit findings by the Department of Veteran Affairs. During this same year, the College’s Veteran Services Office was awarded a congressionally-directed grant through the US Department of Education’s FIPSE Office. These funds were used to develop a comprehensive system of educational services and support to address academic needs, career goals, and personal concerns of our veteran population. The Academy for Veterans Success was tasked with researching, developing, delivering, and institutionalizing educational programming and support services for veteran and military students. These services have been maintained by partnering with other college offices and external constituencies with intent to build a cohesive community surrounding veteran issues.

**Additional Academic Support Services**

MCC has multiple support services that are of an academic nature to meet the needs of students who may be disadvantaged in some manner. These programs provide services that will prepare students for enrollment at the College and/or provide additional tools and support which will lead to a higher level of persistence and eventual graduation. Programs in this area include, but are not limited to, Student Support Services, Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program, Educational Opportunity Program, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The College also provides multiple learning and resource centers which are discussed in Standard 11.

**Athletics**

Every year, approximately 225 student-athletes participate in MCC’s twelve sports teams. MCC’s nationally-recognized athletic program is governed by the National Junior College Athletic Program Association; we are a member of Region III and the Western New York Athletic Conference. Additionally, the College offers a variety of intramural and recreational opportunities for the general student population.

The College promotes programs that ensure student-athletes are academically successful while competing in intercollegiate sports programs. As such, MCC athletic programs are regulated by the academic, fiscal, and other administrative principles that govern other institutional programs. Therefore, student-athletes meet the admissions requirements and adhere to the academic standards that are required for the general
population. We demonstrate fair and equitable treatment of student-athletes by complying with Title IX regulations; the Title IX Compliance Report is filed annually as required by the Federal Government.

All athletic programs adhere to a standardized success initiative. In 2013, a Life-Skills Coordinator position was created to assist student-athletes with advisement, transfer, and career goal development. In addition, the Coordinator creates community service and leadership opportunities so student-athletes can develop into well-rounded individuals, promoting life-time success after their collegiate experience. Assessing student-athlete success occurs in several ways. Graduation rates are tracked, grade-point evaluations and Academic and Scholar-Athlete Achievement Awards are recorded in Banner reports, and Starfish is used as an early alert strategy.

Student Support Services

The Student Support Services program is a federally-funded TRIO grant program specifically designed for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities. This program targets Transitional Studies and English for Speakers of Other Languages students and provides tutoring, counseling, and advisement assistance to improve academic achievement, retention, and increase the rates of matriculation into degree-granting programs.

Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program

The purpose of the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) is to increase the number of historically underrepresented minorities and economically disadvantaged students who complete programs of study that lead to professional licensure in health-related professions and to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). CSTEP provides support services for students in various ways, including a five-week summer bridge program, small group tutoring, and student professional development. In 2014-15, 165 students were served in the CSTEP program. The success of these students is evident: their names consistently appeared on the Dean’s List, they held leadership roles within student clubs and government, and they participated in extracurricular course activities including project-based research. Students participated in over 1,500 hours of academic tutoring and 900 hours of counseling that was offered as additional support. At the end of the academic year, the program’s retention rate was 89%.

The Educational Opportunity Program

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) combines access, academic support services, and supplemental financial assistance to make higher education possible for New York State residents with the potential to succeed despite poor preparation and limited financial resources. The primary objective of MCC’s EOP is to facilitate the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation of these students. This is accomplished by providing students with an array of educational-related support services including counseling to assist with early intervention strategies and seminars to improve study skills and time management, among others. First-time students are encouraged to participate in the EOP four-week Summer Institute which includes the COS 133: Introduction to College Studies course and enrichment activities each Friday. Students in the 2008 cohort who participated in the summer experience had 65% retention for fall 2009.

English for Speakers of Other Languages

The MCC English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program serves more than 250 diverse student learners from countries around the world. The ESOL program fully supports the College’s Mission by educating and preparing diverse learners as well as by facilitating awareness and understanding within the academic community to help learners achieve success. The purpose of the ESOL Program is to provide non-native English speakers with intensive study in English language and culture to support their academic goals. The ESOL Faculty and Student Support Services Staff facilitate
intercultural awareness and understanding within the academic community as well as provide ongoing support for ESOL students in the form of comprehensive support services, advisement, counseling, and tutoring.

The curriculum, services, and supports provided to ESOL students are routinely evaluated and the program evaluation has demonstrated positive results. The four year average (2009–12) success rate for the ESOL students, defined as graduation, retention and transfer, is 74%. The six year graduation rate (excluding transfers) for the 2007 and 2008 cohorts respectively are 27% and 45%. The program evaluation has led directly to the development and implementation of a secondary grammar course to support students that are performing below the C level in the ESL 130: English for Speakers of Other Languages-Advanced I: Integrated Skills or ESL 201: English for Speakers of Other Languages-Advanced II: Reading/Writing courses. Additionally, the ESOL faculty routinely analyze student success within the ESOL courses as well as within the College’s mandatory ENG 101: College Composition course.

Qualifications of Professionals

As of spring 2015, MCC employed 287 full-time administrative staff members. This group includes Advisors, Directors, Assistant/Associate Directors, Computer Programmers, Coordinators, Counselors, Deans, Librarians, Specialists, and Technical Assistants. Each department follows MCC’s hiring process while recognizing the need for individualization to account for specialized skills and certifications required in some professional areas. For example, clinical staff hired by the Health Services Department must be Registered Nurses. They maintain New York State nursing licensure requirements and are registered with the NYS Education Department. In addition, some departments have updated their credentialing requirements to better serve students’ needs. The number of students attending MCC with mental health issues has increased from year to year so the Counseling Center is now requiring licensure in mental health or social work for all new Counselors hired. Because of a 74% increase between 2008-13 in the number of students who self-identified and registered with the SSD Office, the need for advanced training and credentialing was identified. Consequently, current staff have advanced degrees and additional credentialing such as New York State Initial Certificate for students with disabilities, Nationally Certified School Psychologist, New York State Licensed Psychologist, and a certified Interpreter. These professionals are able to provide a broad range of personalized services to address the various needs of our student population. The Office of Human Resources and Organizational Development reviews all official transcripts for new appointments and confirms the appropriate degrees and certifications/licensures before approval is made by the Board of Trustees.

The MCC culture encourages all staff to attend ongoing professional development as budgetary restrictions allow. For many years, the Student Services division devised and presented an annual professional development program centered on a particular theme. The program utilized current staff as well as outside speakers to provide continuing education intended to help faculty and staff improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.

Maintaining Integrity in Managing Student Information

MCC is committed to maintaining the security of all student records and stores student data in its Banner system. In 2011, the College adopted policies (Code of Conduct, Password Policy) to increase the regulation around student security. Employees have access only to the level of information required by job duties. Immediate supervisors provide first-level approval access for staff, which is then approved and confirmed by the Registrar. All transactions performed in Banner have audit trails to identify staff members working in the system. When an employee departs MCC, Banner access ceases on the last date of employment. Students have electronic access only to their own records, which terminates one year after they end enrollment.
MCC uses additional electronic systems to help maintain records, including Maxient and ImageNow. Access to these databases is determined by employees’ roles and is approved by immediate supervisors. Images of supporting documents used to change records are retained for the appropriate time periods as stated by NYS law; MCC’s security processes are also regularly reviewed by an external auditor to ensure that they meet industry standards.

Measuring Quality/Assessment

As indicated in Standard 7, the unit assessment process is included in MCC’s Institutional Effectiveness Plan. The assessment of student support services continues to evolve. The hiring of a new Vice President in 2014 led to an examination of the current unit assessment process within the Student Services division. The Vice President found some departments were conducting point-of-service surveys and others were engaged in other types of assessment activities. However, the various types of assessments were periodic, and the resulting changes were not consistently tracked. Accordingly, the Vice President for Student Services created a plan to use national standards created by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) to evaluate services being offered to support student success. In addition, other instruments, such as CCSSE and SUNY Student Opinion Survey, continued to be used to obtain assessment data.

In addition to establishing annual goals and objectives, Student Services unit assessment occurs on a three-year continuous cycle (Phases 1-3). Phase 1 included the evaluation of four units and was completed in summer 2015. The results were reviewed by the Vice President and shared with the directors of the respective departments. Departments then utilized the results to make changes and improve effectiveness. For example, in 2014, Health Services recognized that an in-house survey of point-of-service delivery had not been conducted since spring 2011; therefore, staff sought an electronic medical records system which allows for immediate feedback from patients. A new medical records system was fully implemented in September 2015 which includes a method to collect student satisfaction information electronically. In addition, Student Life and Leadership Development utilized the results from the spring 2015 unit assessment to establish goals and objectives for the upcoming year. This included realigning all functional areas, programs, and services in order to bring about more efficiency, updating policy manuals to clearly delineate policies and procedures, and providing support to students and organizations, faculty, and staff.

STRENGTHS

• MCC offers significant services and initiatives to address both the academically prepared and underprepared students.
• Student feedback in student service areas is being collected in a timely manner and used for improvement.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

• None Noted.

Recommendations

• Continue to implement the unit assessment cycle and use the results to inform future decision-making concerning student support services.
• Follow up on the recommendations of the MCC Liberal Arts Degree Programs committee.
OVERVIEW

MCC assigns primary responsibility for developing, delivering, and assuring the quality of the curriculum to faculty and other qualified professionals. MCC supports our dynamic learning environment through clear and equitable policies related to hiring, retention, and promotion as well as a commitment to professional development. This chapter examines MCC’s commitment to teaching and learning.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Profile and Academic Preparedness of Faculty

As of fall 2014, MCC employed 314 full-time faculty and 883 adjunct faculty; 64% of MCC’s classes are taught by full-time faculty and 36% by adjunct faculty. By negotiated union contract, MCC defines “faculty” to include teaching-faculty, non-classroom faculty, and some other professional support staff. Full-time faculty members not only are critical for instruction, but are also essential for student and program success and completion. Full-time teaching faculty hold office hours; develop curriculum; advise students; and participate in department, division, and college-wide committees in addition to their teaching duties. A complete list of the roles and responsibilities of full-time teaching faculty is published in the Faculty Association Contract.

Professional staff in non-teaching faculty positions, including Librarians, Counselors, and others, may hold the rank of Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor as do teaching faculty. Professional staff can also be awarded tenure and serve on college-wide committees. A complete list of these positions and the responsibilities of those hired to these positions appears in the Faculty Association Contract.

MCC’s faculty and other professionals are appropriately prepared and qualified for their positions. Demographics of employees demonstrate the demographic profile and the academic preparation of the full-time faculty for the 2014-15 academic year. The data show that 76% of full-time faculty hold a Master’s Degree and 19% hold a Doctorate. In terms of rank, 82% of the full-time teaching faculty carry the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, with only 18% of the faculty being Instructors and Lecturers.

The large number of faculty at the ranks of Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor reflects the College’s dedication to the development of new faculty. In addition, 94% of full-time teaching faculty at MCC are either tenured (68%) or on tenured tracks (26%). The longevity of faculty careers at MCC is evidenced by 66% of the full-time teaching faculty serving the College for 11 years or longer.

The College also ensures that its adjunct faculty are appropriately prepared and qualified for the positions they hold. By contract, adjuncts are limited to teaching nine credit hours per semester in fall and spring and are obligated exclusively to teaching responsibilities, but they are invited to participate in department and college-wide activities. Many adjuncts bring pertinent real-life experiences to the classroom and help connect the College to the Greater Rochester community. Among the adjunct faculty, many are experienced policy makers, journalists, artists, writers, scientists, health professionals, and business leaders. Despite recent surges in faculty retirements, the percentage of MCC adjunct faculty teaching courses has remained consistent for the past five years, proving there is a commitment to appropriately staffing the College’s classrooms with full-time faculty.
The College’s specific hiring policies and procedures (see also Standard 9) likewise ensure that faculty are appropriately prepared and qualified for the positions they hold. Job descriptions are posted on the College’s website when positions become available. Human Resources policies and procedures are published and available on the MCC portal on the Human Resources page. To ensure a comprehensive and equitable hiring process, search committees for faculty positions include both experts in the subject area and representatives from other related departments and/or administrators to add diverse viewpoints and to provide opportunities for participation in the process throughout the College. Adjunct faculty hiring follows a very similar and rigorous procedure and is outlined in the hiring procedures made available by Human Resources on the MCC portal.

MCC makes every effort to attract a high-quality, diverse faculty. As of 2014, 20% of full-time faculty came from an underrepresented population, an increase of 4% since 2007. The percentage is lower (11%) in the adjunct ranks. The Office of Human Resources and Organizational Development continues to work with faculty and departments in exploring and pursuing new ways to recruit and hire more faculty members from underrepresented populations (see Standard 3). This commitment is evident, for example, in the Alice Holloway Young Faculty Internship which has long been used to recruit, mentor, and incentivize candidates from underrepresented populations to join the MCC faculty.

**Academic Freedom**

Part of MCC’s Mission is to prepare diverse learners to achieve scholarly, professional, and individual success. In order to create an environment where diversity of thought is welcomed and celebrated, faculty need the academic freedom to engage in innovative and dynamic academic inquiry. This effort is supported by MCC and evidenced by the policies that provide clear and specific support for academic and intellectual freedom. Our statement on academic freedom is clearly outlined in the Faculty Resource Handbook. The College also endorses the Statement of Academic Freedom from the American Association of University Professors and their Statement on Academic Freedom as outlined in the 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure. MCC uses these guidelines as a framework for addressing grievances in these areas, which is reinforced in both the Faculty Association contract and the Faculty Senate bylaws.

**Ownership of Curriculum**

The College recognizes that the faculty bear the responsibility of owning and driving curriculum design as demonstrated through the curriculum process of the Faculty Senate. Faculty members submit proposals for new or revised courses/programs to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. The peer-review process is rigorous. At each stage, the proposing faculty are engaged and informed. The Dean of Curriculum and Program Development oversees all curriculum initiatives at the College by assisting faculty with completing necessary curriculum forms, communicating directly with SUNY about curricular changes, identifying economic and community needs, and supporting faculty to develop or adapt programs and courses.

MCC has started to respond to the SUNY Seamless Transfer Requirements by designing and revising curricula to ensure that students in A.A. and A.S. degrees can complete the SUNY General Education (SUNY-GER) requirement and a sufficient number of courses in the major to achieve true junior status at the four-year institution. For example, three new programs were developed by faculty based on the corresponding SUNY Transfer Path: Biology, Chemistry, and Physics are new A.S. degrees being offered in fall 2015. Faculty will continue to consider SUNY Seamless Transfer and SUNY-GER requirements, for those programs for which SUNY-GER is applicable, as new programs are developed and others are revised. Proposals move efficiently through the curriculum approval process at the College, SUNY, and the New York State Education Department for final approval.
Professional Development Support

The College demonstrates a commitment to the support of professional development activities, for both teaching faculty and professional staff. Between FYs 2012-15, MCC allocated nearly $2M towards professional development activities across the College’s divisions and departments, including professional leaves, tuition reimbursement, support for presentation and participation in conferences, retraining, in-service training, academic exchanges, and other activities leading to improved performance in teaching, support, and administration. Results from the “Student Opinions of Course and Faculty” survey are shared directly with faculty to support their own professional development and course improvement. (See Standard 2)

The Teaching and Creativity Center

MCC supports faculty with student learning through the Teaching and Creativity Center (TCC). The TCC received additional support from administration with a dedicated full-time Coordinator position beginning in 2011. As a result, the TCC has offered significantly more programming for faculty over the past four years and has seen a corresponding increase in faculty engagement in these programs. These programs include monthly workshops, half-day conferences, multi-day institutes, on-going cohort-based programs, including Faculty Inquiry Groups, and confidential consultation for individual faculty members. The TCC works with faculty and staff to promote instructional excellence at the College through the use of emerging technologies, evidence-based pedagogy, and the latest research on high-impact teaching practices and instructional innovation. For example, the TCC, with support from a Xerox Foundation grant, began offering a five-day summer institute in 2014 for STEM and Applied STEM faculty to support course redesign to emphasize active and collaborative learning.

The TCC also sponsors The Two-Year Faculty Orientation Series for all new faculty hires, which consists of a series of monthly meetings focused on pedagogy and broader issues of what it means to be a successful community college faculty member. Details of this program are made available on the TCC website. This program was assessed with an evaluation form distributed to participants at the end of each monthly meeting. Data would then be used at the end of the year to plan for the following year’s series. For example, new topics with which faculty members indicated they needed additional support (e.g., supporting the academic success of students with disabilities) would be included in the next year. Because evaluations were consistent from month to month, communicating high levels of satisfaction, the TCC moved to an online evaluation during 2014-15 and administered at the end of each academic year.

Strategic Resource Development and Grant Management

The College also encourages and provides support for professional development through its Office of Strategic Resource Development and Grant Management (SRGM). This department is funded through operational funds and provides support for the development, submission, and implementation of externally funded projects including from agencies such as the National Science Foundation and the United States Department of Education. Over the last several years, more faculty have taken the lead on securing grants to help improve the range and quality of educational offerings at MCC, from college-readiness programs to exciting STEM initiatives.

The SRGM department includes a director, coordinator, and secretary. In the last three years the department added a dedicated writer to support the development of college-wide applications. In 2014, a dedicated post-award specialist was added to provide assistance with areas such as navigating federal agency reports, assistance with purchasing, and the controller’s office. Through the work of the post-award specialist, resources for projects have been more effectively managed.
Instructional Services

Instructional Services departments, which offer training programs and personalized consultations to support faculty in the effective applications of instructional technologies to enhance student learning and in the design and development of course content, including online courses. One area within Instructional Services, MCC Library Services, provides a Librarian liaison to each academic department. These liaisons support faculty members in a variety of areas including course content, open educational resources, and information literacy. Instructional Services also provide resources for faculty use including the Faculty Innovation Center, an Interactive Library Instruction classroom, multimedia production rooms, and classroom technology practice rooms.

Additional Professional Development

Additional opportunities are provided by committees in specific offices or divisions and, as such, target focused subgroups of faculty (e.g., Division of Health, Science, and Business Professional Development programs). The Faculty Association has recently offered workshops on topics such as the contract and navigating workplace relationships; the Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee, in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources and Organizational Development Office and the TCC, also offers programs during a Professional Development Week each June. Recent topics include Starfish retention software training, working with ESOL students, sustainability, and internationalizing the curriculum. The Academic Advisement Centers offer workshops each month to support the work of faculty in the academic advising process.

Each of these programs, and the resources devoted to offering them, serves as evidence that ongoing professional development for continuous improvement is one of the College’s core values.

Faculty Achievement in Teaching and Service

MCC recognizes faculty achievements and encourages linkages between research and scholarship as well as teaching and service as evidenced in the numerous awards and accolades received by faculty. Among MCC award-winning faculty are a United States Professor of the Year, two SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professors, and one SUNY Distinguished Service Professor. Many current MCC faculty members hold SUNY Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence, including 22 for Teaching, three for Scholarship and Creative Activities, four for Librarianship, three for Faculty Service, and 19 for Professional Service. Awards granted internally include 18 teaching awards, ten professional service awards, two emerging excellence awards, and four President’s Awards. Recipients’ names are published in the MCC Daily Tribune and celebrated at the Employee Recognition Ceremony. In addition, a list of these accolades can be found in college catalog and on plaques at the entrance to the Brighton Campus Library.

Faculty achievement is further evidenced by the number and frequency of faculty and professional staff who actively participate in local, regional, and national professional activities as content experts, conference presenters, and as elected or appointed members of professional organizations. Many MCC faculty and professionals are published authors and researchers. Achievements are consistently announced in the MCC Daily Tribune. Faculty members list their accomplishments and professional development successes in an Annual Faculty Development Report (AFDR).

Review and Performance Evaluation

The Faculty Association (FA) collective bargaining agreement outlines the process by which faculty are evaluated, promoted, and dismissed, all based on principles of fairness with due regard for the rights of all persons. Further, the FA Contract describes how the College strives to utilize carefully articulated, equitable, and implemented procedures and criteria for reviewing all individuals who have responsibility for the educational program of the institution, including criteria for the appointment, supervision, and
review of teaching effectiveness for part-time, adjunct, and other faculty consistent with those for full-time faculty. The Faculty Association contract allows for more frequent evaluation of teaching faculty if the need is warranted.

**Faculty Performance**

As delineated in the Faculty Association contract, faculty members must submit the AFDR, through the appropriate channels, ultimately ending in the individual’s personnel file. In addition, professional staff submit their AFDR to their directors and vice president. By design, the AFDR encourages faculty to create linkages among the domains of scholarship, teaching, student learning, research, and service. Information provided in the AFDR is used to determine an individual’s eligibility for promotion.

The AFDR has been recently revised to make clear connections among the required elements and the Strategic Plan. The new AFDR was adopted by the faculty and became part of the FA Contract in fall 2014. The new form fosters a stronger awareness of how the individual actions of teaching faculty and professional staff contribute to the fulfillment of all four directions of the Strategic Plan. The AFDR’s recent revision demonstrates both the College’s and the faculty’s ongoing commitment to self-assessment and excellence in teaching and service.

**Faculty Tenure and Promotion**

**Teaching Faculty**

MCC’s Faculty Association Contract outlines the College’s criteria, schedules, and procedures for preparing faculty tenure and promotion applications. Individual academic departments may determine additional evidence to include that is appropriate to the discipline. At a minimum, these criteria require promotion packets to include an assessment of faculty performance of teaching, a record of professional activity and growth, as well as a description of the candidate’s service to students, the College, and the community. Packets must also contain a recent classroom observation report conducted by a faculty peer.

Procedures for tenure and promotion, as outlined by the Faculty Contract, include the following:

- The faculty member initiates the promotion process by notifying the department.
- Promotion and tenure cases are discussed and voted upon by the tenured faculty in the candidate’s department, who then make a recommendation to the department chair.
- The department chair makes a separate recommendation after reviewing the recommendation by the department committee, and forwards the candidate’s packet and his or her own recommendation to the dean.
- Deans review each recommendation for promotion/tenure and will consider how effectively the individual has met his or her academic duties and responsibilities. The dean provides his or her own recommendation, along with the packet, to the appropriate vice president.
- The vice president receives the recommendation and conducts his or her own review of the record and makes a recommendation to the President, who makes the final recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- In the event of a negative recommendation at any level for promotion, the candidate is notified and given the opportunity to withdraw the request or direct that the request be submitted to the next higher level. Through this process, the candidate may respond in writing to negative concerns to insure a full, frank, and confidential discussion of the case.

While the Faculty Association Contract outlines the evaluation and promotion procedures for faculty, the Study Team concluded that criteria, procedures, and deadlines for promotion and tenure could be more readily available to faculty.
Professional Staff

Faculty members serving in professional positions observe the same set of guidelines, procedures, and timelines for tenure and promotion as teaching faculty, with one variation. Whereas classroom faculty are evaluated on teaching effectiveness, professional staff members are evaluated on effectiveness in position. This variation is outlined in Article 54 of the Faculty Contract.

Adjunct Faculty

The College’s current policy for adjunct faculty includes annual evaluation for each of the first five years, and one every three years thereafter; however, evaluations may occur more frequently. Guidelines for adjunct faculty evaluation and promotion are listed in Article 32 of the Faculty Association Contract.

Post Tenure Review

The post tenure review process is another way the College maintains quality instruction. All tenured faculty undergo a review every three years to help faculty sustain and improve their performance and to document the individual professional performance over the previous three years.

Dismissal

The College’s dismissal procedures emphasize due process and are explained in the Faculty Association contract. The procedures for dismissal of faculty and professional staff include the following:

- Employees may be terminated only for just cause
- The President communicates directly with the faculty or professional staff member regarding any complaints and charges
- The faculty member may elect to have a hearing of his or her peers
- The hearing committee makes a decision and provides full transcripts to the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees makes a final determination regarding the decision of the hearing committee
- A decision to terminate employment by the Board of Trustees may be appealed in the courts as provided by law

The Study Team determined that although few departments had direct experience with the dismissal process, those that did felt that the process was fair and equitable.

Assessment of Policies and Procedures

The College’s policies and procedures ensure a fair, equitable, and publicized process for the hiring, retention, and promotion of qualified faculty. These policies and procedures are both inclusive and comprehensive. For example, Human Resources does not release a candidate’s application materials to a department’s search committee until the candidate’s application packet is complete, including all official transcripts. Before giving final approval for a hire, the Board of Trustees reviews the credentials of all candidates.

Once hired, faculty members are provided with guidance and support, and are mentored by other faculty within their department, throughout the tenure and promotion process. Those pursuing promotion also receive assistance by way professional development opportunities and through the Faculty Mentoring Program, sponsored by the TCC. A review of the TCC’s Annual Report for 2014-15 demonstrates a strong faculty satisfaction for professional development and mentoring programming at the College.
As part of the movement toward more comprehensive policies and procedures, the Assistant to the President, Human Resources and Organizational Development has been reviewing the policies and procedures regarding the search process and hiring process to ensure consistency and clarity. A Human Resources Manual is under development which will explain all of the processes and procedures that guide the decision-making on a wide variety of fronts (e.g., hiring, supervising, benefit administration).

**STRENGTHS**

- The College has a qualified and highly-dedicated faculty.
- The College rigorously supports professional development for faculty and professional staff.
- The newly revised AFDR encourages faculty to track and assess continuous professional growth.
- The College has a transparent and inclusive evaluation process for the hiring, retention, and promotion of qualified faculty

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Suggestions**

- Continue diligent efforts to build diversity among faculty and professional staff.
- Make promotion and tenure materials readily available in electronic format to help both those going through the process and those providing assistance during the process.

**Recommendations**

- None noted.
OVERVIEW

MCC is an institution well-respected for a quality curriculum, diverse opportunities, innovative ideas, and dedication to life-long learning. The College provides students with an intellectually rigorous and pedagogically effective course of study. This chapter analyzes how MCC’s educational offerings support our Mission.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Programs and Curriculum Development

MCC offers more than 100 degree and certificate programs in diverse areas of study. Each Associate in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), and certificate program goes through a rigorous, transparent, and consistent process led by faculty following shared governance resolutions. Each proposal (e.g., new program, revised program, new course, revised course) is reviewed and approved by the department, division dean, Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, Curriculum Dean, and the Provost. Proposals are posted for faculty review and comment. Proposals for new programs also must be approved by the Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the New York State Education Department (NYSED), SUNY, and other regional providers have the opportunity to comment on program proposals.

During the fall 2014 semester alone, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee approved 384 proposals; these proposals all went through the extensive, transparent review process to ensure they meet our high academic standards.

MCC offers six A.A.S. and one certificate program that must demonstrate compliance with the standards appropriate to their fields. The College regularly demonstrates compliance with these requirements; recently, Applied Technologies, Engineering Technologies, Hospitality, and Information and Computer Technologies met with their respective advisory boards and their curricula were validated as responsive to the needs of the local community. Further, multiple programs rely on external advisory boards to ensure MCC’s programs contain content required by the workforce.

Relationship of Curriculum to the Mission

MCC’s educational offerings demonstrate that the College provides a quality education to diverse learners in preparation for scholarly, professional, and individual success:

- In accordance with the new SUNY Seamless Transfer Resolution, MCC’s Curriculum and Program Development Office recently conducted a review of all degrees. Many transfer degrees were redesigned to include a 64 credit maximum, including the 30 credit SUNY General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER) (see standard 12).
- MCC has 2+2 dual admission articulation agreements with 29 different four-year institutions which enable MCC students to be admitted into four-year programs within their first year of college-level study. The College’s more than 270 articulation agreements offer evidence that MCC’s courses and programs meet the standards set by our transfer partners.
• MCC students transferred to 189 different colleges and universities in 2013 alone. The persistence rate when transferring to four-year SUNY institutions, 79%, is consistent with those of students transferring from other SUNY community colleges; the success in transfer of our students validates the rigor and educational content of MCC’s curriculum.

• Our graduates in career pathways were consistently employed after graduation. In fact, career and certificate program graduates in 2013 were employed at 567 different employers; of those employed full time, 90% of them work for regional companies.

• Students consistently succeed on state and national licensure exams. In June 2013 and 2014, Radiologic Technology students earned a 100%, the pass rate on their certification exam, and for the 10th year in a row, all Dental Hygiene students passed their clinical board exams. Nursing students taking the NCLEX-RN licensing exam exceeded both state and national averages; in 2013 89% passed and in 2014 91% passed.

• Students, themselves, recognize the quality of their MCC education. More than 79% responded that their educational experience at MCC was “good” or “excellent;” 91% of students completing the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) would recommend MCC to others.

Synthesis of Learning

MCC’s curriculum is appropriate to a college of our scope and complexity. We educate students from those who are underprepared to those taking honors courses and offer programs as varied as fine arts and automotive technology. The College provides a coherent learning experience and opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge throughout their academic experience. MCC’s commitment to application of knowledge is also recognized by our students, 70% of whom reported synthesizing ideas or information in new ways.

General Education Requirements

The College’s A.A. and A.S. degree programs meet two sets of general education requirements, ensuring students graduate with breadth of knowledge that promotes connections between courses. MCC’s General Education Plan (MCC-GER) requires students to complete 17 credits in six knowledge and skills areas: Basic Communication, Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Health and Physical Education. Additionally, students are required to develop competencies of critical analysis and reasoning and information management. With the exception of Health and Physical Education, these content areas overlap with SUNY-GER, which creates a smooth process for students while providing MCC’s curriculum with the ability to respond to local needs. Further, to provide students with clarity in their learning experience, MCC has created four-semester sequences for all degree programs offered.

Applied Learning

Applied learning at MCC provides students with various opportunities to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to hands-on, real world experiences. MCC partners with businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies to empower students to reach their goals. Applied learning at MCC takes many forms including, but not limited to, those listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
<th>Total Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-ops</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experiences</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinicals</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>1226</td>
<td>2319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2059</td>
<td>2173</td>
<td>4232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.1: Students participating in Applied Learning Experiences, 2014-2015
• **Co-ops** are required in eight different programs, which include 180 mandatory, intensive work hours. For example, students in Entrepreneurial and Applied Business Studies A.A.S. enroll in BUS 275: Business Cooperative Education; students attend a seminar two hours a week and complete a minimum of 180 work hours related to their degrees. This co-op requires that the skills and competencies learned throughout the degree program be applied to job experience. The job experience supervisor verifies the completion of the required clock hours and provides an assessment regarding how well the student is prepared to enter the workforce in their chosen field.

• **Clinical hours** require that students apply classroom knowledge to hands-on experiences outside the classroom. For example, students in NUR 112: Nursing Care of the Adult and Child I spend a total of 135 hours over the semester in a clinical setting focusing on basic needs of adult and child patients using the nursing process to provide quality, safe, patient-centered care for diverse populations. Students use science and their accumulated knowledge to manage, with assistance, the essential issues of patients with both acute and chronic conditions.

• **Field experience** provides students with the opportunity to complete work outside a classroom setting in a supervised environment that supports or extends coursework. For example, students enrolled in GEO 295: Field Studies in the Geosciences attended lectures and labs for 11 weeks in a classroom setting; then they participated in a field experience in locations such as Devils Tower National Monument, Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and Craters of the Moon National Monument. While in the field, students employed methods learned in class to meet the course learning outcome requiring students to collect data, record measurements, and make observations of the natural geology in a field setting. This data was analyzed and interpreted by students to gain an understanding of the geological processes that shaped this region over time, and was shared with the college community in a daily blog.

• **Service learning** combines civic engagement with academic coursework to the benefit of both the student and community. In 2012-13, 1,200 MCC students completed service learning courses with a C or better and completed 41,315 hours of dedicated time on their projects; additionally, 67 earned the prestigious Presidential Volunteer Service Award. Students enrolled in service learning courses in English and Transitional Studies, for example, helped prepare high school students in Rush-Henrietta and the city of Rochester for their transition to college.

**Advanced Learning Experiences**

MCC offers additional opportunities for students to integrate classroom knowledge by applying work from multiple courses in a degree program to other courses in a program and by making connections between coursework and co-curricular and community events. The following are two such examples.

• **The Honors Institute** administers the Honors Advanced Studies Certificate, including requirements for academic achievement and demonstration of civic engagement, leadership, and scholarship. The Institute tracks academic and co-curricular progress; provides financial support for registration, transportation, and accommodations for students to present research at conferences and seminars; and funds attendance to activities such as theater performances, art galleries, and lectures. Courses designated as Honors focus on interdisciplinary approaches, high impact practices, and global contexts as students complete challenging course work. Students are provided the opportunity to integrate their course work with a variety of co-curricular opportunities and project-based learning. MCC offers approximately 21 Honors courses per semester with an average of 185 students enrolled in the Honors Institute. Honors students...
demonstrated their success at the 2012 North East Regional Honors Conference where more papers were accepted by MCC students for presentation than any other community college in the region.

- **Capstone Courses** are used by some career and technical education programs and require students to demonstrate integrated knowledge and growth in the major. The following programs currently require capstone courses: Computer Systems Technology, A.A.S.; Agriculture and Food Studies, Certificate; Biotechnology, A.A.S.; Office Technology: Office Administrative Assistant, A.A.S.; Electrical Engineering Technology – Electronics, A.A.S.; and Optical Systems Technology, A.A.S.

**Program Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Program goals are consistent with the Mission, stated in terms of student learning outcomes and included in all degree programs. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) articulate the culminating knowledge, behaviors, skills, or abilities that students should demonstrate upon completion of a degree program. For student reference, PLO are printed in the college catalog under each program listing. Each course also includes specific CLO which articulate the knowledge and skills students should demonstrate upon completion of the course. Faculty Senate Resolutions require that outcomes be included on course information sheets, which are housed in academic departments in hard or electronic copy. However, the Study Team found these were not easily accessible to prospective students. Beginning in 2010, course learning outcome review was integrated into the assessment process. CLO and PLO are required on curriculum proposals as evidence of the relationship between the two to ensure appropriate content. The College’s assessment of this process can be found in Standard 14.

The relationship of course content to program learning outcomes is demonstrated through the College’s rigorous program assessment process. For example, in 2014-15 the Nursing program evaluation included a comprehensive review of the ways nursing program learning outcomes linked and related to course learning outcomes. The comprehensive review involved all full-time nursing faculty and representatives from each discipline included in the nursing program of study. The nursing faculty revised the Clinical Performance Appraisal criteria to complete the mapping process and close existing curricular gaps. This process ensured that each nursing CLO aligned with the PLO.

**Fostering Information Literacy and Technological Competency**

Our commitment to MCC’s educational programming is demonstrated by the extensive services provided to a diverse population, ensuring that students and staff are provided with appropriate learning resources, facilities, instructional equipment, library services, and professional library staff adequate to support the College’s educational programs. These resources demonstrate collaboration among faculty, administration, and library staff to foster information literacy, technological competency, and student use of a variety of resources.

**Learning Centers and Spaces**

MCC offers 24 different learning centers on both the Brighton and DCC campuses. In these centers, students with diverse interests and needs can receive extra assistance from tutors, utilize video instruction, use computer software, and locate additional resources in a variety of subjects and skill areas. Some of these learning centers are general use including the Electronic Learning Center and the Writing Center, while others are discipline specific including Accounting, Mathematics, Nursing, Computer Graphics, Computer-related Curricula, Dental Hygiene, and Economics. In the 2013-14 academic year, 4,010 students accessed tutoring services in more than 30,876 sessions for a total of 22,599 hours of instruction. MCC’s commitment to technological innovation can be seen in recent developments in learning spaces for students. For example, media control panels, projectors, and new sound systems in six classrooms.
provide the nursing department with multi-media advanced learning environments to enhance hands-on learning and student collaboration. The newest dental technologies were included in the newly renovated Dental Hygiene clinic while instruction was enhanced in the Hospitality Department through a new sound system, technology upgrades, projectors, and smart technologies to reflect digital infrastructure standards in the field.

Library Services

The College’s electronic resources network includes an online catalog of materials owned by the Libraries, 100+ electronic databases with access to more than 30,000 journal titles and 48,000 e-books, and links to the collections of hundreds of libraries. Registered students can use these virtual resources in the Libraries or off campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Through SUNY’s Open Access Policy, MCC students have access to and borrowing privileges at all other SUNY libraries. Research materials are also embedded in Blackboard. As a member of local, state, and international consortia, the MCC Libraries participate in resource-sharing programs including Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) and SUNYConnect.

Information Literacy

MCC’s general education requirements promote the use of information and resources as students meet the required infused competency of information management. This competency requires that students develop the ability to perform basic computer use and research techniques; locate, evaluate, and synthesize information from multiple sources; and demonstrate an understanding of issues affecting the use of information. To aid student success, the Library offers Instruction Sessions which are co-designed with faculty members regarding how to identify, locate, evaluate, and use sources for assigned coursework.

Comparable Quality across Delivery Mode and Location

All courses and programs offered at MCC, regardless of delivery mode or location, are of comparable quality. The College offers multiple courses in over 100 programs; we offer classes online, in hybrid format, and off site. Courses meet the same outcomes irrespective of delivery mode or location, thus, ensuring consistency of course offerings and the quality of our educational offerings. Programs offered in alternative formats likewise must meet the same outcomes as those offered in a traditional format. The following examples demonstrate the College’s uniform approach to intellectual rigor and program consistency.

Accelerated Degree Programs

Accelerated degree programs are different from standard programs only in length. They follow the same transparent, collaborative curriculum development process, include the same course and program learning outcomes, and are registered with the New York State Education Department

For example, the accelerated Precision Tooling Certificate Program (APTC) was originally implemented in 2012 in a collaboration with the Rochester Technology and Manufacturing Association (RTMA). The project responds to the local advanced manufacturing industry’s immediate need for skilled workers. Participants complete coursework and demonstrate hands-on skill development necessary for careers in the advanced manufacturing environment. Upon completion of the program, candidates receive a SUNY Precision Tooling Academic Certificate. The Academic Certificate is stackable to an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in Precision Machining. The accelerated program has averaged an 80% completion rate in the first three cohorts of graduates, compared to a 33% completion rate for first-time, full-time cohorts completing the same curriculum in the non-accelerated format. Job placement is also very high with an average 90% job placement rate for graduates.
Dual Enrollment

As discussed in Standard 8, dual enrollment courses offered at local high schools allow students to earn both MCC and high school credit. In 2014, 4,314 students in the greater Rochester area are enrolled in dual enrollment classes.

As stated in the Faculty Contract, the assigned teaching faculty member (also known as the course supervisor) is responsible for ensuring instruction is consistent with MCC’s Mission, aligns with College standards, and accomplishes the established learning outcomes. All high school teachers must meet MCC’s certification requirements; quality and course integrity is assured in a number of ways:

- Each Dual Enrollment course is assigned to an MCC faculty member. The faculty member has duties in this role that include reviewing instructional materials, course outline and examinations, observing classroom teaching, reviewing student performance, and assigning final grades.
- Dual Enrollment students are held to the same standards of achievement as our on-campus students. Only students that meet MCC course prerequisites are allowed to register for dual enrollment courses. Dual enrollment students also take the same tests as students in our on-campus sections.
- Each Dual Enrollment course has a Course Information Sheet on file, documenting that course learning outcomes, course requirements, and grading criteria are MCC’s.

In 2015 MCC offered the first summer Business Teacher Institute to provide discipline-specific professional development to 21 high school teachers. These workshops provided immersion training in course curricula, philosophy, and theory to ensure consistency and adherence to MCC standards for quality.

Online Courses

Before a course is offered online, the course must be approved through a rigorous process. The Open SUNY Advisory Committee reviews the pedagogy, explanations of how the course learning outcomes would be met in the online format, and the rationale for offering the course online. This process ensures that online courses meet the same requirements for quality of teaching and academic rigor (see Standard 13).

Transfer of Credit

MCC accepts transfer credit from regionally accredited institutions of higher education and from recognized candidates for accreditation.

Students who have attended non-regionally accredited institutions of higher education may request that their coursework be evaluated for transfer credit. Credit will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and students will be expected to provide course descriptions and/or syllabi to assist in evaluating the coursework. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation provides a searchable database of colleges and universities and their accreditation. Information about transfer credit is publicized in the college catalog.

MCC supports veteran and military students in receiving transfer credit for military experience. The process for awarding credit aligns with the institutional process for transfer of credit. Veteran and military students from the Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, or Navy provide MCC with an official Joint Services Transcript which contains course and credit recommendations by the American Council on Education. Students from the Air Force provide an official Community College of the Air Force transcript. The Veteran Services Office reviews each student’s military transcript and works with each academic department to determine transfer credit.
Adult Learners

MCC’s commitment to adult students is evident in our course offerings, flexible program options, and available resources. Courses are offered on schedules that work for MCC’s adult students including at night, on Saturdays, off campus, and online. For example, Engineering Technologies alternates its course offerings between day and night classes every year to accommodate the working adult student.

Additionally, multiple Fast Track Bachelors’ degree programs are available through partnerships with several institutions. Roberts Wesleyan College, for example, offers a seamless transfer from 3 years at MCC to a 15-month bachelor’s degree in Organizational Management; a partnership with St. John Fisher College offers students the opportunity to earn a B.S. in Business Management and an M.B.A. with a 2+2+1 dual enrollment program. For adults seeking a liberal arts degree, MCC also offers an accelerated associates degree of two 8-week fast-tracked sessions with supplemental guided independent learning.

Resources are readily available for adult students. MCC has an Office of Experiential and Adult Learning that assists students with advisement and academic planning. The College offers evening and weekend hours at the Brighton and Damon City Campus Libraries as well as other learning labs (e.g., Nursing, Mathematics) to accommodate the work schedules of adult students. Further, students are invited to attend adult student information nights which provide information regarding academic programs, financial aid, and enrollment, among other topics. Further, MCC has a child-care facility on the Brighton campus and provides childcare vouchers to students at the Damon City Campus.

Assessment of Curricular and Co-Curricular Programming

MCC participates in a cyclical process of academic assessment for individual courses and programs. The assessment process may take a variety of forms including hands-on activities, written assignments, and portfolio assessments to determine if students meet outcomes. Assessment results are then used to improve student learning and program effectiveness (see Standard 14).

In support of our Strategic Plan, MCC offers a variety of co-curricular programming to supplement students’ academic curriculum. Participation in clubs and organizations affords students with opportunities to develop leadership skills, extend the learning environment, and develop new skills. Through clubs and organizations as varied as the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Project; Global Union and International Student Association; the Math Club; Campus Activities Board; and the Pride Alliance, among many others, MCC offers students opportunities to enhance their college experience. Assessment of individual events are conducted by the sponsoring club or organization and used to improve future programming (see Standard 9).

STRENGTHS

- Access to high-quality education is offered through MCC’s campuses, off-site locations, Dual Enrollment courses, and online offerings.
- MCC’s curriculum process is transparent and collaborative.
- The College has multiple partnerships with four-year institutions and local industry, demonstrating the relevance and rigor of our academic programs.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

- Develop a systematic housing of course information sheets in electronic format.
Recommendations

- Develop a method to ensure course learning outcomes are readily available to prospective students.
- Review the current transfer credit evaluation procedures to ensure that the College offers a standardized assessment of credits that is reviewed on an annual basis.
Standard 12: General Education

OVERVIEW

MCC provides a General Education Program that supports the goals of diverse learners and includes preparation for both transfer and career paths. The MCC General Education Program is designed to meet both local MCC general education requirements (MCC-GER), as well as those established by the State University of New York (SUNY-GER). This chapter analyzes MCC’s commitment to general education.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

MCC General Education

The MCC General Education Program supports the Mission of the College to educate and “prepare diverse learners to achieve scholarly, professional and individual success within a local and global context.” In addition, the General Education Program provides learners with a broad foundation of skills and academic experiences to prepare them for “lifelong learning and civic engagement,” as specified in the College’s Mission. In 2009, the MCC General Education Definitions Project team first proposed a definition of general education as “those courses and learning outcomes which serve students to understand themselves, their society, and provides the necessary skills for careers.” This definition was restated in the 2014 Re-imagine, Re-invent, and Re-engineer General Education Committee report that is currently under review.

Beyond the knowledge and skills students achieve in their disciplines, by the time of graduation students earning an associate degree (A.A., A.S., or A.A.S.) will have taken and passed a minimum of 17 credits in courses identified as supporting MCC general education in six knowledge and skill areas: Basic Communication, Humanities, Social Science, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Health/Physical Education. These are included in the distribution requirements of each program printed in the catalog. Students who meet all of the program requirements will satisfy MCC-GER. Students also complete courses infused with content designed to develop their competencies in Critical Analysis and Reasoning, and Information Management.

Relationship between SUNY General Education and MCC General Education

As a member of the SUNY system, MCC must also ensure that A.A. and A.S. degree programs meet SUNY General Education Requirements. For SUNY, general education is a broad curriculum designed to provide students “with a set of non-specialized, coherent and focused educational experiences aimed at enabling students to acquire knowledge and skills that are useful and important for all educated persons regardless of their jobs or professions.” The General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER) is 30 credits for baccalaureate degree recipients which requires that student demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes in seven of ten knowledge and skills area (two of which are required), and two competency areas. All students enrolled in A.A. and A.S. degree programs at SUNY system institutions are expected to complete the SUNY-GER requirements within their first two years of study. Academic programs at MCC are designed so that students complete the majority of MCC-GER and SUNY-GER simultaneously; completion of the Health/Physical Education requirement is solely an MCC-GER.

General Education Outcomes

As part of SUNY General Education, MCC adopted SUNY’s system-wide Student Learning Outcomes. Courses fulfilling SUNY General Education, MCC’s course learning outcomes (CLO) for General Education are mapped to SUNY General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLO). This ensures that
assessments of both general education programs take place simultaneously. MCC’s academic assessment and curriculum design processes acknowledge, incorporate, and explicitly document this mapping (See Table 12.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Requirements: Liberal Arts Content &amp; General Education</th>
<th>NYSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCC General Education (09-14)</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUNY General Education (09-00; revised 09-10, and 09-14)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees: AA, AS, AAS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Degrees: AA, AS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit hours: 17 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Credit hours: 30 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCC (7 out of 10, include Basic Communication and Mathematics, if transferring to a SUNY college or university; 5 out of 10 for Engineering Science)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Skills Areas: 6</th>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Skills Areas: 10</th>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Skills Areas:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As listed in current MCC catalog, Courses fulfilling MCC General Education Requirements.</td>
<td>As listed in current MCC catalog, SUNY General Education Requirements.</td>
<td>As listed under Standard 12, Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education, pg. 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Basic Communication (ENG 101/200)</td>
<td>(3) Basic Communication (BC) <strong>(Requirement)</strong></td>
<td>Written Communication Speech Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Any MCC Humanities</td>
<td>(3) Humanities (H)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Any MCC Social Science</td>
<td>(3) Social Sciences (SS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Any MCC Natural Science</td>
<td>(3) Natural Sciences (NS)</td>
<td>Scientific Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Mathematics, MTH 104 or higher AAS; MTH 150 or higher AA, AS</td>
<td>(3) Mathematics (M) <strong>(Requirement)</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Foreign Language (FL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) American History (AH)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Western Civilization (WC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Other World Civilization (OWC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Any MCC PE/HED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 12.1: Comparison of General Education and Liberal Arts Requirements**

**Responsibility for the General Education Program**

Responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of the curriculum, including MCC General Education, rests primarily, but not solely, with the faculty. To accomplish this, ongoing oversight for the General Education Program is provided by the Faculty Senate and is supported by Administration through shared governance. Support for assessment of the General Education Program is provided by the Office of Academic Assessment, headed by the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment. This Assistant
Director provides ongoing support of general education assessment through professional development trainings; coaching of faculty and departments during the assessment process; evaluation of tools, benchmarks, and processes; and representation on the related committees and shared governance bodies.

The faculty are responsible for using the institution’s well-established curriculum-design and assessment processes to verify proficiency in all areas of the General Education Program (both MCC-GER and SUNY-GER). Both the curriculum development and general education assessment processes require that faculty critically examine and regularly review the CLO for each course, identifying those that support general education. New course development, course revision, and assessment procedures stipulate that course learning outcomes must accurately reflect the minimum common content across all course sections, regardless of instructor. To ensure that course content reflects college-level learning standards, faculty members are encouraged to utilize a variety of external benchmarking techniques. Support for the establishment and evaluation of external benchmarks is available from the Office of Academic Assessment.

Responsibility for initiating curriculum decisions related to general education rests with a course proposer, usually a faculty member or academic department. The proposal then follows the curriculum process and is approved by the department chair, division dean, the Faculty Senate, Curriculum Dean, and the Provost. Proposals for courses to meet SUNY-GER are then forwarded to SUNY for approval. Learning Outcomes for each SUNY knowledge and skills area have been established by SUNY and courses being proposed as a SUNY-GER are reviewed to ensure that Course Learning Outcomes map to each of the SUNY Learning Outcomes for the area.

Historically, the Provost has periodically charged ad hoc committees to review and modify MCC-GER to ensure currency and effectiveness. The most recent comprehensive review began in 2011 when the Provost and the President of the Faculty Senate jointly charged the Senate to “re-imagine, re-invent, and re-engineer” MCC’s General Education Program to better reflect and respond to community needs and demands for student learning. In preparation for their work, a six-member delegation from MCC participated in the Association of American Colleges and Universities Institute on General Education and Assessment in June 2012. The committee worked diligently for two years and submitted the completed Re-Imagine, Re-Invent, and Re-Engineer General Education report to the Interim Provost in fall 2014. The resulting document and recommendations are currently under review.

MCC’s infrastructure in support of general education is responsive to a changing environment. For example, in 2013, the SUNY Provost signed a resolution intended to ensure seamless transfer for students between community colleges and four-year institutions within the SUNY system. As part of this initiative, all associate degree programs, with the exception of Engineering (68 credit hour maximum), were capped at a maximum of 64 credit hours. All of MCC’s degree programs were inventoried for compliance with SUNY Seamless Transfer Requirements (SSTR), and appropriate, necessary curricular revisions were made. In total of seven programs, it was necessary to remove one or both hours of the Health and Physical Education MCC-GER in order to meet SSTR credit hour restrictions. Five remaining programs are still in the curricular redesign phase working toward meeting SSTR requirements. The Faculty Senate provisionally supported these programmatic changes in order to comply with SSTR while work continues on a proposed redesign of the MCC-GER that would reconcile this issue and allow all programs to simultaneously meet both MCC-GER and SUNY-GER requirements.

**General Education Program of Sufficient Scope**

MCC’s general education requirement sufficiently meets the needs of the diverse aspirations of students earning A.A., A.S., and A.A.S. degrees. Completion of MCC and SUNY general education requirements support students who transfer to both SUNY and non-SUNY schools, as well as students who enter the workforce directly from MCC. MCC’s graduating class of 2013 successfully transferred to 189 four-year schools; 30% of these transfer schools were in the SUNY or CUNY systems. MCC has established dual-
admission agreements with 27 four-year institutions, including 15 private colleges and universities, who accept our programs of study, indicating that the scope of our General Education Program is acceptable to these institutions. Students also recognize the value of general education, as evidenced by the results of periodic surveys of MCC graduates conducted by the Institutional Research, which reveal that graduates are satisfied with the writing, mathematics, and critical thinking skills honed at MCC. In addition, the 2012 Community College Survey of Student Engagement documented that 57% of respondents reported that their MCC experience contributed “Very Much” or “Quite a Bit” to their use of computing and information technology.

General Education Applied in the Major or Concentration

A required component of MCC’s program evaluation process is an examination of the relationship between the general education requirements and the major. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) have been identified for all degree programs at MCC and are listed on the website and in the catalog. An examination of PLO for MCC’s programs reveals the many ways in which the skills and abilities developed in general education are applied in the major. Competency in Critical Thinking and Information Management, required elements of SUNY-GER, are handled as infused competencies at MCC. Student proficiency in these areas is assessed by measuring student performance for course learning outcomes from courses throughout the curriculum. An inventory of these courses is housed in the Curriculum Database. MCC has a long history of assessing Critical Thinking and Information Management (Information Literacy/Technological Literacy). As a follow-up to the 2011 Periodic Review Report and to respond to the addition of the infused competencies of Values and Ethics and Diversity and Diverse Perspectives to the curriculum, the College has nearly completed efforts to broaden the college-wide process to define, develop outcomes for, and assess all these infused competencies:

- Beginning in fall 2012, a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee developed a set of working definitions and criteria for each of the infused competencies.
- Faculty across the College identified course content covering these competencies in an electronic Infused Competencies Inventory, housed within the Curriculum Database.
- Five separate infused competencies committees were charged by the Curriculum Committee to revise the working definitions into final definitions and to develop corresponding learning outcomes.
- Each committee conducted a pilot assessment of the definitions and outcomes, analyzed the resulting information, and proposed refinements to the definitions and outcomes in response to the results of the assessment.

For example, the Critical Thinking Infused Competency Committee used the information compiled by faculty in the Infused Competencies Inventory to demonstrate that MCC courses and degree programs showed sufficient evidence supporting critical thinking as an infused competency. In fall 2014, the committee wrote a broad Critical Thinking definition with the following seven learning outcomes:

1. Evaluate arguments as they occur in the work of others
2. Develop well-reasoned arguments in their own work
3. Solve discipline-specific problems in a meaningful or creative way
4. Contextualize by considering ideas, artifacts, texts, or events as framed by the historical, cultural, or political circumstances in which they were developed
5. Reason logically in their own written, verbal, or demonstrative work
6. Synthesize information for the purpose of discipline-specific understanding, conceptualization, or application
7. Create and test hypotheses specific to the discipline

In spring 2015, MCC conducted the pilot assessment on the Critical Thinking learning outcomes. A random sample of courses identified as matching the Critical Thinking learning outcomes were selected
for assessment. Student work was assessed against the CLO and awarded a score using a rubric developed from an externally validated tool. Preliminary findings indicate that, of the 389 students assessed, the average score on their work was 3.0 out of a possible 4.0, indicating acceptable achievement of the CLO.

The final steps in this process are underway. The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee is currently reviewing the Infused Competency Assessment reports. Upon any revisions as a result of that review, the reports will be voted on at Faculty Senate and forwarded to the Provost in fall 2015.

Although the development of a system for implementing and assessing infused competencies in the General Education Program presented a challenge because of the number and breadth of departments and faculty that were engaged, MCC can now confirm that these elements are widely available through infusion. Assessment of the infused competencies will be facilitated by the recent adoption of a new Assessment Database, an electronic database that will document assessment activities, evaluation findings, and action plans. Lessons learned during the initial assessments will be used to revise and refine the assessment process in preparation for the next assessment cycle.

**Oral and Written Communication, and Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning Appropriate to the Discipline**

Students acquire college-level knowledge, skills, and competency in the four substantive areas of general education (oral communication, written communication, scientific reasoning, and quantitative reasoning) through achievement of course learning outcomes in courses designated as satisfying faculty expectations for learning in those academic disciplines. The local definitions and descriptions for each of the four areas are compatible with SUNY-GER definitions and outcomes, ensuring that any student selecting courses from the SUNY-GER list will automatically fulfill MCC-GER.

MCC general education outcomes are mapped to SUNY outcomes to identify the specific learning outcomes that support general education. Proficiency in oral and written communication is principally met by assessing and documenting acceptable student achievement of CLO established for Basic Communications within ENG 101: College Composition or ENG 200: Advanced Composition. Similarly, proficiency in scientific reasoning is acquired with the successful achievement of CLO in at least one course listed as qualifying for the SUNY-GER Natural Science category or for other courses designated in the catalog as fulfilling the local requirement. Finally, proficiency in quantitative reasoning is assured by student achievement of CLO established for Mathematics courses. Courses that fulfill this requirement include MTH 104: Intermediate Algebra or any higher level mathematics course for A.A.S. degree programs, and by MTH 150: Survey of Math or higher for A.S. or A.A. degree programs.

Assessment has been used to great effect and impact in verifying that students are achieving “with proficiency” the knowledge, skills, and competencies that underpin general education. Assessment has also provided the faculty with the opportunity to understand how and where gaps in student learning require their added attention. A review of the general education assessment reports from the past two full assessment cycles reveals the following:

- **Oral communication:** The 2011-12 Basic Communication-Oral general education assessment report showed that greater than 75% of students assessed met or exceeded faculty expectations for achievement of the two SUNY-GER learning outcomes.

- **Written communication:** The 2013-14 Basic Communication-Written general education assessment report showed that for the CLO assessed:
  
  **ENG 101** -- 84% of students assessed met or exceeded expectations
  **ENG 200** – 89% of students assessed met or exceeded
  **ENG 250** – 85% of students assessed met or exceeded
Mathematics: The 2013 Mathematics general education report results showed that the departmental expectations for student learning success were not met in the majority of courses assessed. Course committees within the mathematics department developed significant action plans for addressing gaps in student learning in each course in response to these assessment results, and these plans were included in the report.

Natural Sciences: Reports completed in 2012-13 for Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Geosciences indicated success in student achievement of learning outcomes in the disciplines, each identifying student learning gaps:

Biology – 73% of students met or exceeded expectations
Chemistry – 79% of students met or exceeded expectations
Geosciences – 89% (averages across 9 courses) of students met or exceeded expectations
Physics – students met expectations for learning for the majority of CLO in all courses assessed. “Trouble areas” to be addressed were identified, and a detailed action plan was created for each.

General Education Requirements are Clearly and Accurately Described in Publications

The College shares the goals and requirements for general education in multiple official publications available in print and through web-based distribution that are accessible to the general public. These publications include both a description of the overall goals and design of the General Education Program at MCC and detailed information about how students meet general education requirements.

Students and advisors have access to online interactive programs that check student compliance with program requirements, including MCC and SUNY general education requirements. In March 2015, the College implemented Degree Works, a SUNY-wide degree compliance system. General education requirements are embedded in the advisement sequences and semester sequences that are used by advisors, faculty, and students to plan and choose appropriate courses for degree completion. In addition, students can review their individual progress on completing General Education and other degree requirements by accessing Degree Works reports available through the web.

SUNY-GER is integrated in program requirements at MCC, ensuring that individual students do not need to research whether a given course satisfies a specific general education requirement. A survey of 376 students conducted in spring 2013 found that the majority of students (65%) thought they could explain the local general education program to a friend, while about 75% responded that MCC’s general education courses would help them achieve their future goals.

General Education Program Assessment for Curricular Improvement

Responsibility for academic assessment at MCC is a collective effort consistent with our shared governance structure. The faculty are responsible for conducting assessment projects, analyzing their findings, and completing follow-up action plans. The Senate, through the College Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) committee, establishes policies regarding assessment; the Office of Academic Assessment facilitates the assessment process. A calendar of all assessment projects is maintained by the Office of Academic Assessment and the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment works with faculty to design, conduct, and document assessment projects according to this schedule. Once assessment project reports are complete, they are submitted to the division dean and Dean of Curriculum for review and acceptance. Reports are expected to document actions taken since the last assessment and findings and recommendations for an action plan moving forward.
The *Foundations IV* document established a model of assessment of general education that would not only fulfill external requirements, but would lead the campus in focusing on promoting excellence in teaching, learning, and curriculum. Additionally, it was imperative that the academic assessment model adopted incorporate MCC’s commitment to both SUNY-GER and MCC-GER requirements.

Progress in the assessment of general education has been significant over the past six years. The goal of shifting the focus of assessment away from solely assessing SUNY-GER student learning outcomes to a system of assessment projects grounded in disciplines and centered on student achievement of CLO was documented in the PRR. This shift is bringing MCC’s assessment of student learning to a new level. In fall 2012, with leadership from CAPE, the College began implementing a 3-year transition that would move MCC’s assessment of general education toward a model to fulfill the intent of *Foundations IV*. General education assessment projects follow a 3-year cycle. Academic year 2015-16 marks the beginning of the second assessment cycle since implementation of this new model, providing the first opportunity to measure the results from previous action plans.

Every General Education Assessment Project includes an “Actions Taken Since Last Assessment” section and a reflection on the results of the current assessment with the plan for future action. During the time between assessments, faculty act on their own recommendations from previous findings. General education assessment reports provide many examples of assessment results being used for curricular improvement.

General education is addressed as part of the program evaluation process. One of the required steps in that process is to “review and evaluate for clarity the relationship between degree requirements and general education courses.” Each program is assessed on a six-year cycle. Program evaluation determines the future direction and curriculum of the program, and provides a basis for informed decision making.

**Future Directions for General Education at MCC**

The Re-Imagine, Re-Invent, Re-Engineer General Education report recommended a departure from the current general education distribution model in favor of an outcomes based model in an effort to

- allow greater flexibility that permits programs to meet general education outcomes with fewer courses
- tie general education outcomes to the major
- clarify the relevance of general education outcomes for students
- continue systematic assessment of general education learning outcomes

Although the report was tabled during the spring 2015 semester while the College was awaiting the appointment of a new Provost in May 2015, the Faculty Senate took action on some of the report’s recommendations and voted to support the adoption of an outcomes-based, MCC general education model. The report’s recommendations are currently under review by the Provost and will be considered for adoption or further refinement during fall 2015. This ongoing work is further evidence of MCC’s commitment to continuous assessment and intentional improvement of curriculum.

**STRENGTHS**

- MCC has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to the delivery and design of an effective general education program, including periodic re-evaluation of the program itself.
- MCC faculty and administration approach assessment of general education courses with purposeful intent to improve student learning.
- Most MCC students surveyed both understood the general education program requirements and recognized the value of general education toward their future goal attainment.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Suggestions:

- Expand the survey that asks for perceptions graduates have of their education at MCC to include all areas of general education.
- Require assessment projects, where appropriate, to measure the effectiveness of actions taken in the previous evaluation cycle.

Recommendations:

- Increase the transparency for all aspects of general education assessment, including consistent documentation of process, findings, and action steps taken, using the Assessment Database as a tool.
- Approve an updated General Education Program that includes an implementation plan and is scheduled before the end of the 2015-16 academic year, followed by implementation of the plan and assessment of the results.
Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

OVERVIEW

Due to MCC’s strategic focus over the last five years, many of the institutional areas covered by this standard—developmental curriculum, workforce development and career education, and additional instructional sites—have been among the most dynamic at the College. This chapter examines how campuses, divisions, departments, and offices responsible for delivering innovative educational activities and offerings to our diverse learners fulfill the institutional Mission.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

MCC’s Redesign of its Basic Skills Model

MCC has systematic procedures in place to identify students who do not meet the established entry-level academic standards for acceptance into the College’s degree and certificate programs (see Standard 8). Transcripts are reviewed to determine if incoming students are required to take the ACCUPLACER. Students whose placement results indicate under-preparedness for college level work in the basic skills of English, reading, and mathematics are placed into the appropriate courses within the Transitional Studies program (TS01). Data from 2014 indicate that 25% of students require some level of developmental coursework.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)/Transitional Studies (TRS) Department teaches pre-college English and mathematics coursework and provides advisement for all admitted, under-prepared students. Imputed credit is assigned to pre-college coursework, and the credit does not count toward completion of a degree or certificate; instead, imputed credit counts toward a full-time course load for financial aid purposes. In 2012-13, TRS faculty began a comprehensive redesign of MCC’s developmental education program. Institutional Research data for the 2009-10 academic year showed that the fall to fall retention rate averages for TS01 students (48%) were well below that of the fall to fall retention rate averages for all MCC students (60%). In 2011, the TRS Department conducted a comprehensive review of its programs and services. This review, along with the findings from the MCC Reading Study Group Report 2010, supported a redesign of the College’s developmental education program that now shortens the pathway to completion, integrates support services, and provides greater flexibility in course delivery.

TRS Redesign

MCC received a five-year, $2 million US Department of Education Title III Part A, Strengthening Institutions Program: Building A Culture of Engagement and Success grant and is using the funds for the TRS redesign and other endeavors. TRS and English faculty collaborated on the recent redesign of TRS English courses. All developmental English courses were re-crafted to support the fundamental reading needs of students that, when unaddressed, inhibit success across all coursework. The redesign also strategically realigned this sequence with the revised learning outcomes for the College’s mandatory composition course. This resulted in the creation of two new courses: TRS 100 and 200 Integrated Reading and Writing I and II. This reduced the three semester non-credit preparatory sequence down to two semesters and added studio lab engagement activities. The redesign addressed identified reading deficits and provided students with a shorter, more seamless route to credit bearing courses, namely ENG 101: College Composition. In addition, credit bearing courses were created: REA 100: Reading and Thinking in the Disciplines and REA 101: Critical Reading; these are designed to help any student develop mastery in critical reading skills.
The ESOL/TRS Department also offers two non-credit developmental mathematics courses, TRS 092: Basic Mathematics and TRS 094: Pre-Algebra. Working in close collaboration with Mathematics faculty, the ESOL/TRS department developed a flexible pace option for TRS students to move through their mathematics sequence. This new modularized curriculum allows students to progress at their own pace and complete TRS 092 and TRS 094 in a single semester if able, allowing them to move more quickly to credit-bearing mathematics courses and other classes with mathematics prerequisites. With on-demand assistance from faculty, students who just need to “brush up” on their mathematics skills are not beholden to a full semester course. Some students need more than one semester to complete a single course, so this redesign provides the ability for students to pick up where they left off when the new semester begins. Students who place into any TRS course are also required to enroll in a College Success (COS) course. COS courses are credit-bearing and help students develop skills in critical thinking, time management, and study techniques, as well as require participation in active and collaborative learning experiences that utilize college resources.

MCC provides a comprehensive introduction to college services and strategies for success specifically for TRS and ESOL students. These students are required to meet with an advisor each semester to ensure they are progressing through their foundational coursework; this requirement also provides an opportunity for advisors to build relationships with this at-risk population. TRS/ESOL students may also utilize library and student support services outlined in Standards 8 and 9 and, if eligible, may participate in programs such as the Educational Opportunity Program and the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program.

Recent College initiatives such as the development of new credit and non-credit reading courses, creation of flexible pace mathematics, and the newly-established partnership between COS and First Year Experience (FYE) have all been in response to recommendations in the Transitional Studies Department Program Evaluation Report. All changes reflect MCC’s commitment to the retention and completion agenda and the College’s culture of assessment and evaluation. The final results of the TRS redesign and partnership between COS and FYE remain to be seen. However, the initial results look promising. For example, students enrolled in the flexible pace sections of TRS 092: Basic Mathematics show statistically significant differences in C or better rates when compared to traditional sections. Spring to fall persistence was improved, while fall to spring persistence and fall-to-fall retention were not.

Academic Certificate Programs

An academic certificate is a credential issued by an institution in recognition of the completion of a curriculum other than one leading to a degree. These certificates can be completed in a shortened amount of time and are offered for a particular purpose and/or to meet a local or immediate need.

Each certificate program details a description, learning outcomes, and course sequence for the program. Additionally, employment potential is also provided both online and on department websites. Academic certificate programs are treated as equivalent to A.A., A.S., and A.A.S. degree programs in that they adhere to college policies, are housed within academic departments, and adhere to the standards of all educational offerings as outlined in Standard 11.

Certificate courses may be applied toward a degree should the certificate recipient later decide to complete an A.A., A.S., or A.A.S. degree. In addition to courses being utilized to complete an MCC degree, academic certificate courses may be transferable to baccalaureate programs. Students enrolled in certificate programs have access to support services available to all students (see Standards 8 and 9).

Institutional Research provides a summary of program costs and gainful employment data for all federally-aidable certificate programs.
Published information pertaining to certificate program objectives, requirements, and curricular sequencing can be found in multiple locations for current and potential students as well as for faculty and staff who are advising students. Information provided in each location is consistent.

**Experiential Learning and Prior Learning Assessment**

MCC students demonstrate learning achieved through sources and experiences outside of the traditional academic environment including concurrent learning and prior learning.

Experiential learning allows students to earn college credit outside of a traditional classroom and comes in a [variety of forms](#) (e.g., cooperative education, internships, clinical/practicum, field experience, service-learning). Departments offering concurrent experiential learning opportunities have established department-specific criteria in handbooks for clinical/practicum and field experiences. In July 2013, MCC completed the first [Experiential Education Assessment Initiative](#), which catalogued the types of experiential learning at the College and provided recommendations. As a result of this report:

- MCC has created dedicated web pages for Experiential Learning including a Career Action Plan
- SUNY Works funds were used to create promotional brochures for both students and employers
- MCC is transitioning from the Job Connection database to the web-based career tool, Purple Briefcase, which will provide students additional support in locating full- and part-time employment, as well as internship opportunities

In keeping with Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) framework and SUNY’s recommendations, MCC conducted an operations assessment of experiential education in 2012. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) can be an important factor in reducing cost and time to degree completion. In January 2015 the Faculty Senate appointed an ad hoc committee to develop a comprehensive PLA procedure for the College. A recommendation was [approved by the Faculty Senate](#) in June 2015 to revise MCC’s PLA procedure. In accordance with this new procedure, prior learning credit will appear on the student transcript as transfer credit (“T”) with no grade assigned and no effect on the student’s GPA.

**Non Credit Workforce Development and Career Education**

MCC created the Division of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services (EDIWS) in 2011 to support the College’s Mission to educate and prepare diverse learners to achieve professional and individual success as incumbent workers or seek new employment opportunities. As an extension of the purpose of EDIWS, MCC restructured its non-credit workforce unit into a Corporate College model in 2012. This transformation has facilitated our ability to support local industry with non-credit and certificate programs, courses, and workshops.

MCC’s Corporate College focuses on finding the resources most appropriate to meet the diverse needs of the community. Through Corporate College, MCC delivers more than [350 credit and non-credit learning and development opportunities](#) to the community. Learners range from advanced manufacturing workers completing computer and technical skills training to company executives developing stronger leadership competencies that enhance careers. Corporate College catalogs are produced three times a year and typically display more than 100 different courses per semester.

Non-credit offerings meet College standards for quality. Many course topics link to academic departments and some courses are taught by MCC professors. Partner educators presenting Corporate College curriculum for clients and individuals come with extensive, diverse, and accomplished corporate learning and development backgrounds as adult learning practitioners with advanced subject matter expertise.
Student learning outcomes are clearly articulated for all non-credit course offerings, both online and in printed materials. All Corporate College programs, courses, workshops, and learning activities are assessed via Kirkpatrick Level 1 and Level 2 participant feedback and debrief consultation with corporate clients. Course improvements often occur following this feedback.

MCC is at the beginning stages of creating formal agreements to transfer the completion of non-credit classes into academic credit. MCC’s Applied Technologies Center (ATC), Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC), and G.W. Lisk, Co. Inc. have collaborated to create a “stackable” certificate program in Advanced Manufacturing Machinist (AMM). FLCC’s non-credit AMM program (comprised of 200 classroom hours and 300 lab hours), will transfer into the first semester of MCC’s Precision Machining A.A.S degree program. Assessments from MCC Precision Machining instructors have been implemented into FLCC’s AMM program to facilitate this process. FLCC students electing to take this option can choose to complete MCC’s one-year program by completing an additional 15 credit hours or 45 credit hours to complete the full two-year A.A.S program.

MCC regularly assesses the impact of non-credit education on the institution’s resources. Both the Office of Workforce Development and the Corporate College strive to operate within a self-support budget model. To achieve this, the Office of Workforce Development and Corporate College’s business plan includes the intent to provide the College with revenue from non-credit courses in excess of direct divisional costs, which include the costs to the College for the salary and benefits of dedicated staff and administrators within these areas. The plan identifies goals and objectives in terms of specific program performance and offers insight in terms of opportunities for improvement. A final accounting of the financial performance of these two business units is completed each year with the staff of the Controller’s Office, Vice President of EDIWS, and staff of the Corporate College. Decisions for supporting new programming and investment in additional staff are made with a heavy weight being given to the evaluation of the previous year’s financial performance.

In 2013 EDIWS began conducting a local biannual survey, “The Rochester Area Skills Needs Assessment and Business Climate Survey,” to collect data which is used to directly align programs to meet local employers’ needs. The data gathering ensures that the College resources remain focused on the future workforce education of the community and that EDIWS and Corporate College offerings and deliverables support the most important economic drivers in the region as aligned with the College Mission.

Branch Campus, Additional Locations, and Other Instructional Sites

MCC has additional locations which enable the College to support the Mission. All programs and courses offered at these additional locations/other instructional sites meet the same standards as courses on the Brighton campus in terms of development, instruction, and assessment. All academic programs offered at alternative campus locations must go through a rigorous review at both SUNY and NY State Education Department before they are approved and can be offered by the College (see Standard 11). Regardless of program location, student learning assessment follows the same cycle of assessment (see Standard 14). Furthermore, from a budgeting and planning standpoint, the program and course offerings, as well as facility and staffing, are regularly evaluated in the same manner as those on Brighton campus. Each additional location/instructional site has an equitable and appropriate level of institutional support, often subsidized by partnerships and programs with local industry, advisory boards, and community-based organizations. At all additional locations, students have access to faculty and academic advisers who teach at that location as well as resources appropriate to the discipline.

Damon City Campus

The Damon City Campus (DCC), located in downtown Rochester, served over 2,500 students in fall 2014. DCC houses the Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Education departments; courses in all major certificate, associate, and degree programs; developmental courses in Transitional Studies; pre-collegiate courses; service programs; and the MCC Foundation. Resources offered to students include a
library providing electronic and hard copy resources related to academic programs, various learning centers, counseling, and advising. DCC also has programs and partnerships (e.g. AmeriCorps, Upward Bound, Liberty Partnerships) which bring grant funds to the College and extend MCC’s Mission. For example, the New York State Department of Health Pathways to Success grant program helps MCC better serve pregnant or parenting students. Additionally, the College operates a free shuttle service (with MCC ID) between the Brighton and Damon City campuses which allows students to participate in the full offering of activities and events held on both campuses.

MCC leaders and community members have long held a vision of a permanent college campus in downtown Rochester, one that reflects the core mission of access, academic excellence, innovation, and individual student success. In 2013, after a process and dialogue spanning many years, the Monroe County Legislature approved the College’s purchase of properties owned by Eastman Kodak at State Street and Morrie Silver Way for MCC’s new, permanent downtown campus. In addition to the programming that currently exists at DCC, the new downtown campus will extend MCC’s reach to the business community, nonprofit organizations, and emerging industries. The plans for the new campus include the creation of flexible, innovative, and high-tech learning spaces; meeting/function space for hosting events for the College and the local community; a learning commons; a fitness center; student activity areas; a cafeteria; and a green roof. This new city campus is scheduled to open fall 2017.

Applied Technologies Center

The Applied Technologies Center (ATC) is essential in the College’s ability to fulfill our Mission as a catalyst for innovation and economic development for the region. ATC offers all major courses in certificate and associate degree programs in solar-thermal; precision machining; automotive technology; and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC). The students at ATC receive pertinent advisement and counseling from program coordinators, faculty, and teaching assistants. Additionally, services (e.g., tutoring) are supported by partnerships and grant programs with local industry such as the Empire State Development Multiple Pathways to Middle Skills Jobs. ATC’s 53,000-square-foot facility contains computer labs, multi-use classrooms, state-of-the-art industry-specific learning centers, technical labs, conference rooms, and a student lounge. In fall 2014, over 500 full-time and part-time students benefited from the technical education and industry-based training offered by the ATC.

In 2013, MCC was awarded a $200,000 grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for the development of a solar thermal technology certificate program. This program was created and used to train HVAC students to become technicians skilled in the design, installation, and maintenance of renewable energy systems. In addition, the College used the funds to help support the construction of a Solar Thermal Auxiliary Resources Center and the Weatherization and Energy Efficient House. This was a response to the region’s increased demand for skilled workers in the field.

Public Safety Training Facility

The Public Safety Training Facility (PSTF) is a regional emergency training complex owned by Monroe County and operated through a partnership with the City of Rochester and MCC. The PSTF training programs encompass entry-level academy certifications, degree programs, and advanced training credentials in Law Enforcement, Fire and Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, Aircraft Rescue, Corrections, and Probation. The facility offers on-site career and program specific advisement and features many specialized training labs, classrooms, and simulators. In 2014-15, PSTF hosted 600 FTEs, while nearly 4,000 students benefited from at least one of the many training programs offered.

PSTF also houses the Homeland Security Management Institute (HSMI) that provides first response training, prevention, and operational management during emergency situations through traditional classroom instruction, online learning, and mobile training teams. As part of MCC, the HSMI utilizes the College’s staff and resources, complemented with grant funds through community partnerships and
strategic alliances with other educational institutions, government agencies, and private industry. Grant appropriations, for example, from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Monroe County Health Department, and the League for Innovation have enabled the HSMI to expand its course offerings and training programs in recent years.

**Online Learning**

Online courses and programs are an essential component of MCC’s educational offerings and are aligned with the College’s Strategic Plan. Approximately 240 sections, representing 124 different online courses are offered on a semester basis and are delivered asynchronously through Blackboard, the campus’s Learning Management System, hosted by the Open SUNY (formerly called the SUNY Learning Network or SLN). MCC also offers hybrid/blended courses where students attend class on campus approximately once per week and complete additional coursework online. MCC faculty also use Blackboard to web-enhance on-campus classes.

**Online Offerings**

MCC started offering online courses in 1997 and since then courses have been developed in over 50 disciplines. MCC currently offers four fully online academic degree programs and 38 programs where 50% or more of the courses can be completed online, 14 of which have 75% or more of the courses online. Review, approval, and notification of new online course proposals are managed by MCC’s Curriculum and Program Development Office. All proposals for new online course sections are then reviewed and approved by the Open SUNY Advisory Committee.

Each newly-developed online course is reviewed using the Open SUNY Course Quality Rubric (OSCQR) to assure the courses meet College expectations for course learning outcomes, assessment, course technology, resources and materials, and accessibility. After initial development, training and support is provided on a regular basis to promote ongoing course quality.

**Support and Resources**

The College provides fiscal, human, library, physical, and technical support for online courses via a wide variety of institutional resources. MCC’s Virtual Campus (initially called the Office of Online Learning when it was established in 2007), provides leadership, growth, development, and support to distance education students and faculty. MCC employs a team of instructional designers, multimedia specialists, and librarians to work with faculty in development and delivery of online courses. Faculty are required to take extensive training before teaching online, covering topics including course design, pedagogy, assessment, interaction, and classroom management. To date, over 600 MCC faculty have completed this training. In addition to the initial training, workshops are offered throughout the year on a variety of topics related to best practices.

MCC also provides a variety of training and support services for students enrolled in online courses. These include access to the Open SUNY Student Orientation, the Building Online Student Success (B.O.S.S.) in-person orientation program, technology access, support in the Electronic Learning Centers on both the Brighton and Damon City Campuses, online tutoring services through Smarthinking, and an Online Writing Center. MCC Libraries also provide a variety of services for online students. Student services such as Admissions, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, and Registrar provide electronic means to enable students to complete these core functions at a distance.

**Integrity**

MCC’s distance education course offerings are consistent with the definition of distance education in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). They also meet HEOA legal requirements, Public Law 1110-315, which require colleges and universities to put appropriate processes in place to establish that
the student who registers in an online course is the same student who participates in and completes the course and receives the academic credit. To verify a student’s identity, MCC authenticates students in online courses through secure login and password procedures. These procedures are detailed in MCC’s Distance Education Fraud Prevention Procedures Manual.

MCC faculty members attempt to prevent and detect academic dishonesty through course design that reduces reliance on traditional tests by utilizing qualitative assessments such as written essays, research papers, and other original work where appropriate. Some departments, including the Mathematics department, have proctoring procedures in place for online students to take course examinations, and Dental Studies makes use of preceptors in its Dental Assisting Rapid Track online program. Additionally, Open SUNY provides a web-based SUNY Exam Proctoring System tool to assist online students in locating proctored testing centers in New York State to register to take exams.

**Assessment**

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) for online courses and Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) for fully online programs are the same as those for comparable face-to-face courses and programs. CLO for both online and face-to-face courses are assessed through MCC’s general education and program evaluation initiatives. In response to a recommendation from the Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE) final report in June 2006 to “create a plan for outcomes assessment for online learning” an ad hoc committee, the Distance Learning Assessment Initiative (DLAI-1), was charged with conducting an assessment of distance learning. The outcome of the Committee’s work was the development of the Protocol for Assessing Distance Education based on the MCC Student Learning Assessment Template used to assess face-to-face courses. The Committee also developed a schedule identifying in which semester outcomes would be assessed in online courses. In courses where a SUNY-GER assessment was also being conducted, departments combined the assessment results for their SLN sections with the results for their face-to-face sections. It should be noted that student success was quite high and consistent with the results reported in past years in both SUNY-GER course assessments and in the assessment of courses that are included in the program evaluation process. In 2014, the Distance Learning Assessment Initiative 2 (DLAI-2) Committee was charged to evaluate progress on the recommendations from the DLAI-1 report on the assessment of online courses within the framework and cycles of general education learning outcomes assessment and program evaluation. Their final report was submitted in fall 2015 and findings are currently under review.

The College also assesses the effectiveness of online teaching and learning through reports compiled by Institutional Research, one of which tracks grades and withdrawal rates in distance learning courses. Failure and withdrawal rates in MCC online course are historically higher than those in traditional face-to-face courses and vary by discipline. The College conducted multiple student retention research surveys of non-retained online students to learn why students felt they weren’t successful in their online courses. MCC has also participated in the SUNY Directors of Online and Distance Learning Environments annual persistence study since 2007. Collectively this research has informed the instructional design of online courses and student support services. Most recently, this understanding of the issues and concerns faced by online students has led MCC to integrate Starfish Retention Solutions software into Blackboard to help MCC deliver personalized support for students and assess which services and interventions will keep online students on track. Both automated and manual alerts are being implemented to create real-time interventions to increase student success in online courses.

**Enrollment**

Enrollments in online courses currently accounts for approximately 20% of all enrollments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 13.1: Total MCC Student Body Headcount Generated by SLN Enrollment*
This growth pattern has established distance learning as a contributor to the vitality of enrollment growth and management at MCC. In fall 2014 MCC’s online program enrolled 1,122 online headcount students (students who took only online courses). That semester’s total headcount of online students (those students who enrolled in both online and face-to-face courses) was approximately 3,157.

Virtual Campus

Efforts to improve MCC’s online presence continue. In fall 2014, MCC hired a Director of E-Learning and Instructional Technologies to better focus MCC’s online learning organizational structure and support the College’s plan to create the MCC Virtual Campus. The MCC Virtual Campus strategically expands access to its catalog of educational offerings, to enhance the student experience, to support strategic enrollment and financial planning, and to strengthen the link between labor market needs and college offerings. This student-centered plan for distance learning provides high quality, accessible, workforce relevant, and cost-effective educational opportunities in an online environment to meet the needs of MCC’s diverse students and community, in addition to establishing a central online presence to consult for advising, tutoring, library, registration, and financial aid information.

The establishment of an MCC Virtual Campus also provides the College an opportunity to take better advantage of new Open SUNY services, in particular, system-wide marketing, coordinated degree program development, integration of prior learning assessment, and innovative student engagement and support services. A key expectation of Open SUNY campuses is the completion of an Open SUNY Institutional Readiness Review process which is a self-study that evaluates 75 indicators across 9 categories of distance learning programs. MCC has recently completed this self-study which provides a foundation for a comprehensive implementation plan to address areas for improvement. Combining these results with the DLAI-2 report provides MCC with a clear understanding of our current practices and future opportunities.

Contractual Relationships

Purchasing and Central Receiving serves as the primary administrative focal point for review and appropriate execution of all College contracts with two primary exceptions:

- The Strategic Resource Development and Grant Management Office serves as the primary administrative focal point for review and appropriate execution of grant agreements between the funder and the College.
- The EDIWS division and its Vice President serve as the primary administrative focal point for review and appropriate execution of training-related agreements between various entities and executes various contracts.

In all these agreements, qualified staff provide oversight (or supervision) of the activities relevant to the agreement, assuring the activities carried out meet the College’s standards and are consistent with our mission and goals. Supervising staff are typically teaching faculty, program directors, and coordinators who oversee a variety of programs and services the College provides.

STRENGTHS

- The College has sound assessment methods for identifying underprepared students and has developed a rigorous sequence of courses geared toward student academic success.
- Information about certificate program objectives, requirements, and curricular sequencing is consistent throughout the College and adheres to national, state, regional, and institutional standards.
• The College provides diverse opportunities for students to access and engage in experiential learning.
• Regardless of the location where offered, the standards and quality of MCC courses are maintained through assessment and evaluation.
• MCC’s comprehensive online faculty training program ensures quality design and pedagogy.
• The significant infrastructure changes to the Corporate College have resulted in sound operational, technology, personnel, and facility upgrades.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions

• Evaluate the impact of the early alert system for online learners and associated interventions on student success and modify/enhance these efforts based on the results of this evaluation.

Recommendations

• Implement a formal course review process for every online course after it is initially developed to ensure ongoing quality using the Open SUNY Quality Course Review Rubric, or a similar tool.
OVERVIEW

MCC’s focus on student learning is demonstrated by various assessment procedures and practices. Student learning is assessed at the course level through course learning outcomes assessment as well as at the program level during a cyclical program evaluation process. This chapter examines MCC’s commitment to assessment in support of student success.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Organized, Systematic, and Sustainable Academic Assessment Processes

Since the publication of our first comprehensive and systematic academic assessment plan in 2001, MCC has engaged in and continued to develop our model of academic assessment. The College’s most recent academic assessment plan (2015), Foundations for Student Success 4.1: Closing the Assessment Loop (hereafter referred to as Foundations 4.1), is an update that incorporates new assessment practices, policies, and procedures.

The College adheres to guidelines for the completion of planned, scheduled activities for program evaluation. A review of all program evaluation reports scheduled since 2008-09 confirmed that all were completed in accordance with the published program evaluation project schedule. All general education assessment projects scheduled since 2002 were also reviewed and found complete. These findings confirmed that MCC’s approach to academic assessment is planned, organized, systematic, and sustained. The remaining discussion of this Standard will outline the impact of this process on the institution’s ability to utilize assessment for improvement.

Resources, Coordination, and Support for Assessment

Support for assessment of student learning is provided by the Office of Academic Assessment, headed by the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment. This Assistant Director provides ongoing support of student learning assessment through professional development trainings; coaching of faculty and departments during the assessment process; evaluation of tools, benchmarks, and processes; and representation on the related committees and shared governance bodies. The College provides resources in support of academic assessment, including release time to faculty assessment leaders, professional development funds, support for an annual assessment awards reception, and professional assessment organization memberships. The College supported the development of an internally-designed Assessment Database that improves upon the College’s previous pre-packaged tool by linking assessment projects specifically to curricular changes through the Curriculum Database.

MCC’s Office of Academic Assessment maintains a revolving schedule for all academic assessment projects, which is regularly updated, circulated to the academic deans and department chairs, and posted on the Assessment webpage. The College evaluates its degree and certificate programs on a six-year cycle, and general education assessments follow a three-year cycle. Following each project’s completion, debriefing meetings are held to discuss findings and recommendations and to plan for follow-up actions on completed projects.

The College’s commitment to academic assessment is also demonstrated by the establishment of the College Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) Committee. All academic assessment processes are
guided by this standing subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. Since its inception, CAPE has substantially contributed to the institution’s system of organized and sustainable assessment.

In addition to the above offices and committees directly involved in student learning assessment, Institutional Research serves as a valuable resource in the completion of academic assessment projects. Institutional Research has provided data for all academic assessment projects completed over the past six years.

**Student Learning Outcomes are Articulated and Integrated at Various Levels**

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) are established by the departmental faculty in the related discipline. CLO are reviewed and approved by the department chair, division dean, and Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. Every course at MCC has measurable CLO that list the minimum core learning that students should be able to demonstrate upon the successful completion of that course. Faculty Senate policy requires that each course information sheet provided to students include CLO. The Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment provides training in the development of learning outcomes annually to the Curriculum Committee, to departments beginning an assessment cycle, and to the general faculty as requested.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

All degree and certificate programs at the College have Program Learning Outcomes (PLO), which are available in the catalog. PLO are established and reviewed using the same process as CLO. As part of the program evaluation process, faculty review both PLO and CLO, and create curriculum maps showing their linkage. Program evaluation protocols first required curriculum mapping in 2010, and a review of program evaluation reports since that time demonstrates compliance with this requirement.

The program evaluation process also requires faculty to describe how each program’s purpose statement or goals is vertically integrated with the College’s Mission and the Strategic Plan. In addition, required performance measures embedded in the program evaluation process track success in meeting broader institutional goals, including enrollment, completion, retention, persistence, transfer, and job placement. Full faculty compliance with these steps from the College’s Program Evaluation Process Guidelines (2012) was evident in a review of program evaluation reports.

**Institutional Learning Outcomes**

MCC has historically relied upon General Education to frame institutional expectations for learning. As part of the development of an outcomes-based local General Education program, the faculty have linked current MCC General Education (MCC-GER) courses and their associated CLO to SUNY General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) using curriculum-mapping and assessment processes. This established connection has served functionally as the equivalent of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) for the College since 2012.

As part of MCC’s ongoing internal review processes, it was determined that the college community needed additional clarity with respect to the ILO. In March 2015, to more intentionally clarify and articulate the Institutional Learning Outcomes, the Interim Provost and the Faculty Senate President jointly charged the Curriculum Office and Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee to establish the Institutional Learning Outcomes Working Group, and to lead the process for proposing a new/revised set of measurable institutional learning outcomes. The ILO Working Group has completed the first stage of this process. Among the recommendations of the ILO Working Group was that “the learning outcomes for MCC General Education recommended in the final report of the Re-imagine, Re-invent, Re-engineer General Education Committee should be used as a starting basis for continued refinement toward
embedded ILOs.” During the fall 2015 semester, this effort will continue with a team charged to begin the process of implementation by merging the collective work of the ILO Working Group and the Re-Imagine Steering Committee. This work will include the delivery of an implementation plan and schedule before the end of the 2015-16 academic year.

Program Evaluation

Course-based assessment of student learning is central to the program assessment and evaluation process, as outlined in the Program Evaluation Process Guidelines (2012). All programs are required to assess selected course learning outcomes that directly support program learning outcomes, and to analyze assessment results and other program performance measures. All program evaluations must also include a visit from an external review team (ERT), affording an opportunity for constructive feedback. Such feedback from ERT members may include commentary on PLO, courses offered, individual course design, facilities and equipment, student retention and completion, and, in rare instances, CLO. Depending upon the degree program being evaluated, a typical ERT may include representatives from industry and colleagues from both four-year academic institutions and other two-year institutions. Program evaluation reports include a discussion of lessons learned from the project, recommendations for change, and an action plan for moving forward.

Specialized accredited degree programs at the College (e.g., Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Radiologic Technology) undertake detailed evaluation of their programs as part of their programmatic accreditation process. Because accredited programs often faced duplication of assessment efforts associated with completing both program evaluation and self-study for accreditation, in October 2014 the Faculty Senate amended the College’s Program Evaluation Guidelines to permit accredited programs to conduct program evaluations using more streamlined processes. This revised protocol is also in line with SUNY program accreditation policy which indicates that program evaluation can be fulfilled by an accreditation process that includes assessment of student learning.

General Education

MCC’s curriculum is organized around a dual general education model: a SUNY-mandated general education program (SUNY-GER) that all A.S. and A.A. degrees are built upon and MCC’s local general education program (MCC-GER) that is fully compatible with SUNY-GER. Over the past five years, the College has made significant changes in its assessment of general education.

In 2011, MCC revised its academic assessment processes and updated its academic assessment plan in response to changes in assessment requirements initiated by SUNY. This shift resulted in an approach that focuses on assessment of general education-related CLO by faculty members with expertise in the discipline and focuses on increased follow-up on project findings and recommendations.

The Office of Academic Assessment applies the following criteria for general education assessment projects:

- All general education assessment projects are organized and conducted by academic departments. For example, the Mathematics Department owns the responsibility for leading the assessment of Mathematics for the campus, regardless of the program in which the student being assessed is matriculated.
- All general education assessments begin with a specific project purpose. The project purpose is designed to address ongoing department concerns about student learning in the general education discipline, which could include examination of levels of student knowledge such as critical thinking skills, course design concerns, or broader student success issues.
- All general education CLO are mapped to relevant SUNY-wide general education student learning outcomes during each cycle of assessment (see Standard 12).
Evidence of Student Learning

Establishment of Benchmarks and Assessment Tools

All projects that assess student learning outcomes are expected to include an analysis of results that compares students’ achievement of those outcomes against a pre-established threshold level of success (often referenced as a learning “benchmark”). Proportions of students observed to be “meeting” or “exceeding” learning expectations are compared against these benchmarks, with the assumption that departments will respond with an action to address any learning gaps. Typically, departments follow a longstanding practice of setting a 70% benchmark, which was advocated by SUNY System Administration with the rollout of SUNY General Education Assessment in 1999, and which also is supported by cross-departmental pass rate averages for courses at the College. In addition to using established external benchmarks, departments have been encouraged to set their own benchmark standards based upon institutionally-derived data. For example, the Electrical Engineering Technology program faculty established two benchmarks of learning for their students, one for courses taken in the first year (70%), and one for second-year courses (80%), based on Institutional Research data indicating historic trends of improved learning in the second year.

To ensure that assessment results are relevant and valid, faculty are encouraged to utilize embedded student work as the favored means for measuring student learning outcome achievement. When embedded assessment tools are not appropriate for a specific project, support is available from the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment for the development or selection of rubrics, scorecards, or other tools that accurately measure student learning, consistent with standards at other institutions.

Student Learning as Documented in Program Evaluation Reports

An examination of all program evaluations completed since 2008-09 revealed wide compliance with the program evaluation process guidelines and documented evidence of student learning as illustrated by the findings and examples below. Key findings from the review of the program evaluation reports revealed that in 29 of 33 program evaluation reports reviewed, student learning of PLO met or exceeded faculty benchmark expectations. In addition, each assessment cycle includes an evaluation of the assessment process and tools used for the project. The vast majority of reports (77%) showed evidence that assessment data and tools used were appropriate to inform decisions, indicating that neither the process nor the tool required revision before the next assessment cycle.

For example, in the 2011-12 program evaluation for the Advertising: Commercial Art program, the assessment of CLO and PLO indicated that students are meeting and exceeding learning targets for the program and its courses. Program faculty used multiple measures to assess student learning, including rubrics for group evaluations and critiques, surveys, and exit interviews. In all courses assessed, students exceeded the established 70% benchmark. Feedback received from the external review team indicated broad consensus that graduates are well-prepared for transfer and careers.

Program data from accredited degree programs also provides evidence of student learning. Student pass rates on state and national licensure exams demonstrate achievement of discipline-specific knowledge consistent with professional standards and expectations. For example:

- 89% and 91% of students in the Nursing program passed the NCLEX-RN licensing exam in 2013 and 2014, respectively, exceeding both state and national averages
- 100% of students in Radiologic Technology passed their certification exams in 2013 and 2014
- 100% of students in Dental Hygiene also passed their clinical board exams in 2014 and 2015
Student Learning Results as Documented in General Education Reports

A comprehensive review of all 31 general education assessment projects completed from academic year 2008-09 through March 2015 provided significant evidence of student learning at the College. Some specific examples include:

- In 2011-12, students in randomly selected ENG 101: College Composition and ENG 200: Advanced Composition course sections were assessed for their achievement of the two SUNY Student Learning Outcomes associated with the oral skills component of the SUNY-GER Basic Communication knowledge and skills area. The qualitative assessment included analysis of student oral presentations and peer group workshops using a 3-point scoring scale. Student performance on both outcomes met or exceeded the benchmark standard which was set by the department faculty and served as the target for the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards.

- In 2011-12, the World Languages project assessed student success in meeting CLO that mapped to the two SUNY SLO for the Foreign Language knowledge and skills area. Using a course-embedded measure that assessed grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, and cultural components of language, the department established a benchmark of 75% of students meeting or exceeding expectations. Students in nine of the 14 language courses assessed met one or both SLO. As a result of the assessment, the department is currently undertaking a course-by-course review to improve achievement of learning outcomes. Results of the subsequent assessment cycle are under review in the fall 2015 semester to determine the impact of these recommended actions.

- In 2013-14, students in ENG 101: College Composition, ENG 200: Advanced Composition, ENG 205: Professional Communication, and ENG 251: Technical Writing were assessed for achievement of the writing component of Basic Communication. The assessment measure included course-embedded written essays that were scored using a departmental rubric. At least 84% of students in each of the four courses assessed met or exceeded standards, again exceeding the faculty’s established benchmark expectation.

General education project reports were also reviewed for documentation of the achievement of student learning outcomes, the quality of assessment tools and process applied, and the degree to which results were discussed concretely and constructively. The Study Team reported key findings of this analysis revealed that the majority of reports (74%) provide evidence that students are meeting expectations for key course and SUNY student learning outcomes. Most reports (61%) showed evidence that assessment data and tools used were appropriate to inform decisions, indicating that neither the process nor the tool required revision before the next assessment cycle.

Responding to Middle States Concerns

General Education Assessment: the Infused Competencies

MCC has a long history of assessing Critical Thinking and Information Management (Information Literacy/Technological Literacy) through infused competencies, meaning that they are embedded in courses throughout the curriculum. Student proficiency in these areas is assessed by measuring student performance for CLO from specific courses throughout the curriculum. As a follow-up to the 2011 Periodic Review Report and to respond to the addition of the infused competencies of Values and Ethics and Diversity and Diverse Perspectives to the curriculum as part of a larger redesign of the general education program, MCC has nearly completed its efforts to broaden the college-wide process to define, develop outcomes for, and assess all five of these infused competencies. See Standard 12 for an explanation of the pilot assessment.
Following any revisions as a result of Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee review and upon approval by the Faculty Senate, all five final Infused Competencies reports will be submitted to the Provost for consideration in fall 2015. Assessment of the infused competencies will be facilitated by the recent adoption of a new Assessment Database, an electronic database that will document assessment activities, evaluation findings, and action plans. Lessons learned during the initial assessments will be used to revise and refine the assessment process in preparation for the next assessment cycle.

**Distance Education Evaluation**

As discussed in detail in Standard 13, MCC responded to the Middle States recommendation to “create a plan for outcomes assessment for on-line learning,” by conducting its first comprehensive evaluation of distance education with the 2009-11 Distance Learning Assessment Initiative (DLAI-1). The results showed that student achievement of CLO in distance education sections was consistent with results reported for face-to-face courses in both general education and program evaluation course assessments. In 2013-15, the second Distance Learning Assessment Initiative (DLAI-2) was conducted, using a new protocol that CAPE created benchmarking the 2012 Program Evaluation Process Guidelines against MSCHE’s “Nine Hallmarks of Quality” for distance education.

The DLAI projects illustrate how assessment results are shared and provide examples of internal processes for follow-up on assessment work. The findings of the DLAI-1 project were shared and discussed within the leadership of both Academic Services and Educational Technology Services (ETS). The merger of Academic Services and ETS in spring 2014 afforded the opportunity to better address and account for follow-up actions from the initial DLAI project report. In July 2015, the DLAI-2 draft report documented the progress made from DLAI-1 and focused attention on issues of concern. Assessment of student learning in distance education courses was included in both DLAI projects. The results of these projects, combined with the Institutional Readiness Assessment (see Standard 13) provides MCC with a comprehensive plan for the future of online learning that addresses current challenges and future opportunities.

**Closing the Loop**

MCC’s assessment policies emphasize the effective use of assessment results and a process of continuous improvement. Foundations 4.1 substantiates the institutional objective of making assessment and program evaluation projects relevant and useful to faculty and administration. Emphasis is placed on the analysis and interpretation of assessment data to generate follow-up actions. Between assessment cycles, departments and programs are expected to act on the recommendations developed from the assessment findings. All general education assessment and program evaluation projects require documentation of findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions taken. In addition, a debriefing meeting is held after the completion of each project. These meetings serve as a platform for recognition of faculty efforts in assessment and offer opportunities for discussion with the department chair, division dean, or senior administrator around actions that have been taken, future planned actions, and any assistance that is needed to act on report recommendations.

All assessment project reports completed and summaries of project debriefings from 2008-09 to the present were reviewed, and interviews with division deans were conducted to determine the effectiveness of closing the loop activities at the College. The findings revealed the following key observations:

- All general education and program evaluation reports included recommendations resulting from the project.
- 91% of reports included either actionable items or an action plan for follow-up.
- All general education assessment reports included recommendations to be considered for action; many of these recommendations included minor actions in response to positive assessment findings.
• The vast majority of reports (77%) showed evidence that assessment data and tools used were appropriate to inform decisions, indicating that neither the process nor the tool required revision before the next assessment cycle.

Debriefing meetings and information in successive assessment reports provide evidence that closing-the-loop activities are occurring. Information from debriefing meetings indicated that the majority of assessment reports included recommendations that were acted upon both affirmatively and quickly.

Assessment Results Used to Improve Teaching and Learning

From 2007-09, College faculty developed and published lists of CLO that identified skills, knowledge, and competencies students would acquire in each course. Starting in fall 2010 for program evaluation, and in fall 2011 for general education assessment, faculty leaders of assessment projects included a comprehensive review of CLO to ensure that each set represented the “minimum common core content” of learning covered in that course and that each CLO was measurable. To support this effort in assessment, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee also adopted rigorous CLO review in approving new courses and course revisions.

MCC’s faculty utilize results of assessment projects and program evaluations to improve teaching and learning. Areas providing the richest evidence of change were curriculum and program design, followed by support services, and faculty professional development. MCC’s Curriculum Database retains evidence of numerous changes to courses and programs as a direct result of assessment, particularly changes to PLO and CLO implemented to enhance student learning. Specific examples of how results are used to improve teaching and learning include assessment projects in the natural sciences:

• In 2012-13, Chemistry faculty examined student learning in CHE 151: General College Chemistry I, a pivotal course that had been identified by other programs as a potential impediment to program completion. As a result of the assessment, the department developed a number of recommendations to improve student success in CHE 151, including implementing alternative instructional methods and a flipped classroom pilot in one section of the course.

• In its most recent general education assessment, conducted in 2012-13, the Physics faculty assessed student learning for every CLO in each department-based course meeting SUNY-GER in the Natural Sciences knowledge and skills area. In addition, the department devised ways in which the teaching and learning of the CLO could be improved upon, including revision of physics labs to accentuate hypothesis development; emphasize mathematical analysis, measurement, and data collection; and increase the use of analytical exercises. The flipped classroom approach was recommended to enhance learning of difficult concepts in some physics courses.

Results demonstrating the impact of these changes are anticipated with their next assessment cycle in 2015-16.

Assessment Results Lead to Institutional Renewal

Academic assessment at MCC is strategically used by leaders to make decisions, and has resulted in identifiable, tangible changes to the institution. In fall 2016, the College will transition to a new cohort-based admissions and student support system that will change how the institution’s faculty and support staff shepherd students through their college experiences. This initiative, the Academies Roadmap Project, used academic assessment projects in Transitional Studies (TRS) and Liberal Arts as important foundational resources, both in the conception of the project and in the development of various features of its design. Information from the TRS report, concerning how remediation services are used to assist underprepared students at entry provided baseline information for the conceptualizing of specific student support services in the Academies. The co-chairs of the Academies Project also cited the importance of
the Liberal Arts degrees program evaluation project in the identification of key areas that could be strengthened with respect to student support.

The transition to the new Academies Model will come with a predetermined assessment plan in place. Early in the conceptualization phase, the Academies co-chairs determined that considerations for assessment would be at the center of the program’s implementation. An ongoing Academies Assessment Committee has worked to establish baseline measures for student success, as well as ongoing measures to help the institution determine the extent to which the Academies Plan is meeting its benchmark goals. To date, no other academically-centered project at the College has incorporated considerations for assessment during the initial planning stages, which clearly illustrates the growth of MCC’s culture of assessment.

Assessment Results Shared

Assessment results are shared across the College. Completed assessment reports are submitted to the division dean, the Dean of Curriculum, the Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services, and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Services. Each completed assessment project is reviewed in a debriefing meeting, attended by the faculty assessment project leader(s), department chair, division dean, Dean of Curriculum, and Assistant Director of Curriculum and Assessment. Debriefings provide a forum for the discussion of findings and recommendations resulting from assessment projects or program evaluations, and to promote planning for follow-up actions.

Specific large-scale and cross-divisional projects, such as the DLAI-1 and the Liberal Arts Program Evaluation, are presented and discussed at the Academic Services Leadership Council, a group that includes the Provost, senior academic leaders, and division deans. In addition, the newly-created Assessment Database, similar to the Curriculum Database, affords the institution with a standardized platform for the storage, review, and sharing of assessment project results. Although assessment results have been a consideration in requesting resources at the department level, the implementation of the new Assessment Database will create the opportunity for more institution-wide use of assessment results in the allocation of resources.

Assessment Efforts Recognized and Valued

During the annual Assessment Awards reception, excellence of faculty assessment leadership and excellence of collaboration by an academic program or department are recognized with awards. CAPE presents awards at this reception that recognize unique and interesting assessment practices, and in spring 2015 presented its first Career Achievement in Assessment Award. In spring 2014, the Provost presented an Award of Special Recognition for Excellence in an Assessment Project to faculty leaders of the College’s Liberal Arts transfer degree program evaluation. Award recipients are honored at the reception, in the MCC Daily Tribune, and listed on the Assessment webpage.

Future Directions

Momentum for continued improvement informed by academic assessment is evident at the College. Work on the College’s assessment roadmap for the future, Foundations 4.1, has been completed. CAPE will begin the new academic year with the further development of comprehensive institutional General Education assessment process guidelines mirroring our well-established program evaluation guidelines. Sponsorship of faculty professional development activities in the area of academic assessment is a continued priority for the College. With the Assessment Database fully implemented, another priority will be to use it effectively for even greater accountability, transparency, and follow-up.
STRENGTHS

- MCC’s academic assessment process ensures that assessment projects are planned and executed on a pre-established schedule.
- MCC’s academic assessment processes are faculty-driven and promote faculty engagement in purposeful assessment.
- The College’s academic assessment policies, processes, and practices promote the use of external feedback as a way to assure program quality, including feedback from external review teams and program advisory committees.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions:

- Develop and implement an “Assessment Communication Plan” to encourage faculty and departments to exchange best practices more widely in academic assessment and program evaluation.
- Publicize MCC’s updated assessment plan, Foundations 4.1.
- Develop a succession plan for faculty leaders in academic assessment.
- Develop stronger internal accountability processes to improve on-time completion of scheduled assessment projects..

Recommendations:

- MCC needs to increase the transparency of the documentation of the process of closing the loop and to better communicate the timely results and actions stemming from academic assessment projects by leveraging the Assessment Database.
- MCC should link resource allocation more closely to assessment results, using the Assessment Database as a tool.
MCC’s Self-Study process represents the significant commitment of over 150 MCC stakeholders, comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators—and countless others who participated in interviews, gathered data and documentation, and responded to inquiries. MCC takes pride in the many accomplishments that it has been able to document in this self-study. In sum, this self-study report demonstrates that MCC meets MSCHE’s *Standards of Excellence*, with the 15 recommendations highlighted herein reflecting MCC’s ambition to do more. Taken together, these recommendations reveal three general areas for self-improvement: communication, consistency, and timeliness. The following table details these three areas for self-improvement with the corresponding recommendations.

### Self-Study Recommendations and General Areas for Self-Improvement

**Communication:** The following recommendations demonstrate that the College could be more diligent in developing, publicizing, and communicating policies, procedures, and plans.

- Develop an Intellectual Property policy. (Std. 6)
- Develop an on-going strategic enrollment management planning process that includes a focus on student retention. (Std. 8)
- Develop a method to ensure course learning outcomes are readily available to prospective students. (Std. 11)
- Increase the transparency for all aspects of general education assessment, including consistent documentation of process, findings, and action steps taken, using the Assessment Database as a tool. (Std. 12)
- Increase the transparency and the documentation of the process of closing the loop and better communicate the timely results and actions stemming from academic assessment projects by leveraging the Assessment Database (Std. 14)

**Consistency:** One clear and important area for improvement addressed by the following recommendations is the College’s need to be consistent in its assessment efforts and the use of resulting data.

- Create annual reports for each division recording improvement efforts and results and ensure that they are aligned, as appropriate, with the annual budgeting process. (Std. 2)
- Establish and publish an evaluation cycle to review and update college-wide policies. (Std. 4)
- Implement the planned MCC Report Card and require unit plans to articulate activities taken to improve these metrics. (Std. 7)
- Develop consistent and regular evaluation criteria for new retention efforts. (Std. 8)
- Continue to implement the unit assessment cycle and use the results to inform future decision-making concerning student support services. (Std. 9)
- Implement a formal course review process for every online course after it is initially developed to ensure ongoing quality using the Open SUNY Quality Course Review Rubric, or an externally developed similar tool. (Std. 13)
- Link resource allocation more closely to assessment results using the Assessment Database as a tool (Std. 14)

**Timeliness:** The following recommendations highlight the importance for the College to have timely and appropriate follow-up on the findings and recommendations from committee reports.
- Review the current transfer credit evaluation procedures to ensure that the College offers a standardized assessment of credits that is reviewed on an annual basis. (Std. 8 and Std. 11)
- Follow up on the recommendations of the MCC Liberal Arts Degree Programs committee. (Std. 9)
- Approve an updated General Education Program that includes an implementation plan and is scheduled before the end of the 2015-16 academic year, followed by implementation of the plan and assessment of the results. (Std. 12)

### Ensuring the Use of the Self-Study Recommendations

MCC will ensure the continuing use of these self-study recommendations by including them as standing items on the agenda of President’s Staff and incorporating them into the work of the newly–convened College Coordinating Council (CCC), a cross-institutional governance body that is composed of faculty, union leaders, administrators, staff, and students. This body is modeled on successful governance practice at colleges such as the Madison Area Technical Colleges, Austin Community College, and the Maricopa Community Colleges. President Kress has also committed to reporting out to the Board of Trustees on the College’s progress in addressing the recommendations, assuring that our Trustees remain involved and informed about this aspect of institutional assessment, improvement, and effectiveness.

MCC has already begun addressing some of the recommendations identified in the preceding pages. For each relevant Standard, the table below provides a few of the specific action steps that MCC has taken since the start of this self-study process and the submission of this self-study report to Middle States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Action Steps Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This self-study is helping to set the stage for the next MCC Strategic Plan, slated to be in place in spring 2017. Since strategic planning comes directly at the heels of reaccreditation activities, MCC is using this document as a way to advance its new mission and realize its future strategic goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The newly created MCC policy website, in addition to the on-going review of College transfer credit procedures, are two clear steps that MCC is taking to improve consistency, communication, and standardization of language around policy and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The College has begun its implementation of the MCC Report Card to improve assessment metrics and benchmarking to drive institutional improvement. The Report Card improves metrics that set high standards and enable the College to better track its progress towards its strategic goals. It will be launched in spring 2016 so as to include finalized fall 2015 data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Moving to the Academies Model in fall 2016 has benefits beyond student success and retention; it will help simplify the enrollment process for students, streamline marketing and communications, create a single degree coding/reporting system, and focus advisement along clear, intentional pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>While it is prudent that changes to a successful program of general education be undertaken only after very thoughtful consideration, the College recognizes that it must</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
finalize and launch a revised General Education Program by the end of the 2015-16 academic year.

| 13 | MCC’s new downtown campus will address two distinct but convergent needs: the need for additional space and the need to provide learning environments appropriate to 21st Century learners and programs. In addition to improving its physical facilities, the College has also been reconstructing and updating its infrastructure in numerous other areas, especially in information technology, enrollment management, and external marketing--including a comprehensive redesign of the College website to focus on prospective and current students. |
| 14 | MCC’s newly-created Assessment Database is enabling the College to better document and communicate timely assessment results which faculty and administrative leaders are using to make appropriate decisions about teaching, planning, and budgeting, thus closing the assessment loop. |

As our self-study documents, Monroe Community College has used this process as an opportunity for comprehensive self-assessment, and the resulting report will yield benefits for our students for years to come. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education notes that the accreditation process “is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of higher education, making it worthy of public confidence.” We are grateful for this opportunity to take part in this meaningful and deliberate process of continuous improvement that will yield a stronger MCC, improve outcomes for our students, and provide another measure by which our community can see the quality and excellence of their college.