Academy Application
DUE DATE: JULY 15, 2007
MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  MONROE, MI  MAY 30, 2007

Name of Institution    City, State  Application Date

Preferred Point of Entry to the Academy:
__X__ October 2007
_____ February 2008
_____ June 2008

Note: HLC will determine Academy entry point based on the Admissions Panel's recommendations and the process of constructing cohorts based on needs, goals, institutional types, mission, size, ...etc.

Application Questions:

Recent Efforts

1. What is your “assessment story”? Evaluate your past and present efforts (include here things such as your accomplishments, issues, barriers, results, strategies).

From about 1995-2002, Monroe County Community College (MCCC) had a somewhat developed process for collecting data to assess institutional effectiveness. Most often, however, the evaluation loop was not closed in terms of the use of data for improvement and feedback. There is no record of consistent, comprehensive, and on-going assessment of student learning at the course and program levels at MCCC.

Currently, evaluations of effectiveness at the College are inconsistent and incomplete at the institutional (Instruction, Business Affairs, Student Services, and Institutional Advancement), program, and course levels. Accredited occupational programs, including Nursing and Respiratory Therapy Assistant, are mature in assessment of student learning. With the exception of writing, assessment of learning in general education (which includes science, mathematics, writing, political science, and computer science) is inconsistent and incomplete, both within the core general education program as well as within general education competencies across the curriculum (i.e., embedded).
Evaluation activities at MCCC cut across all areas within a committee structure. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee includes evaluation activities within the areas of Business Affairs, Student Services, Institutional Advancement and Instruction, including assessment of student learning activities within the academic divisions of humanities/social sciences, science/mathematics, health, industrial technology, and business.

Individual faculty, departments and divisions have undertaken assorted assessment activities with varying levels of success and results. These activities may be defined as inconsistent, at best. In fact, on-going attempts to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for assessing student learning have stalled resulting in the lack of a defined culture of assessment at the college. Rather, an underlying assumption that assessment is the sole responsibility of a committee continues to permeate the institution.

Of late, however, faculty have directly participated in workshops involving hands-on-activity at documenting course and program level outcomes. More such workshops are planned for the future. Still, many (faculty particularly) remain skeptical of “assessment” as an added burden, even those willing to concede the problem of grade inflation. A comprehensive change in the outlook of documentation and processes to move towards outcome-based learning is anticipated over the next few years. It is expected that participation, particularly with faculty representation, in the Academy will not only support but accelerate efforts to create a culture of assessment at the College.

**Needs and Benefits**

2. What are your most pressing needs that you expect to be addressed via your participation?

Identifying and holding accountable department/division leadership (both administrative and faculty) for implementing program and course level assessment of student learning.

Providing professional development and training in the area of assessment for key personnel who will serve in the capacity of a “train-the-trainer” approach to professional development.
Creating a culture of accountability for assessing student learning that supports the College’s current strategic planning initiative which focuses on data-driven decision-making.

Developing an institution-wide plan for assessing student learning that includes the goals of creating a culture of assessment, systematic data collection and analysis procedures and practices, as well as, a clear process for evaluating the plan and effectiveness of assessment activities in an effort to ensure progress and sustainability of activities.

Developing a clear understanding of the difference between program and course level outcomes and how both tie into the big picture of assessment in general.

3. Why is the Academy key to your success now?

MCCC’s participation in the Academy is timely for a number of reasons. The current senior administration supports “beefing-up” assessment efforts. The College has committed the funds to participate. Administrators and faculty are motivated to participate. As the College prepares for the 2009-2010 HLC re-accreditation visit coupled with its current strategic planning initiative, the environment is ripe for HLC-related activities that support re-accreditation and data-driven decision-making.

In all honesty, the college cannot afford to continue the practice of piecemeal assessment of student learning. The Academy provides a comprehensive, structured program for assessing student learning that holds the College accountable over four years, both financially and in terms of regular reporting.

4. What are your goals for the Academy? What do you think will be your focus during the Academy (e.g., projects, initiatives, activities, work)?

Professional development and training in the area of assessment for key personnel (i.e., faculty and instructional administrators on the Academy team) who will serve in the capacity of a “train-the-trainer” approach to professional development.

Developing an institution-wide plan for assessing student learning that includes the goals of creating a culture of assessment, systematic data collection and analysis procedures and practices, as well as, a clear process for evaluating the plan
and effectiveness of assessment activities in an effort to ensure progress and sustainability of activities.

Securing solid, proven examples and samples of successful assessment practices (best practices) in place at institutions similar to MCCC.

Developing a clear understanding of the difference between program and course level outcomes and how both fit into the big picture of assessment in general.

Securing guidelines for developing “program assessment” where there are no programs—i.e., overall assessment of the Associate of Arts degree.

Finding help with or direction to alternative models for assessment—one size does not fit all.

Commitment and Focus

5. What evidence demonstrates your commitment to and capacity for assessment of student learning (include things such as evidence of presidential and academic commitment to full participation, plans for involving the people and groups to accomplish your goals, financial and other resource support, inclusion of the broader institutional community)?

Academy team would be comprised of faculty and administration, under the guidance of the Vice President of Instruction.

As outlined earlier, program and course level outcomes are currently being tied to broader institutional effectiveness strategies.

The College has committed significant financial resources toward the study and implementation of assessment practices, not limited to the funds needed to participate in the Academy. For example, in addition to the annual Academy fees over four years, the College has committed funds for attending Academy-related activities, the annual HLC meeting, and other assessment-related professional development activities. Additionally, the College supports a license for the use of WIDS software for developing
curriculum, managing and storing course data, and assessing student learning outcomes.

Over the last three years, the college has consistently encouraged professional development through offerings of workshops and information sessions. Additional funds have been budgeted through both institutional and grant dollars such as Perkins IV (for Occupational programs) to support assessment of course and program level outcomes assessment.

The Vice President of Instruction has committed to providing faculty release from workload obligations to serve as division assessment coordinators.

Practices and examples of assessment strategies are being implemented within various academic divisions. This is a strategy which will be continued into the next several years.

The Vice President of Instruction is committed to establishing a standing committee comprised of faculty, administrators, and a student that is charged with developing, managing, and implementing the college’s plan for assessing student learning. The committee will report to the Vice President of Instruction, who will serve as an ex-officio member. The Academy team will serve as members on the committee.

**Potential Impact**

6. What results do you want to achieve by the end of four years in the Academy? What is the potential for impact on the institution? On learning and teaching? On the culture?

Establish plan implementation benchmarks for use over the next several years.

Create a systematic process for reviewing and evaluating the assessment plan.

Secure comprehensive institutional buy-in and participation that results in a prevailing culture of accountability for assessing and improving student learning.

Integrate assessment of student learning with accreditation and strategic planning efforts.
Move the College through at least one cycle of implementation of an effective and sustainable plan for assessing student learning.

7. How will your work in the Academy contribute to student learning? How will it be significant to student learning?

It is believed that the college’s participation in the Academy will serve to accelerate current efforts to assess student learning and, subsequently, support the development of a culture of assessment (and accountability) that puts improvement of student learning at the center of all institutional effectiveness and strategic planning efforts.

Comprehensive, consistent, planned, systemic collection of student outcome data will be used to determine if course and program outcomes are being met. Improvements can then be made to areas of instruction corresponding to those particular outcomes that are not being met. This will contribute to student learning by focusing improvement efforts where they are most needed.
CONTACT INFORMATION

Primary Academy Contact Person:

Dr. Grace B. Yackee
Salutation, Name

Vice President of Instruction
Job Title of Liaison

Monroe County Community College
Organization Name

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Monroe, MI 48161
City, State, Zip

734/384-4221           734/384-4211 gyackee@monroeccc.edu
Office phone(s) and extension(s)  Office fax  Email address

Name and address to which the Commission should send invoices for Academy participation:

Same as Above
Salutation, Name, Title

Organization Name

Office address

City, State, Zip

Application Due Date: July 15, 2007

Before you email your Academy Application to academy@hlcommission.org, make certain it has been reviewed and approved by your institution's CEO.
**APPLICATION AFFIRMATION**

I affirm that the application emailed to academy@hlcommission.org presents our institution accurately, and that we agree, if admitted, to commit to meaningful and productive participation in the four-year Academy for Assessment of Student Learning.

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<th>Signature of Organizational CEO</th>
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**Printed/Typed Name and Title**

Monroe County Community College

**Name of Organization**

1555 S. Raisinville Rd.

**Address**

Monroe, MI 48161

**City, State of Organization, ZIP code**

Include the affirmation in the electronic delivery of the application or fax to the Commission, attention to Jonathan Keiser: (312) 263-7462.