

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Monroe County Community College
Monroe, Michigan

September 28-30, 2009

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The purpose of this visit was to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Monroe County Community College (MCCC) for the purpose of continued accreditation.

B. Organizational Context

Monroe County Community College is a comprehensive two-year college, located in Monroe County, Michigan (southeastern corner of the state). The College was created in 1964 and received initial accreditation from HLC (NCA) in 1972. The population of Monroe County is approximately 154,000. Credit headcount enrollment at MCCC (Fall 2008) is 4,514.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

There were an unusual number of third party comments submitted to HLC for this evaluation. Many were positive. Some were negative. Most of the concerns were from two current employees and one former employee of the College. The team investigated the concerns raised. In the case of concerns that were verified by interviews and documents reviewed during the visit, these issues are addressed in the findings and recommendations of this report.

MCCC is a current member of the Commission's Academy of Assessment of Student Learning.

MCCC has considered converting to the AQIP accreditation process but has not yet made that decision.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

Two team members visited Monroe County CCs Whitman Center, located 15 miles south of Monroe, in Temperance, MI. This is an off-campus site where courses, but no full programs are delivered.

E. Distance Education Reviewed

MCCC offers online courses as a member of the HLC approved Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative. During Fall 2009, MCCC offered 64 online courses. Interviews with faculty and staff verified that the College provides appropriate computer support and technical staff support for online instruction, under the leadership of the Coordinator for E-Learning and Instructional Support. Student success rates for students taking online courses are comparable to that of students taking classes in the traditional face to face format. A Distance Learning Committee was formed in 2007 to address the needs, issues, and concerns of online faculty and students.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

Board of Trustees

Entire Board (seven members)

Administration

President
Vice President of Instruction
Vice President of Student and Information Services
Vice President of Business Affairs and Treasurer
Director of Institutional Advancement
Director of Marketing
Director of Human Resources
Dean of Business
Dean of Health Sciences
Dean of Humanities/Social Sciences
Dean of Science/Mathematics
Dean of Industrial Technology
Dean of Corporate and Community Services

Faculty

Open meetings with @ 60 faculty members, including faculty from the following departments/disciplines:

Biology
Business
Chemistry
Counseling
Early Childhood Development
eLearning
Electronics
Geoscience
Health Science
Humanities
Industrial Technology
Information Technology
Journalism
Library
Math
Nursing
Physics
Psychology
Social Sciences

President MCCC Faculty Association
Self-Study Co-Chairs

Staff

Open Meeting with Administrative Staff
Open Meeting with 70 Support Staff and Maintenance
Corporate and Community Services staff
e-Learning and Instructional Support Staff
Learning Resources Director
Library staff
Learning Assistance Lab staff
Purchasing Director
Registrar
Whitman Center Director
Information Systems Manager
Information Services staff
Admissions Director
Physical Plant Director
Lifelong Learning Director
Financial Aid Director
Institutional Advancement staff

Students

Open Meeting with Students (14 in attendance)

Committees

HLC Self-Study Steering Team
Curriculum Committee
Criterion I Steering Committee
Institutional Effectiveness Committee
Strategic Planning Committee
HLC Academy for Assessment of Student Learning Team
General Education Review Task Force
Diversity Committee

Community

Members of the Foundation Board of Directors
CEO, Monroe Bank and Trust
Insurance Agency Owner
Staff representative from Congressman Dingell
Engineer, DTE Energy
Communications Director, Intermediate School District
CEO, local American Red Cross
La-Z-Boy Foundation Board Member
HR Director, Mercy Memorial Hospital System
Publisher, Monroe Evening News

Circuit Court Judge
Executive Director, United Way of Monroe County
Bedford Business Association Trustee
President, Monroe County Chamber of Commerce
Retired Medical Doctor
Mayor of Monroe
Farmer
Director, Monroe County Library System
Superintendent, Monroe County Intermediate School District

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

MCCC Accreditation Self-Study
MCCC Self-Study Update (September 2009)
Annual Financial Reports (including audits) for 2007 and 2008
Documents provided by the HLC
MCCC 2009-2010 College Catalog
MCCC Diversity Plan
2006 Conversation Day reports
2006 Constellation Survey data and reports
2008-2009 Board of Trustee Minutes
MCCC web site
Employee Climate Surveys
Lifelong Learning Schedule
Strategic Planning Committee Minutes
Institutional Effectiveness Committee Model
General Requirements for Graduation
Third Party Comments
Faculty Handbook
Student Complaint Log and Procedures
Student Orientation Handbook
Electronic Resource Room

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The self-study was thorough. Interviews during the visit verified broad participation in the self-study process. In the self-study, the College recognized many opportunities for self-improvement. Follow-up on these ideas for improvement will benefit the College.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The team found that the self-study provided a reasonably accurate picture of the institution at the time it was written.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The team considers MCCC's responses to previously identified challenges to be adequate.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

Requirements were fulfilled.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Please see the attached worksheet (Appendix).

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met**Mission**

The Self-Study and interviews during the visit verified that the College's academic divisions operate under mission statements consistent with MCCC's institutional purposes. Campus surveys suggest that staff and faculty have a shared understanding of the institution's mission.

The MCCC Ad Hoc Diversity Committee was established in 2004. In the time since the committee's establishment, the group planned and delivered a series of diversity training sessions attended by all full-time faculty and employees. The committee also supports and monitors diversity activities that include readings, concerts, art shows, and presentations by speakers that emphasize multicultural topics. In 2007, the ad hoc committee was granted standing committee status by the Institutional Governance Committee.

MCCC's mission statement appears in each edition of the *College Catalog*. The mission statement also appears in the college's *Faculty Handbook* and *Support Staff Handbook* along with statements about the institution's vision, core values, and educational objectives. The mission statement is also printed in the *Annual Report* and other College publications, posted on the College website, and posted at numerous locations about the Campus, including on the wall of the Board of Trustees meeting room in the La-Z-Boy.

Governance

Interviews during the visit indicated that the College's Board Members are knowledgeable and committed to the College's educational mission.

At the level of college policy, MCCC maintains a commitment to the principles of shared governance. Specifically, the Board of Trustees' Policy for Faculty Participation in the Governance of the Institution (5.01) demonstrates the College's long term, historic intent to encourage collaborative decision making processes.

Integrity

The organization upholds and protects its integrity. Evidence includes a set of expectations and standards for students detailed in the *Student Handbook*, the *College Catalog*, semester course schedules, and the *MCCC Policy and Procedure Manual*. In addition, the institutional rights and responsibilities for full-time faculty are outlined in the College's *Master Agreement* with the faculty. The College also maintains a Code of Ethics for all of its employees.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

None noted

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires Commission follow-up

Shared Governance and Communication (Core Component 1d)

In regard to shared governance, a structure has been in place since 1972. However, the College concluded in its Self-Study that the structure was in need of review. Institutional survey data and team meetings with faculty, staff and administration, during the visit, suggest that the College does not currently have an effective structure or process for promoting communication and shared governance. The institution's Self-Study concluded that "The College must work to improve and maintain effective lines of communication" (p. 120). On campus, the team heard comments in meetings with staff and faculty to the effect that the current communication strategy focuses on reporting as opposed to dialogue.

The College recently undertook an HLC Vital Focus study. The study included a 2006 College-wide Conversation Day and a Constellation Survey. The institution also conducts routine Campus Climate surveys. A common theme among all of these sources has been the need for improved communication.

The Self-Study included a proposal that, "The campus community should discuss and recommend a model for decision making" (p. 120). A decision making model was subsequently developed by a subcommittee of the HLC Accreditation Steering Committee and is currently under consideration by the Institutional Governance Committee.

The Self-Study suggests that the "The Institutional Governance Committee should conduct a review of the internal governance structure" (p. 121). Through visits with employee groups on campus, the team confirmed the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the College's governance structure. The College should decide what is the best mechanism for addressing these issues (Institutional Governance Committee or another mechanism).

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None noted.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; Commission follow-up is recommended: A focused visit on communication and shared governance, during academic year 2012-13.

CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE. The organization's allocation of

resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Institutional Resources

The Self-Study, audits for the past two years, and interviews with College personnel indicate that despite challenging times with the economy and state budget, the College's financials are strong. The College continues to operate in a sound fiscal manner. An important indicator of fiscal stability are the College's fund balances: (a) working capital (2/12ths of annual budgeted expenditures) and (b) a contingency fund (5 percent of annual budgeted expenditures).

Interviews during the visit indicated that the College has a qualified staff that is appropriately sized for a college with student enrollments and budgets similar to Monroe's.

The College has implemented a new technology plan, and classroom technology has been upgraded to provide computers and technology relevant to today's classroom needs. However, the computer labs at the Whitman Center (off-campus site) have yet to be updated and should be scheduled for updating in the near future.

In recent years, the College has been successful in acquiring funding through fund-raising and external grants, to include a Title III grant designed to further enhance the external fundraising efforts of the College.

The assets of the Foundation have continued to grow in the few years that the Foundation has existed.

Planning

The team learned from the Self-Study and from interviews during the visit that MCCC has a history of planning, and has recently developed a new strategic planning model that is in the first two years of operation. The College has established a good planning foundation with this model. Through this model, the College is attempting to move to data driven decision-making, but this process is in the early stages of development and has achieved few results at this time.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

None noted

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

Evaluating and Improving Institutional Effectiveness (Core Component 2c)

The College has a desire to build a culture of institutional effectiveness and has an Institutional Effectiveness Committee. This committee reports to the President and

the President then has the responsibility to consider, approve and implement committee recommendations.

At this time, the committee is still developing recommendations for institutional effectiveness. Follow through, accountability and feedback mechanisms have yet to be developed.

The Assessment Committee was renamed the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The team recommends that the College reestablish a free standing Assessment Committee that is composed primarily of faculty, with the charge of establishing and implementing a college-wide student academic assessment program.

The team also recommends that the College develop a process to coordinate the work of the assessment committee, the strategic planning committee, and the institutional effectiveness committee.

In the absence of an institutional research office, in order to facilitate data-driven decision-making, a college-wide process for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and storing data should be developed and maintained.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None noted

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; Commission follow-up is recommended: A focused visit on evaluating and improving institutional effectiveness, during academic year 2012-13.

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Effective Teaching

A sample review of Human Resources files verified that MCCC follows its hiring criteria for hiring qualified faculty (including adjunct faculty); the sample also revealed that full-time faculty are regularly evaluated.

Interviews revealed that the Curriculum Committee is composed of representatives from all academic divisions as well as administrators, although some faculty feel there is inadequate faculty representation on the committee.

The Self-Study, as well as interviews during the visit, verified that MCCC recognizes effective teaching through Outstanding Faculty Awards as well as support for innovative teaching practices through Foundation Grants.

Learning Environment and Learning Resources

A tour of MCCC facilities verified that the College has developed learning environments that support and enhance student learning opportunities. These

include the East and West Technology Buildings, Campbell Learning Resource Center, Life Sciences Building, Warrick Student Services/Administration Building, Welch Health Education Building, and La-Z-Boy Center. The Whitman Center, an off-campus site, is a much valued and well utilized learning environment in southern Monroe County.

The campus tour, as well as interviews with staff, indicated that MCCC has made an institutional commitment to provide support for the use of instructional technology via access to information, training and resources for implementation; this commitment has included the hiring of a coordinator for e-learning and instructional support and a distance learning assistant.

MCCC supports student learning and effective teaching through facilities and services such as the MCCC library, the Learning Assistance Lab, the Writing Center, the computer labs, and the Testing Center. In addition, the Fitness Center, Meyer Theater, and other spaces support specific departments and offer enrichment for students and staff at MCCC.

Supplemental Instruction is an academic support best practice at MCCC. The work of student leaders in courses with historically high course attrition has proven to be highly effective in promotion of student retention and success. Another successful practice has been online tutoring for distance learners provided by the Writing Center through e-mail and Blackboard with a guaranteed turn-around of 48 hours.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, Including General Education Outcomes (Core Component 3a):

The team found that general education core competencies are being considered but that they have not yet been established, even though the two previous HLC teams, dating back to 1990, cited general education as an area of concern. General education competencies must be identified and implemented throughout the college in order to inform and drive the assessment of student learning.

The Vice President of Instruction is in charge of the assessment of student learning at the institutional level. There seem to be isolated instances of assessment at the program level and several good examples at the course level. But MCCC needs to develop a college-wide process of assessment that includes data collection, the analysis of data, and a continuous feedback loop.

The College participates in the HLC Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning (2007 cohort). The General Education Review Task Force has been charged with leading the first MCCC Academy project, review of general education. This is an opportunity to establish an assessment process that adds value to general education at the College.

Effective Teaching (Core Component 3b)

Questions were raised by faculty, during the visit, about enrollment growth without a commensurate increase in the number of full-time faculty. A large percentage of classes (approximately 60 percent) are taught by adjunct faculty. The College needs to insure: (1) Full-time faculty oversight and involvement in each instructional

program and (2) Proper oversight and evaluation of adjunct faculty.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None noted

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Professional Development

Interviews during the visit verified that MCCC supports professional development opportunities to enhance teaching at College, including the possibility of completing a Ph. D. in Educational Leadership on campus. The College allows for 15 faculty contract days a year for on-campus professional development and other instructional activities. Each full-time staff member and his/her immediate family may attend most classes on campus tuition free, whether credit or non-credit.

Academic and Student Support

Interviews during the visit indicated that the College employs an academic alert process for notifying students whose performance is falling below acceptable levels. Comments from faculty, staff, and students indicate that the process is effective for communicating with students and connecting them with their faculty.

MCCC students are able to access learning support services online.

Peer tutoring services provided by the Learning Assistance Lab (LAL), such as Supplemental Instruction and writing fellows, were recognized as key elements of the academic support structure of the College by students and the institution.

MCCC provides comprehensive Student Services programs, with services, student clubs/organizations, and student activities for meeting the needs of both traditional and nontraditional students.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Curriculum Development (Core Component 4c)

Interviews during visit indicated that the College has a model for reviewing and evaluating academic programs. However, only programs receiving federal Perkins funds undergo a regular review process (pp. 108-109). The Self-Study includes a recommendation that “The College should develop a comprehensive and consistent model/process for reviewing and evaluating academic programs” (p. 121).

There appears to be a widespread lack of buy-in by faculty to the WIDS process for instructional design (Self-Study p. 125). Level of complexity, method of administrative pronouncement and timeline for implementation, and absence of discussion opportunities have contributed to an apparent resistance by a substantial number of faculty, across all divisions. The team recommends a dialog with faculty about the purpose and value of the WIDS system.

Academic and Student Support (Core Component 4d)

While the students at the main campus enjoy the availability of academic support services, the students attending the Whitman Center do not have available the same level of services. In particular, the Whitman Center lacks a tutoring program, and the computer lab/classroom needs to be updated.

3 Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None noted

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Learns from Constituencies

As indicated in the Self-Study and interviews during the visit, the College regularly solicits input from internal and external constituencies through employee climate surveys, student surveys, surveys of graduates, and employer surveys.

Responds to Constituent Needs

The team's meeting with representatives of 12 community partner organizations indicated that the College has active partnerships that are responsive to the needs of these organizations.

As indicated in the Self-Study and interviews during the visit, the College's Corporate and Community Services Division provides valued services to community partners through contract training, workforce development programs, and lifelong learning programs.

Services Are Valued

An open meeting with 14 MCCC students indicated that students appreciate and value the programs and services that the College provides for them.

The team's meeting with representatives of 12 community partner organizations indicated that the College's services to the community are highly valued by these organizations.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Learns from Constituencies (Core Component 5a)

Although the College administration seeks input from faculty and staff, many faculty feel that this input is not considered. The College would benefit from addressing this issue, which is related to concerns about internal communication raised in Criterion One.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None noted

5. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None noted

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status

No change.

B. Nature of Organization

- 1. **Legal status** No change
- 2. **Degrees awarded** No change

C. Conditions of Affiliation

- 1. **Stipulation on affiliation status**
No change
- 2. **Approval of degree sites**
No change
- 3. **Approval of distance education degree**
No change
- 4. **Reports required**
 - Progress Report**
None
 - Monitoring Report**
None
 - Contingency Report**
None
- 5. **Other visits scheduled**

The team recommends a focused visit during academic year 2012-13, addressing the following topics:

- Shared Governance and Communication
- Evaluating and Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Rationale and Expectations:

Shared Governance and Communication (Core Component 1d)

In regard to shared governance, a structure has been in place since 1972. However, the College concluded in its Self-Study that the structure was in need of review. Institutional survey data and team meetings with faculty, staff and administration, during the visit, suggest that the College does not currently have an effective structure or process for promoting communication and shared governance.

The institution's Self-Study concluded that "The College must work to improve and maintain effective lines of communication" (p. 120). On campus, the team heard comments in meetings with staff and faculty to the effect that the current communication strategy focuses on reporting as opposed to dialogue.

The College recently undertook an HLC Vital Focus study. The study included a 2006 College-wide Conversation Day and a Constellation Survey. The institution also conducts routine Campus Climate surveys. A common theme among all of these sources has been the need for improved communication.

The Self-Study included a proposal that, "The campus community should discuss and recommend a model for decision making" (p. 120). A decision making model was subsequently developed by a subcommittee of the HLC Accreditation Steering Committee and is currently under consideration by the Institutional Governance Committee.

The Self-Study suggests that the "The Institutional Governance Committee should conduct a review of the internal governance structure" (p. 121). Through visits with employee groups on campus, the team confirmed the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the College's governance structure. The College should decide what is the best mechanism for addressing these issues (Institutional Governance Committee or another mechanism).

By the time of the focused visit, the expectations should include:

- MCCC should review the structure and appointment procedures for its committees. Consideration should be given to nomination procedures and length of committee appointments.
- MCC should review and enhance strategies for open two-way communication, to include administrative feedback to input from faculty and staff.
- MCCC should review and consider implementation of its Self-Study recommendations concerning communication and shared governance (as noted above).

Evaluating and Improving Institutional Effectiveness (Core Component 2c)

The College has a desire to build a culture of institutional effectiveness and has an Institutional Effectiveness Committee. This committee reports to the President and the President then has the responsibility to consider, approve and implement committee recommendations.

At this time, the committee is still developing recommendations for institutional effectiveness. Follow through, accountability and feedback mechanisms have yet to be developed.

The Assessment Committee was renamed the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The team recommends that the College reestablish a free standing Assessment Committee that is composed primarily of faculty, with the charge of establishing and implementing a college-wide student academic assessment program.

The team also recommends that the College develop a process to coordinate the work of the assessment committee, the strategic planning committee, and the institutional effectiveness committee.

In the absence of an institutional research office, in order to facilitate data-driven decision-making, a college-wide process for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and storing data should be developed and maintained.

By the time of the focused visit, the expectations should include:

- MCCC needs to complete and implement its model for evaluating and improving institutional effectiveness, to include a feedback loop for evaluating the impact of improvements that are made.
- The focused visit evaluation team should expect to see evidence of institutional improvements resulting from this process.
- MCCC should reestablish a free-standing assessment committee composed primarily of faculty
- MCCC should establish a process to coordinate the work of the assessment committee, the strategic planning committee, and the institutional effectiveness committee.
- In the absence of an institutional researcher, MCCC should develop a college-wide process for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and storing data, to support assessment, planning, and institutional effectiveness initiatives.

6. Organization change request

None

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

E. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit: Academic year 2019-20

Rationale for recommendation:

Monroe County Community College meets the criteria for continued accreditation by HLC. The College's mission as a comprehensive two-year institution serving Monroe County, Michigan, is understood and supported by all constituencies of the College. MCCC has the human, physical, and financial resources to carry out its mission. The Board, administration, faculty, and staff are committed to student learning. And the College has productive working relationships with its community partners, including business and industry, health care providers, and K-12 school districts in its region. MCCC is aware of areas in need of attention and is committed to continuous improvement.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS

The team has identified issues relating to assessment of student learning under Criterion Three (Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention). The team did not recommend Commission follow-up on these issues because MCCC is currently enrolled in the HLC Assessment Academy. If MCCC does not successfully complete participation in the Academy, the team recommends Commission follow-up on these issues, possibly as part of the recommended focus visit in 2012-13.

Appendix

**WORKSHEET ON
Federal Compliance Requirements**

**Monroe County Community College
HLC Comprehensive Evaluation Visit
September 28-30, 2009**

**INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS RELATED TO FEDERAL COMPLIANCE
REVIEWED BY THE TEAM:**

Monroe County Community College 2009 Self-Study Report
Monroe County Community College 2009 Self-Study Report Supplement
Monroe County Community College 2009-2010 Catalog
Monroe County Community College Website
Third Party Comments
Student Complaint Log and Procedures
Correspondence from specialized accrediting agencies verifying the
accreditation status of Monroe County Community College

**EVALUATION OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM
COMPONENTS**

The team verifies that it has reviewed each component of the Federal Compliance Program by reviewing each item below. Generally, if the team finds substantive issues in these areas and relates such issues to the institution's fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation, such

discussion should be handled in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

1. Credits, Program Length, and Tuition: *The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

2. Student Complaints: *The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints for the three years prior to the visit.*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

3. Transfer Policies: *The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

4. Verification of Student Identity: *The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identify of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education.*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

5. Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities: *The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program. The team has reviewed these materials and has found no cause for concern regarding the institution's administration or oversight of its Title IV responsibilities.*

- **General Program Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*

- **Financial Responsibility Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Default Rates, Campus Crime Information and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information, Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies:** *The institution has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Contractual Relationships:** *The institution has presented evidence of its contracts with non-accredited third party providers of 25-50% of the academic content of any degree or certificate programs.*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

6. Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruitment Materials: *The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

7. Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards: *The institution has documented that it discloses its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence. **Note that if the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is currently under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor in the past five years, the team must address this in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this information.***

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

8. Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment: *The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. **Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment***

relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.

TEAM RESPONSE:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

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Dr. Mark D. Johnson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, North Iowa Area Community College, Mason City, Iowa 50401, Team Chair

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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The team found that MCCC is a student centered college. The team was impressed by the dedication to student success on the part of your faculty, staff, Board and administration. The College has strong support from its community. Students very much appreciate the education that the College provides for them. The College is financially stable, and it has an impressive campus. The team commends the College for the recent accomplishments of its foundation and its success with external grant development.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

Mission, Governance, and Internal Communication

The Role of the Board of Trustees and the Faculty in Determining the Curriculum: There is some debate and misunderstanding on campus about a Board action on general education requirements that took place several years ago. Based on interviews with all parties concerned, the team concluded that the Board heard conflicting views about the appropriate course of action and therefore overturned a general education course recommendation. The current Board indicated to the team that it would prefer not to overturn curriculum recommendations from the faculty but that it would be helpful to them if differences of opinion among the faculty could be addressed before a recommendation is brought to the Board.

Faculty Senate: As indicated in the Assurance section of this report (Criterion One), the team heard a steady stream of comments, during the visit, on the need for better internal communications at MCCC. One option that the College might consider is the establishment of a faculty senate. At present, the Faculty Association serves as the main conduit for communications between instructors and administrators. Although strong amenable relations between the administration and the MCCCFA are desirable, a faculty senate could help to lend continuity to communications between faculty and administrators—regardless of the state of contract negotiations.

Planning, Resources, and Institutional Effectiveness

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee is in its early stages of work. The committee has developed a plan to evaluate the institution-wide effectiveness of instruction, business affairs, institutional advancement, and student and information services. A feedback process, to evaluate the success of improvement initiatives, has not yet been developed. The College should give priority to completing and implementing an institutional effectiveness model.

The team also recommends that the College develop a process to coordinate the work of the assessment committee, the strategic planning committee, and the institutional effectiveness committee.

In the absence of an institutional researcher, data is collected by many different committees, departments and individuals throughout the College. The College should develop a centralized clearing house to assimilate all data and share it appropriately to improve instruction and services to students.

Student Learning and Effective Teaching

The College should make a concerted effort to reinforce faculty ownership of the curriculum by involving more faculty members in committees that deal with instructional subject matter. Faculty and staff should meet within their departments and across disciplines several times a year to facilitate communication, discuss assessment projects, and continue to update and revise curricular content and various other needs.

Department Chairs: In meetings with faculty, the team heard consistent remarks to the effect that MCCC's Deans lack sufficient time to hire, schedule and evaluate adjunct teachers. In the interest of sharing the workload, key instructors could be identified as department chairs or program leaders and offered release time to help coordinate and evaluate adjuncts. Department chairs, with partial release time, could also play an important role when it comes to implementing the College's plan for the assessment of student learning.

Integrating transfer education faculty and career/technical education faculty would give each a better knowledge/understanding of their importance and contributions to the institution. To accomplish this objective, faculty could be afforded greater opportunities to interact across disciplines.

Training for adjuncts: Through meeting with students, the team determined that educational offerings could be improved if adjunct faculty received formal training in the use of online course platforms. On campus, a group of 14 students came to a consensus that MCCC's adjunct faculty could better serve them if they were trained in the use of online software. Adjunct faculty could also benefit from college-initiated mentoring relationships with full-time faculty.

General Education, Curriculum Development, and Academic/Student Support

First Year Experience: The College should be applauded for its efforts to orient incoming freshman. However, Monroe students could benefit from a more lengthy and meaningful first-year experience. South Carolina's National Resource Center for the First Year Experience is a well established organization, dedicated to helping colleges build a program and curriculum for students who are new to the culture and practices of higher education (<http://www.sc.edu/fye/>).

The College should consider hiring tutors in mathematics and English/writing at the Whitman Center to assure students at the center have the same opportunity as Monroe students for appropriate instructional assistance in these critical general education areas. In addition, the team observed that the computer lab at the Whitman Center needs to be updated. The College reports that it has plans to do so, as soon as resources are available.

Engagement and Service

Student Complaints: While there exists a process for students to voice complaints of an academic nature, the students do not feel that there is adequate follow-through communication with them for reaching resolution. The team encourages the College to discuss this concern with students.

III. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PROGRESS, AND/OR PRACTICES

Monroe County Community College Campus: MCCC's physical facilities, both on the main campus and at the Whitman Center, are well maintained, attractive, and functional. This adds to student satisfaction and employee pride in the College. In addition to academic facilities, the College also offers students on the Monroe campus the extra benefits of a fitness center and a child care center.

*Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS*

INSTITUTION and STATE: : Monroe County Community College, MI

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW (from ESS): Considering AQIP

DATES OF REVIEW: 9/28/09 - 9/30/09

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

DEGREES AWARDED: A

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: None.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF NEW DEGREE SITES: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: Prior Commission approval required for additional degrees beyond those facilitated by The Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: nc

OTHER VISITS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Focused Visit in 2012-13 on two topics: Shared Governance and Communication; Evaluating and Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 1999 - 2000

YEAR OF NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2009 - 2010

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2019-20

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: Monroe County Community College, MI

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS):) : Continued Accreditation
x No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

		Program Distribution	Recommended Change (+ or -)
Programs leading to Undergraduate	Associate	34	
	Bachelors	0	
Programs leading to Graduate	Masters	0	
	Specialist	0	
	First	0	
	Professional		
	Doctoral	0	

Off-Campus Activities

In-State:	Present Activity:	Recommended Change: (+ or -)
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Campuses:	None
Sites:	Temperance (Whitman Center)
Course Locations:	None

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

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

Distance Education Certificate and Degree Offerings:

Present Offerings:

RN from LPN Online offered via Internet

**Recommended Change:
(+ or -)**