



M E T R O P O L I T A N • C O M M U N I T Y • C O L L E G E

Self-Study 2002

conducted in partial fulfillment of requirements for continuous accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

This executive summary provides an overview of the major findings of the Metropolitan Community College 2002 Self-Study Report. As a two-year, comprehensive process, the self-study examined what we have achieved over the last 10 years, who we are today, and where we are headed as a learning institution.

Self-Study Purpose

To ensure that the self-study would be a useful learning experience for the college, the Steering Committee defined its purpose as threefold:

Inclusive. To create an inclusive environment by making the self-study process available to all Metro employees by actively communicating throughout the college.

Integrated. To take advantage of existing systems by integrating the self-study process within the college's overall system of continuous improvement.

Accurate. To ensure that the self-study report accurately reflects Metro's strengths and challenges in guiding it to become a better institution.

Self-Study Process

Metro's self-study began in December 2000 when nine committees, representing a wide variety of personnel, were formed to examine the college as related to the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) five criteria that define an effective college.

Committees gathered and analyzed data and submitted their findings, which were reflected in multiple drafts of the report.

In the past two years, more than 200 employees from all campuses and centers have volunteered to participate by serving on committees, providing

information, or contributing in some other manner to the report.

The Steering Committee reviewed and made recommendations for each chapter. Drafts were posted on Metro's Intranet Web site for employee review during all phases of the report's development.

During the second year, all full-time employees participated in staff development sessions by discussing and reviewing the strengths and challenges identified with each criterion as well as by submitting written comments and suggestions.

Summary of Accomplishments

Over the past 10 years, significant change has occurred throughout the institution. As a community college, Metro has strived to meet the community's educational needs by evolving into a multifaceted institution. It has continued to do what it does best—help students learn.

Since the last continuous accreditation review in 1992, Metropolitan Community College has:

- Increased unduplicated credit student headcount 31 percent.
- Increased credit hours enrollment 43 percent.
- Increased noncredit contact hours 35 percent.
- Granted more than 5,700 associate degrees and 1,500 certificates in over 100 majors or areas of emphasis.

- Restructured the Educational Services division.
- Expanded the transfer program to the South Omaha and Elkhorn Valley campuses.
- Increased significantly postsecondary and secondary articulation agreements.
- Implemented dual credit offerings with area high schools.
- Implemented a "one-stop" approach for student services at all locations.
- Launched an online registration process and a comprehensive student services Web site.
- Initiated an institutional effectiveness process.
- Launched online courses.
- Collaborated with the City of LaVista in building the Sarpy Center.
- Acquired lands for potential development in Fremont, properties adjacent to the South Omaha and Fort Omaha campuses, and a land option in Bellevue.
- Initiated a master facilities plan to provide future direction for the college.
- Expanded the Executive Team to broaden representation of the college.
- Provided new and enhanced means of electronic communication.

- Implemented a new classification and compensation system for part-time and full-time regular non-bargaining unit employees.
- Increased the number of full-time employees 47 percent.
- Increased grant-funded positions.
- Increased awarded grants and contracts 200 percent.
- Increased the Foundation's revenue 300 percent.
- Increased the college's financial stability.
- Implemented a Curriculum Design Studio for creative design and delivery of relevant curriculum and programs.
- Developed 67 technologically-enhanced classrooms to facilitate student learning.
- Implemented a sustainable student learning outcomes assessment program.
- Initiated a LAN/WAN and ATM circuits producing connectivity to all MCC campus locations and in the process of upgrading the network to a Gigabyte Ethernet backbone.



2002 Self-Study Major Findings

The self-study report presents extensive and comprehensive patterns of evidence that Metropolitan Community College meets all HLC continuous accreditation criteria. The college has a clear and publicly stated mission supported by its students, faculty, staff, and community. Faculty and staff are professionally qualified.

The college is fiscally responsible. Its resources provide students a supportive learning environment so they can attain their educational goals. The college's infrastructure successfully supports student learning. Metro is meeting student needs and achieving institutional effectiveness through sound long-range planning. Metro values quality partnerships within the community so all can benefit.

Through the self-study process, Metro identified the following strengths and challenges relating to the HLC's criteria:

Criterion 1 *The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.*

We Pride Ourselves

- MCC's mission and purposes are aligned with its practices and community needs.
- MCC employees feel their jobs contribute to the college's goals.
- A comprehensive representation of employees developed MCC's current strategic plan and participated in refining the mission statement and purposes.

We Challenge Ourselves

- To emphasize the mission statement and purposes in the college's published documents and throughout the institutional planning process.

Criterion 2 *The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.*

We Pride Ourselves

- MCC provides employees meaningful communication opportunities.
- MCC recognizes that governance is an evolutionary process.
- The institution is committed to excellence in hiring, staffing, retaining, and training for all staff.
- MCC celebrates diversity as reflected in college policies, practices, and employee and student populations.
- MCC's professional development program is recognized nationally as exemplary.
- MCC's physical facilities are accessible, safe, and clean, creating a positive learning environment for students.
- MCC dedicates significant funds, time, and personnel to the continuous improvement of its electronic communication system.
- MCC campuses have state-of-the-art technology infrastructures and multifunctional classrooms that support a variety of learning and teaching styles.
- The institution demonstrates a strong financial position and fiscal responsibility.
- MCC maintains a balance among funding sources of property tax, tuition, and state aid.

We Challenge Ourselves

- To analyze strategically the institution's organizational structure including enhancements to the college's governance system.
- To continue to review, analyze, revise, and improve communication systems.
- To streamline the usability of human resources data.
- To streamline the hiring process to respond more quickly to personnel needs.
- To increase minority representation at the administrative and faculty levels.
- To make the current facility master planning process inclusive, relevant, and proactive.
- To provide better facilities information on room and workstation utilization.
- To continue maintaining affordable tuition for students.
- To continue to review processes that facilitate effective resource allocations to support learning throughout the institution.



Criterion 3 *The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.*

We Pride Ourselves

- MCC's comprehensive mission is reflected in its academic programs.
- MCC meets the needs of a diverse student population with excellence in teaching.
- Student Services offers an array of support services that are coordinated into a comprehensive "one-stop" environment at the three campuses and two centers.
- MCC extends the reach of traditional student services through support services that mitigate barriers to learning.
- MCC's outcomes assessment process is faculty-driven.
- MCC has made substantial progress in implementing a comprehensive outcomes assessment program.
- The institution provides fiscal support for the implementation of outcomes assessment such as staff development opportunities and faculty recognition through awards.
- Faculty are involved in all stages of development and implementation of alternative delivery of instruction.
- MCC offers a wide variety of alternative delivered courses, which are transcribed and funded in the same manner as other credit classes.
- Faculty receive support via Instructional Design Services, including development of online courses, production of videotapes, graphics and Web page development, and technical support for each delivery option.

We Challenge Ourselves

- To keep academic programs up-to-date by upgrading curricula and identifying new programs to meet community needs.

MCC Core Values

- *Value diversity.*
- *Take the initiative.*
- *Pursue excellence.*
- *Promote teamwork.*
- *Conduct all business with integrity.*
- *Remain open to creativity and innovation.*
- *Serve through leadership, lead through service.*
- *Strive toward learning centeredness in all services*
- *Be accountable to students, colleagues and the community.*
- *Solve problems using solution-seeking attitudes and systems approaches.*
- *Continuously strive to improve interpersonal and organizational communication.*



- To strengthen the coordination among all aspects of MCC’s educational programs—credit, noncredit, and continuing education—to provide seamless educational opportunities.
- To assess more fully community English-as-a-second-language needs and develop appropriate responses.
- To continue exploring additional co-curricular activities improving student life.
- To continue to balance the use of “high tech with high touch” in reaching and informing MCC students about programs and services.
- To increase student involvement in the outcomes assessment process.
- To fully implement and institutionalize the expanded outcomes assessment process through planning and budgeting.
- To focus on the development of online degree and certificate programs as well as courses.
- To develop a larger qualified pool of faculty availability to teach online courses.

Criterion 4 *The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.*

We Pride Ourselves

- MCC has mature planning and operations processes to continue as a successful organization through periods of transition.
- MCC’s strategic initiatives are visible to the college community and have served to generate a new excitement about the future.
- MCC’s financial stability gives numerous development options for the future.

We Challenge Ourselves

- To address the challenges identified through the self-study process.
- To implement the institutional effectiveness process and facilitate a culture of evidence.

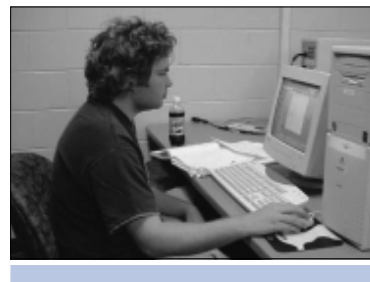
Criterion 5 *The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.*

We Pride Ourselves

- MCC is consistently reaching out to the community to encourage a diverse student body.
- MCC’s articulation agreements with other higher education and secondary institutions and related enrollment increases demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling its mission and purposes.
- The visibility of MCC’s diversity efforts in organized cultural events and staff development are examples of its exemplary commitment to valuing differences.

We Challenge Ourselves

- To strengthen the coordination of marketing and program promotion processes within the college.
- To continue establishing board policies and procedures memorandums and related practices that support the integrity of the institution.



Conclusion

The results of Metropolitan Community College’s 2002 self-study are just a beginning for the college. The report is a point of departure toward the college’s future success.

The process and results reflect the original goals identified by the Steering Committee of being inclusive, integrated, and accurate. Through this thorough process, the college was able to identify those things in which we can take great pride in as well as challenges we face for the future.

The self-study findings will be used as guideposts in developing a culture of evidence for planning and decision-making throughout the college.

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