

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.



Chapter 2

General Institutional Requirements and Federal Compliance

Introduction

Chapter 2 demonstrates that Metropolitan Community College meets the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) as well as the Federal Compliance Program. Lists of the requirements and the college's responses, along with federal compliance evidence, follow.

General Institutional Requirements

Mission

GIR 1 It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.

MCC's published mission statement is appropriate for a Nebraska two-year community college. In 1978, the Nebraska Legislature enacted Legislative Bill 756 that prescribed the community college mission. In 1984, the Nebraska Legislature modified the 1978 mission statement to permit the college to offer an academic transfer program at its Fort Omaha campus and later at the South Omaha and Elkhorn Valley campuses. MCC's mission is presented in more detail in Chapter 3: Criterion 1–Mission.

GIR 2 It is a degree-granting institution.

MCC confers the Associate in Arts Degree (AA), the Associate in Science Degree (AS), the Associate in Science in Nursing Degree (ASN), the Associate in Applied Science Degree (AAS), the Certificate of Achievement, and the Occupational Specialist Diploma. Degrees conferred by MCC are addressed in detail in Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services.

Authorization

- GIR 3** It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.

MCC's Board of Governors possesses and exercises necessary legal powers to establish and review basic policies that govern the college's area. Statute 759, enacted by the Nebraska Legislature in 1971 to establish the Technical Community College System, granted authority to each of the local colleges. When Statute 344 was enacted by the Nebraska Legislature in 1975 to create a system of locally controlled technical community colleges, the authority was extended to the local boards.

Statute 344 also includes the legal authority to operate. The local Boards of Governors are charged with the specific powers, duties, and responsibilities, including provisions to develop and to offer vocational and technical education programs, academic courses that are supportive of the vocational and technical programs, and such other programs and/or courses as the needs of the area served may require.

- GIR 4** It has legal documents to confirm its status: not for profit, for-profit, public.

Legal documents addressing MCC's status as a public, tax-supported institution are found in the Business Office and are available in the Resource Room.

Governance

- GIR 5** It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.

Statute 344 provides for a Board of Governors to be known as the Technical Community College Board of Governors for the specific area the board serves. MCC's governing body is its Board of Governors. This board has the legal power to establish and review the policies of the college. Currently, the board consists of 11 members and meets monthly. Four board committees (Personnel, Curriculum and Instruction, Building and Sites, and Budget and Finance) also meet monthly. The Executive and Ethics Committee meets as needed.

- GIR 6** Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.

Residents within MCC's service area publicly elect each board member at a general election. Ten are elected within the district they reside; one is elected at large. No board members are creditors of MCC, guarantors of institutional debt, or active members of businesses of which MCC is a customer. The MCC Board of Governors is further addressed in Chapter 4: Criterion 2–Governance.

- GIR 7** It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

The Board of Governors is responsible for hiring the CEO of MCC. Jerry Moskus, Ph.D., was appointed president in July 2001.

GIR 8 Its governing board authorizes the institution's affiliation with the Commission.

The Board of Governors authorizes the college's affiliation with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. They review and approve the annual budget that includes the Commission's accreditation fees. Board members are informed of accreditation status and received status reports throughout the self-study process.

Faculty**GIR 9** It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.

MCC's faculty members meet the threshold educational requirements for an institution whose highest degree programs are at the associate level. Sixty-five (64.6%) percent of full-time faculty hold a master's degree or higher; the remaining thirty-five (35.4%) percent hold degrees or credentials appropriate to their teaching assignments. Refer to the Resource Room for documentation.

GIR 10 A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the institution.

For an institution of MCC's size, the core of 176 full-time faculty is sufficient to meet requirements of this GIR, as defined in the NCA handbook. All credit programs have full-time faculty assigned. See Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services.

GIR 11 Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution's educational programs.

In the past, MCC did not have a formal faculty curriculum committee to review and approve new courses and programs. This allowed faculty to develop curriculum in a relatively barrier-free environment. It also created a certain level of duplication over the years. Through the work of the Curriculum Systems Initiative, the college now has a common system of curriculum development facilitated by the Curriculum Design Studio.

The general process for curriculum development at the college is for instructors to collaborate with others in their program area or department, business contacts, and program advisory committee members. Upon approval of the vice president of Educational Services, faculty members work with their academic dean to pilot the new course, provide information for the new catalog, and offer the course. More detail on this curriculum system is provided in Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services.

As part of the overall system of curriculum development, course maintenance is part of the *Components of a Faculty Load* document that applies to all full-time faculty. Faculty members are responsible for developing and revising curricula to meet the changing needs of the market of businesses and industries that the programs support or the four-year colleges that receive MCC students in transfer. Each vocational program has an advisory committee composed of community and industry specialists who keep the faculty apprised of changes in the workplace. Likewise, the academic faculty communicate with peers from four-year colleges and universities to ensure that articulation agreements are current.

Educational Programs

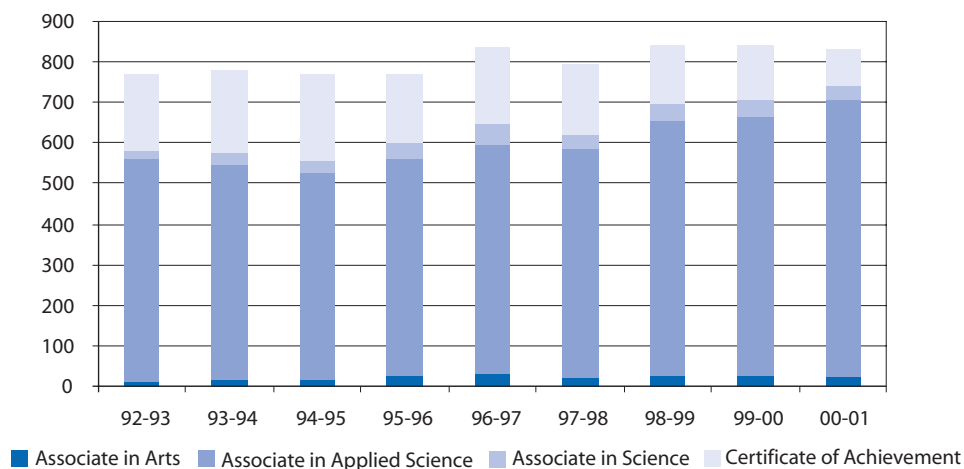
GIR 12 It confers degrees.

MCC confers the Associate in Arts Degree, the Associate in Science Degree, the Associate in Science in Nursing Degree, and the Associate in Applied Science Degree. Requirements are identified in the 2002-03 college catalog, page 42. All degrees and certificates adhere to guidelines established by the State of Nebraska. Degrees conferred by MCC are presented in more detail in Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services.

GIR 13 It has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.

MCC continues to offer programs with sufficient enrollment to support degree and certificate offerings. Between the 1992-93 and 2000-01 academic years, MCC has granted more than 5,700 associate degrees and 1,500 certificates in over 100 majors or areas of emphasis.

Figure 2.1 Degrees and Certificates Awarded 1992-2001



GIR 14 Its degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.

The degree programs offered at MCC are based on recognized fields of higher education and support the mission of the college. A description of all the majors is contained in the 2002-03 catalog. Additional support is provided in Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services.

GIR 15 Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.

The degrees offered by MCC are named appropriately and follow common practice regarding program length and content. The college offers Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Science in Nursing, and Associate in Applied Science degrees as well as certificates and occupational specialist diplomas.

GIR 16 Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution's mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

All degrees offered by MCC have a minimum credit hour requirement for general education courses. Depending on the award, the general education credit requirement is 27-32 for degrees or 6.5-9 for certificates. For the AA and AS degrees, these credits are drawn from courses developed in consultation with four-year colleges and universities to provide additional transfer opportunities.

By definition, the general education requirements represent a broad view of general education. These courses are divided into six categories: communications, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, human relations, and computer literacy. By completing the general education requirement for the approved list of core courses, students should have a broad base of education and knowledge expected of a college graduate. The 2002-03 college catalog, pages 37-38, outlines the general education rationale and requirements for each degree.

GIR 17 It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs.

MCC welcomes anyone who is at least 18 years of age or can benefit from a program of study. Admission to the college, however, does not mean admission to all courses and programs. In addition to the general admission procedures, some programs have requirements such as specific educational and occupational experiences. These standards ensure that the student possesses the potential to complete the program successfully. A student who does not meet the requirements for a specific program may become eligible after completing appropriate work in developmental studies or prerequisite classes.

GIR 18 It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.

MCC provides numerous services for students to support their academic success. Career network centers as well as supervised computer laboratories and learning centers available at each campus offer a variety of support for students. Additional information pertaining to this General Institutional Requirement is further addressed in Chapter 9: Criterion 3– Student Services.

GIR 19 It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.

The independent auditing firm of Dana F. Cole & Company, LLP, is contracted to audit MCC on an annual basis. The practice of an annual audit has been followed since June 1974 with the combination of the Eastern Nebraska Technical Community College Area statement, the Omaha Technical Community College Area statement, and the Metropolitan Technical Community College statement. Audit reports are available for review in the Resource Room.

GIR 20 Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.

Audits demonstrate that MCC has been using and allocating resources in an appropriate manner and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The allocation for educational programs is similar to other community colleges in Nebraska. MCC's financial allocations and use of resources are addressed in detail in Chapter 7: Criterion 2-Financial Resources.

GIR 21 Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.

MCC has consistently received an unqualified "clean" opinion as a result of the annual audits by an independent auditing firm to attest to the accuracy of the college's financial practices, records, and reports. MCC has been able to maintain and grow the reserve balances in order to assure fiscal viability for future years.

Public Information

GIR 22 Its catalog or other official documents include its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of its educational programs and degree requirements; its learning resources; its admissions policies and practices; its academic and nonacademic policies and procedures directly affecting students; its charges and refund policies, and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.

MCC's 2002-03 college catalog contains the mission statement and a complete description of programs of study and courses. The catalog includes a variety of student information. The catalog also includes academic credentials of its faculty and administrators. The procedure memorandums include academic and nonacademic policies and procedures directly affecting students. MCC's catalog and procedures memorandums are located in the Resource Room.

GIR 23 It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.

The college catalog and other appropriate publications provide information concerning institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association and specialized accreditation applicable to specific programs.

GIR 24 It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.

MCC's budget and information that accurately describes the current financial condition of the college are available to the public upon request from the business office.

Federal Compliance Program

Credits, program, length, and tuition. All MCC learning experiences are based on credit hours transcribed on a quarter credit basis. Although some courses are offered on a 14-week basis, the credit hours are still equated to quarter hours. All certificate programs

are intended to be one year in length with a minimum of 48 credit hours. All associate degree programs are intended to be two years in length with credit hours ranging from 96 to 114 credits. These credit hour ranges are based on two-thirds of standard semester hour programs.

Students are charged on a quarter credit hour basis. The college has one tuition and fee rate that applies to all programs approved by the Board of Governors.

Higher Education Reauthorization Act

The college complies with Title IV regulations. Each quarter, all new students are provided with a *Campus Security and Drug Compliance Report*. Student completion/graduation rates, student rights, and privacy (FERPA) information are available in the college catalog and handbook as well as other institutional publications.

In addition to full disclosure under “Student Right to Know,” the college has established an 8% cohort loan default rate for fiscal year 2000. This is the result of a comprehensive default management plan instituted in response to previous higher default rates.

Advertising and Recruitment Materials

The college accurately advertises and represents its programs and services to potential students. Beginning with the 2002-03 college catalog, the address and telephone number of the Higher Learning Commission are appropriately displayed. However, the college recognizes that other publications do not comply with this requirement. Appropriate action is underway to address this deficiency. For example, the fall credit schedule of classes has been modified to include the required information.

Written Student Complaints

The college began tracking written student complaints in 1999 as requested by the North Central Association. The executive dean of Campus and Student Services has a database of the written complaints, actions, and resolutions to those complaints. As of 2002, 19 written student complaints are on file. These complaints are general in nature and result from grade disputes, registration activity, course transfer, and tuition balances. A copy of the database is provided in the Resource Room.

Conclusion

MCC has taken the necessary steps to meet the requirements set forth in the General Institutional Requirements and to conform to the standards established in the Federal Compliance Program.