

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.*

Chapter 3 Criterion 1–Mission

Introduction

Chapter 3 presents evidence that Metropolitan Community College (MCC) fulfills Criterion 1. To demonstrate that the college is mission-driven in its actions, this chapter addresses the college’s mission statement and purposes, its position as a comprehensive community college, mission-related survey results, strategic planning, and freedom of inquiry support.

Mission Statement

Metropolitan Community College’s mission is to serve a diverse community of lifelong learners by providing quality educational opportunities. The mission statement has been refined four times since 1992 during strategic planning processes. The most current edition was written in 2000. The spirit of the mission has been kept intact, but the wording has been revised to communicate a clearer message. In the latest revision process, the Executive Team charged the Leadership Council, a college committee composed of faculty, staff, and administrators, with editing the 1999-2001 mission statement, which the Executive Team subsequently approved in November 2000.

Purposes

- MCC provides affordable and accessible learning-centered developmental, occupational, academic transfer, and continuing education programs;
- MCC promotes excellence in teaching and learning;
- MCC builds and strengthens community partnerships; and
- MCC demonstrates fiscal and academic accountability.

MCC's purposes further define its mission. As with the mission statement, the Executive Team charged the Leadership Council to create clear statements of purpose that captured the spirit of the institution. Focuses in the newly stated purposes were derived and extended from the 1999-2001 mission statement. The Executive Team approved the purpose statements in November 2000. Chapter 8: Criterion 3–Instructional Services documents that the mission and purposes are being accomplished.

Table 3.1 Mission Statement Changes from 1999 to 2001

MCC's Mission 1999-2001	MCC's Mission 2001-2003
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide learning-centered developmental, occupational, academic-transfer and noncredit programs that are affordable, accessible, and relevant to the personal and professional goals of lifelong learners. • Support community and economic development at local, regional, national, and international levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan Community College's mission is to serve a diverse community of lifelong learners by providing quality educational opportunities.

Communicating MCC's Mission and Purposes

Publications

MCC's mission and purposes appear in a variety of documents: the student handbook, college catalog, the strategic initiatives, institutional brochures, and the booklet, *Educational Services: a Framework for Academic Planning*.

MCC lives its mission and purposes by publishing a variety of other documents and brochures that inform the external community of programs and services. Some brochures target current and former students; others target prospective students. After a review of publications for this criterion, it was noted that the college's mission statement was not included in most of these other publications. The college is now making a concerted effort to include the mission statement in all appropriate publications. Further analysis of MCC publications is planned.

All cited documents exemplify MCC's dedication to serving MCC's diverse community needs. Sample publications are located in the Resource Room.

Electronic Sources

MCC also demonstrates its mission and purpose by providing students and the community with electronic academic program and advising resource pages on the college's Web site (<http://www.mccneb.edu/>). Detailed information about programs, career opportunities, and personality traits for success in programs or careers assists individuals in making appropriate career choices early in their educational journeys. This immediate electronic access helps the college offer accurate and up-to-date information to its community.

MCC: Comprehensive Community College

MCC has evolved beyond its origins in 1974 as a technical school into a comprehensive community college. The institution provides instruction for students in occupational, academic transfer, developmental, and continuing education arenas. This comprehensive mission positions the college to more adequately meet the diverse needs of the local community.

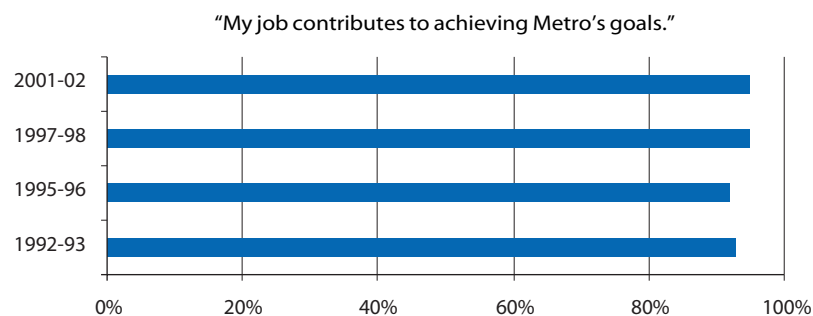
MCC’s mission and purposes are appropriate for an institution of higher learning, particularly a community college. They are consistent with Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education’s (CCPE) defined role and mission of community colleges in the state. The CCPE prioritizes community college instructional and service focuses into four areas: applied technology and occupational education, transfer education, public service, and applied research.

Mission-Related Survey Results

MCC Employee Climate Studies

Approximately every other year, MCC has conducted an employee institutional climate study to analyze numerous aspects of the college. Figure 3.2 pertains to employee perception of their job contributions to MCC’s goals. Employees rated this statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The percentages reflect the number of employees who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement below. In the last four climate studies, on average, 94% of MCC employees thought their jobs contributed to achieving the college’s goals. See the Resource Room for results of the last four surveys.

Figure 3.2 Employee Contributions to College Goals



Community Perceptions Assessment

MCC has conducted two community surveys in the last seven years to determine if the college was meeting community needs. In 1995-96, MCC contracted with the College Board’s Office of Adult Learning Services to conduct a comprehensive telephone survey of 400 students to assess the college’s success in addressing student and community needs and, therefore, serving its mission. Survey recommendations focused on course scheduling, distance learning, credit and noncredit course offerings, and marketing techniques.

As a result, changes such as hours of service, course offerings, and focused marketing were implemented. The value of the results from this study also led to MCC's current practices of conducting student and community surveys.

During October 2001, an independent research firm conducted a random sample telephone survey of residents from the college's four-county service area. A total of 502 surveys equally representing each of the four counties in MCC's service area were completed. The results, published in the *Public Perception Survey of October 2001*, indicated that the community, overall, perceived the college as successful in fulfilling its mission as a community college. Over 76% of surveyed residents believed that MCC was doing a "good" or "excellent" job in meeting the educational needs of the general community and students. Over 67% believed that MCC was doing a "good" or "excellent" job in meeting the educational needs of the business community. Complete survey results are available in the Resource Room.

Student Survey Findings

During the fall quarter 2001, a stratified sample of 1,219 students in 121 course sections completed and returned the student information/satisfaction survey. Survey results indicate that, overall, students think MCC is accomplishing its mission of meeting the individual educational needs of students. Over 95% of students "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement, "Metro is meeting my educational needs."

Results from the MCC fall quarter 2001 survey of former students also indicate that students think MCC is accomplishing its mission. Students enrolled in the spring quarter 2001, but not the fall quarter 2001 and who did not graduate with a degree or certificate, received a mailed survey. Of the 4,628 surveys distributed, 442 were completed, resulting in a return rate of 9.6%. While the return rate was disappointing, 88% of those responding answered "yes" to the question, "Did the courses you took at Metro meet your educational needs?" If MCC meets students' educational needs, then the college is serving its mission.

Strategic Planning

MCC's mission and purposes drive the institution's strategic planning process. The 2001-2003 strategic initiatives were generated from MCC's purposes.

2001-2003 MCC Strategic Initiatives

- Enhance and expand learning-centered education;
- Be a leading learning resource;
- Create and improve flexible learning support systems;
- Optimize partnerships; and
- Provide personal and professional growth opportunities.

In September 2000, as the initial step in establishing the 2001-03 strategic initiatives, a group of 32 participants representing the Board of Governors, faculty, administrators, staff,

and students reviewed the mission statement and the seven 1999-2001 goals and then recommended changes. The Executive Team reviewed these recommendations, selected five goals to provide institutional focus for the next two years, and renamed the goals “strategic initiatives.” The Leadership Council then edited the wording of the new initiatives and developed a brief, clear statement for each. The Executive Team approved the strategic initiatives in November 2000.

The 2001-03 strategic initiatives were modified from earlier institutional goals to provide direction during the college’s leadership transition. At the time of their development, MCC was in the process of selecting a new president, and the college needed this stability during the transitional process. These initiatives anchored the college as it continued to move forward in its area planning process.

Table 3.3 1999-01 Institutional Goals Compared to 2001-03 Strategic Initiatives

MCC’s 1999-2001 Institutional Goals	MCC’s 2001-2003 Strategic Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the leadership potential in all employees. • Become a “first choice” learning resource for businesses and individuals. • Expand strategic partnerships to maximize the impact of MCC’s resources and to optimize learning. • Expand efficient/effective technology enhanced learning centered education. • Increase or improve the use of resources to support cost effective, high quality educational services. • Improve or expand all systems in support of learning. • Increase the commitment to valuing diversity and developing a global perspective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and expand learning-centered education. • Be a leading learning resource. • Create and improve flexible learning support systems. • Optimize partnerships. • Provide personal and professional growth opportunities.

MCC’s planning process is cyclical. Within each cycle, both the process and accomplishments are reviewed. Changes in process and priorities are incorporated in the next plan to ensure that the college’s focus is relevant and responsive to student and community needs.

As the 2001-03 process was reviewed during the self-study, it was noted that while the strategic initiatives were included in the planning process, the mission and purposes could have been emphasized more in the development of area plans. The college’s process is discussed in more detail in Chapter 11: Criterion 4–Organizational Stability and Planning.

Freedom of Inquiry Support

MCC’s support for freedom of inquiry for faculty and students is demonstrated in two board policies. Board Policy 64101, *Academic Freedom and Attendant Responsibilities*, addresses freedom of inquiry and directly supports it. The policy states that college staff