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Roles and Purposes Dimension Report

McHenry County College

Foundations Institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education and those unique to two-year institutions, both for the individual and society. These roles and purposes include learning for personal growth, career enhancement, workplace preparation and retraining, transfer for additional education, engaged citizenship, and serving the public good. Institutions encourage new students to examine their motivation and goals with regard to higher education in general and to their own college. Students are exposed to the value of both a general education and focused study in an academic or career field.

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Current Situation:

PI 8.1 Purposes: To what degree does the institution effectively communicate to new students its vision for the following purposes of higher education?

Personal growth and preparing for future employment are addressed in the Mission Statement of the college.

Advising, Counseling, Recruitment, and MCC 101 address personal growth and preparation for future employment.

Examples of student seminars that are offered through MCC 101 are: Choosing Careers, Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques, Working with Difficult People, Choosing a College Major, Financial Aid, Math Anxiety, Healthy Relationships.

All sections of MCC 101 cover diversity, time management, personal responsibility, and problem solving/critical thinking.

The counseling department offers additional seminars to all students, including: Positive Living, Becoming a Successful College Student, and Decision Making.

Recruitment offers MCC Night which showcases departments, services, and programs.

Student Life provides engaged citizenship and serving the public good through: Constitution Day, Voter Registration, Blood Drives, Canned Goods Drives, Community Service projects.

Results from the student survey indicate that 50% of the students rated the degree to which MCC helps them understand how attending college increases their knowledge for future employment as high or very high. Although this is significant we do feel there is room for improvement. The same results were indicated in the area of personal growth.

PI 8.2 Motivation: To what degree does the institution intentionally provide opportunities for new students to examine their personal motivation for pursuing higher education?.

Both Academic Affairs and Student Support Services implement several activities with area middle and high schools, such as: site visits, classroom presentations, career day, WYSE, Be the First, Kids in College.

Full-time new students attend new student orientation where they receive information on counseling services to educate them on the benefits of higher education. Within MCC 101 career choices seminars are offered to help new students identify majors/careers that fit their needs and interests. In addition, we have personal development courses offered through the counseling department with topics ranging from commitment to career/major exploration. Student feedback indicates that career exploration does indeed demonstrate effectiveness.

Students in occupational programs meet with their department chairs to discuss their motivation to be in the program and what the requirements are for degrees/certificates.

Students reported a relatively low degree (Mean of 2.85) of assistance from MCC in examining their personal reason for getting a college education.

PI 8.3 Rationale To what degree does the institution effectively communicate its rationale for the following? (Required courses, Required competencies, Requirements for entry into programs/majors)

We are addressing this issue within the college community; however the information is not filtering down to the students. CAPC is currently reviewing the MCC general education goals.

How each course links back to the mission, vision, and goals of MCC needs to be communicated to students in the classroom. The MCC Assessment Team is hosting a Curriculum Mapping workshop in March 2007 to help faculty learn the procedures to "map" their curriculum to the college's institutional level goals. There will also be training sessions during the Fall 2007 semester to allow faculty to implement curriculum mapping within their departments.

Annual math coordinators meeting between high school and college faculty.

Advising provides seminars to review requirements for those students going into education. (Basic skills test and articulation information for education programs for state schools.)

Career Services provides guidelines for students in making career choices; educational requirements for specific occupations; and colleges/universities offering programs to fit these career choices.

It appears as if the college focuses on what is required versus the rationale behind the requirements. The rationale can be found in the mission statement of the college and the goals of the college. However the mission and the goals are disseminated independently and not linked to specific courses or competencies. As a result, the message is not getting to all students all of the time; therefore, more work needs to be done.

The required competencies with regard to library skills are built into our current library curriculum in the form of a three phase Information Literacy program.

1. Introduced in MCC 101
2. Comp I
3. Comp II

The library then does an exit exam/quiz for assessment purposes.

Opportunities and Challenges:

PI 8.1: To what degree does the institution effectively communicate to new students its vision for the following purposes of higher education?

- Personal growth and preparing for future employment is addressed in the Mission Statement of the college.
- Faculty should be encouraged to communicate with students the importance of their college courses for future employment and life skills. More could be done to help faculty communicate this information to students (i.e. professional development workshops)
- Service learning opportunities are provided by student organizations and within some classes
- Learning communities may in fact be relevant or an area to look into further.
- Service learning and Learning communities depend heavily on individual instructors and classrooms.
- Service learning also depends on community awareness.
- Student involvement is generally limited because of the makeup of our student body.

PI 8.2: To what degree does the institution intentionally provide opportunities for new students to examine their personal motivation for pursuing higher education?

- A challenge is providing a blanket that will pull all of this together.
- How does the institution evaluate the success of the effort? FoE student survey results will help us gauge our success in this area.

PI 8.3: To what degree does the institution effectively communicate its rationale for the following? (Required courses, Required competencies, Requirements for entry into programs/majors)

- Consistency is an issue when it comes to individual and departmental consultations. It is a challenge across campus to remain informed when departmental requirements are changed annually.
- How students process the information they receive is a concern because they don't necessarily comprehend and integrate the information given
- Writing skills are a concern among faculty members - recently a Writing Across the Curriculum rubric was developed and is currently be used.

First time/Full-time students: 21% taking Developmental Writing, 3% taking Developmental Reading, 55% taking Developmental Math. These students taking developmental courses have been provided the rationale for taking these courses because they lacked the competencies to take college level courses.

Sources of Evidence:

PI 8.1: To what degree does the institution effectively communicate to new students its vision for the following purposes of higher education?

- Personal growth and preparing for future employment is addressed in the Mission Statement of the college.

Other sources:

- The college catalog
- Student planner
- Student Life calendar of events
- MCC 101 course manual
- Personal development course descriptions
- Career services promote resume writing and job interview workshops

PI 8.2: To what degree does the institution intentionally provide opportunities for new students to examine their personal motivation for pursuing higher education?

- Various workshops and seminars
- MCC Night
- Individualized meetings with advisors and counselors
- MCC 101 seminars
- Brochures
- Assessment outcome reports

PI 8.3: To what degree does the institution effectively communicate its rationale for the following? (Required courses, Required competencies, Requirements for entry into programs/majors)

- College catalog
- Course syllabi
- MCC 101 brochure
- Immediate feedback to students on placement test results is given including recommended courses. The local high schools also receive feedback on their students' results.
- College recruiters present to the Directors of Guidance in area high schools the required courses and competencies.

OIRP - Annual Enrollment report dated September 2006.

Recommended Grade: C+

Recommended Action Items:

- Review of General Education Goals (*High priority*)

Currently the Assessment Team is fine tuning the General Education goals. When the goals are finalized we recommend the Assessment Team encourage the Deans, Department Chairs, and Faculty to link these goals to their curriculum. Communicate this linkage to the students.

- Improve Communication (*High priority*)

Communication of the rationale for required courses, required competencies, requirements for entry into programs/majors can and should be improved for students.