



2006 Institutional Self-Study Report

Table of Contents

Part One: Introduction

| | |
|---|----|
| Executive Summary | 5 |
| Institutional Profile | 11 |

Part Two: The Self-Study Report

| | |
|--|-----|
| Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives | 19 |
| Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal | 23 |
| Standard 3: Institutional Resources | 31 |
| Standard 4: Leadership and Governance | 39 |
| Standard 5: Administration | 45 |
| Standard 6: Integrity | 51 |
| Standard 7: Institutional Assessment | 59 |
| Standard 8: Student Admissions | 67 |
| Standard 9: Student Support Services | 75 |
| Standard 10: Faculty | 85 |
| Standard 11: Educational Offerings | 95 |
| Standard 12: General Education | 109 |
| Standard 13: Related Educational Activities | 115 |
| Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning | 127 |

Part Three: [Recommendations](#)

Part Four: [Documents Referenced in the Report](#)

Part Five: [Self-Study Steering Committee and Working Groups](#)

Part Six: Digital Resources

Supplemental Materials

Appendices

- A. Strategic Plan 2002-2005 – Revision (Fall 2004) (#1.722)
- B. Strategic Action Plan 2004 Annual Report (#1.712)
- C. Strategic Action Plan 2005 Annual Report (#1.713)
- D. Action Plans (#1.725- #1.729)
- E. Organizational Charts (#1.123-#1.127)
- F. Core Group Descriptions (#1.120)
- G. Policies and Procedures (#2.310, #2.510)
- H. Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (#3.380)
- I. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan 2003-2006 (#4.705)
- J. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan Progress Report 2004 (#4.710)
- K. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Plans and Reports (#4.110-#4.541)
- L. Approved Operating Budget FY06 (#6.121)
- M. Faculty Handbook (#2.210)
- N. PACE Campus Climate Survey (#3.520)
- O. Support Services: Descriptions and Assessments (#8.756)
- P. Sample Syllabi (#7.031)

Additional Resources

2005-2006 Academic Catalog
Fall 2005 and Fall 2006 Schedules of Credit and Non-Credit Classes
2005-2006 Student Handbook
2005-2006 Viewbook
List of Common Acronyms
Organizational Charts
List of Key Contacts
Campus Map

Digital Resources

Self-Study Report
Complete Set of Referenced Documents

Part One: Introduction

Executive Summary

Profile of Frederick Community College

Frederick Community College (FCC) is a comprehensive community college that serves the citizens of Frederick County, Maryland. The College provides transfer, career, continuing education, and customized training programs to 17,000 students annually. FCC's character as a learning college is represented by its Vision statement, "Student Learning First." FCC is an accredited, public, two-year, degree-granting institution that operates as an agency of Frederick County. It subscribes to an open door admissions policy. FCC is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, with additional governance from the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Frederick Community College awards associate in arts, associate of arts in teaching, associate in applied science, and associate in science degrees, as well as certificates and letters of recognition, in more than 50 fields of study. In the Fall 2005 semester, the College's FTE enrollment was 1,374, with a headcount of 4,822. In FY05, 12,239 students participated in continuing education and customized training programs. Students are served by a total staff of 722. The College occupies a 94-acre campus located north of Frederick city.

FCC as a Learning College

The phrase "learning college" stands for a set of principles that strengthens a college's contributions to its students' lives. Primarily, students must "learn how to learn," by developing the skills and habits of mind to benefit fully from life experiences and opportunities. Students are expected to develop goals and plans for their educational careers. The learning process is enlarged both within and beyond the classroom through collaborative, co-curricular, and experiential learning activities, and through a variety of learning options. Faculty and all other staff play distinctive roles in the learning process. Finally, the learning college improves itself through continuous student, program, and institutional assessment.

In 2002, FCC carried out a campus-wide Visioning Day, which launched its transition to a learning college. Three major steps were a college-wide functional reorganization, a student-centered planning and resource allocation process, and a thorough assessment structure. These steps support countless interactions among students, faculty, and staff in joint pursuit of student learning.

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The College has an articulated Mission statement, as part of a comprehensive Strategic Plan that has specific goals and objectives for institutional and educational improvement.

Mission, goals, and objectives were developed collaboratively, with a common principle to promote student learning. They have driven significant institutional improvement since adopted in 2002. Greater staff knowledge of Mission, goals, and objectives would enhance their effectiveness.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

The College has a comprehensive planning process that includes outcomes/benchmarks that are derived from Strategic Plan goals and objectives, and that have assigned responsibility, schedules, and assessment measures. Planning flourishes at both institutional and unit levels, and is integrated with resource allocation and assessment processes. The College's planning has led to numerous outcomes for institutional and educational renewal. Nevertheless, planning needs to be simplified, improved at unit levels, based upon realistic priorities, and fully understood by all employees.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The College has comprehensive processes to utilize human, fiscal, and infrastructure resources effectively. Resource allocation and budget processes are driven by planning and assessment, and demonstrate integrity and efficiency. The physical plant is adequate and well-maintained, but will be strained by ongoing growth. Technology infrastructure and services have been steadily improving. Attention to space constraints and technology integration will improve facility and resource utilization.

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The College has a collegial governance structure that ensures all stakeholders are involved in decision-making. The governing body is the Board of Trustees, which has a demonstrated record of responsible and engaged leadership, including the selection and evaluation of the president, the College's chief executive officer. Governance can be strengthened by greater stakeholder participation.

Standard 5: Administration

The College's president, administrative leaders, and staff members are well-qualified for their respective responsibilities. Information and decision-making systems adequately support administrative functions. The College's innovative and relatively new organizational structure is still evolving. The staff can be strengthened by an improved reward and recognition system, and by greater familiarity with the organizational structure.

Standard 6: Integrity

The College is ethical, fair, and consistent in dealing with students, employees, oversight bodies, and the public. Interactions with all constituencies are governed by comprehensive, collaboratively-developed policies and procedures, including those that foster a climate of respect among all. The College's public documentation is detailed, consistent, and readily

available. The College must undertake better measures to increase the representation of persons of color in its professional ranks. Greater consistency in hiring procedures, and among policies and procedures, is needed.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The College is committed to using assessment to strengthen all aspects of institutional performance. There is a comprehensive, written assessment plan that is closely integrated with planning and resource allocation processes at both institutional and unit levels. Planning documentation shows assessment-driven improvement occurring institution-wide. Assessment data is not used to fullest effect, and could be better employed both to strengthen and demonstrate institutional accomplishments.

Standard 8: Student Admissions

The College's admissions program is designed to attract all eligible students and to provide support during and after the admissions process. Relevant information on programs, requirements, and policies is widely available and actively provided to prospective students. Admissions functions are complemented by interdepartmental retention and goal attainment programs, which need proper coordination to attain optimum results.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The College has a wide-ranging set of support services to meet students' educational and personal needs. Support services are distributed throughout the College's organizational units, and are characterized by qualified personnel, sound policies and procedures, planning, and assessment-driven renewal. Opportunities may exist for non-credit students to benefit more from support services.

Standard 10: Faculty

The College's faculty is able, highly-qualified, and committed to student learning. Faculty members are responsible for designing and maintaining curricula. The professional status of faculty (including adjuncts) is fortified by published standards and procedures regarding employment and responsibilities, as well as by institutional efforts toward faculty advancement. To strengthen the faculty's contribution, attention should be given to full-time/part-time ratios, development and evaluation processes, and job satisfaction issues.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The College's curricula reflect its Mission, its status as a comprehensive community college, and the needs of its community. FCC's curriculum model provides for integration between credit and non-credit curricula and for infusion of co-curricular experiences. All curricula meet documented standards that reflect student needs, ensure comparability among alternative delivery methods, and announce student learning outcomes. Library services reflect curriculum and student needs, and library staff members cooperate closely with

faculty in developing and conducting information literacy programming and assessment. The College's innovative integration of credit and non-credit curricula needs ongoing maintenance. Student learning with respect to College policies and procedures can be enhanced.

Standard 12: General Education

The College has a comprehensively structured and well articulated general education program. It is faculty-driven and provides students with the essential components of a general education, as well as the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives. The present organizational structure for general education has dispersed responsibilities that need to be clarified, including faculty leadership.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The College's related educational activities reflect its status as a comprehensive community college, especially its large developmental education program and its large and rapidly growing distance learning program. Both can benefit from attention to organizational issues, including assessment.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

The College has an articulated program for student learning assessment that functions at course, program, and institutional levels. Assessments are conducted according to plans that specifically identify goals, methods, and responsibilities. Student learning assessment is closely integrated into college-wide planning and assessment structures. Documented evidence demonstrates assessment-driven teaching and learning improvements. Student learning assessment can be strengthened by assuring that responsibilities are properly apportioned, and that programs are adequately managed and communicated.

Conclusions

Frederick Community College is strong and healthy in every facet of institutional context and educational effectiveness. It has an able and committed faculty, dedicated staff, effective governance, and the support of its county and state. All these elements, working together, provide FCC students with an educational experience of demonstrated quality and effectiveness.

The College's achievements largely result from an institutional culture that demands excellence, commitment, and continued improvement. In recent years, in particular, the College's restless drive toward betterment has brought about extensive organizational and programmatic renewal. These changes have very well positioned the College to flourish in the educational environment of the 21st century.

Large-scale change must be well-managed. Organizational change has a predictable life cycle, which starts with vision, continues with the installation of new ways, and concludes

with firmly established improvements. In many respects the College is in the second stage, with important structures and processes not yet solidly rooted. With diligent attention toward strengthening these necessary and visionary initiatives, the College can continue its exemplary record of service to the citizens of Frederick County.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Institutional Profile

Profile of Frederick Community College

Frederick Community College (FCC) is a comprehensive community college that serves the citizens of Frederick County, Maryland. The College has a distinctive character of responsibility and a culture of service. These characteristics manifest themselves in the College's many contributions to its community, which views FCC as an invaluable resource for educational and personal betterment.

Frederick is the state's largest county by size and is seventh in population. It is located in central Maryland, equidistant from Baltimore and Washington, DC. The county has a diverse economic base, with major sectors in agriculture, service, retail, high-tech, and light manufacturing.

The county has been growing rapidly in recent years. Population in 1990 was 150,208; by 2000 it had grown to 195,277 and by 2010 is estimated to be more than 239,000. Average household income is \$60,000 (2000), and the average single-family home is \$241,000 (2004). Forty-one percent of the county's workers commute out-of-county to the Baltimore and Washington regions. The county is becoming increasingly diverse; its minority population grew from 8% in 1990 to 12% in 2000.

The College provides transfer, career, continuing education, and customized training programs to 17,000 students annually. FCC subscribes to an open door admissions policy. FCC's character as a learning college is represented by its Vision statement, "Student Learning First." It is an accredited, public, two-year, degree-granting institution that operates as an agency of Frederick County. The College is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees; additional governance is provided by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Frederick Community College awards associate in arts, associate of arts in teaching, associate in applied science, and associate in science degrees, as well as certificates and letters of recognition, in more than 50 fields of study. In the Fall 2005 semester, the College's FTE enrollment was 1,374, with a headcount of 4,822. Over the past five years, FTE enrollment has increased 22.6% and full-time enrollment has increased 29.9%. Transfer programs are selected by 61.2% of students. In FY05, 12,239 students participated in Continuing Education and Customized Training programs.

FCC is the college of choice for Frederick County. Ninety-four percent of the College's students are from the county. Two-thirds of county residents who are enrolled in undergraduate programs are enrolled at FCC. Average student age is 27 and 63% are female. The representation of students of color is 18.9%, an increase of 26.9% over the past five years. A majority of students (61.5%) attend part-time.

Students are served by a total staff of 722. There are 82 full-time faculty, 260 adjunct credit faculty, and 42 adjunct non-credit faculty. There are 69 full-time administrators, 116 full-time support employees, and 153 part-time administrative and support staff.

FCC was founded in 1957, offering evening classes to 77 students in borrowed quarters at Frederick High School. The College occupied its present 94-acre campus, located north of Frederick city, in 1970. There are 10 buildings on campus and several satellite locations. Campus buildings include an arts and student center with a cafeteria, art gallery, bookstore, music and art classrooms, and a 400-seat theater; a library building that also houses language, video, and allied health laboratories; the field house, gymnasium, and playing fields; three classroom buildings with faculty offices and administrative space in addition to science, mathematics, and computer laboratories; a lecture hall; a conference center; and a children's center. Planning is now underway for a new building to house an expanded student center with classrooms and offices, and for a new administration building.

FCC as a Learning College

The Learning College Movement

The phrase "learning college" stands for a set of themes that strengthens a college's contributions to its students' lives. The learning college movement grew out of the educational reform period of the 1980's and 90's. The nation then called for educational institutions at all levels to demonstrate better performance and greater accountability. In K-12 schools, the principal outcome is the standards-driven measurement of educational productivity. In higher education, a principal response, particularly for undergraduate education, is the learning college.

The learning college model does not imply that teaching and learning previously were in any way insufficient; instead, it proposes to enrich and extend methods and approaches that have already demonstrated their success. Nor is the learning college just for students and teachers; instead it invites everyone in the institution to participate more fully in the educational process.

The first principle of the learning college is that learning is a transformative experience for students. This means that students must of course master the requisite knowledge of their chosen fields. Furthermore, they must "learn how to learn." They must develop the skills and habits of mind that will enable them to negotiate successfully and benefit fully from life's experiences and opportunities.

This growth occurs in the richer educational environment of the learning college. Students are expected to take greater command of their educational careers, with articulated goals and specific plans to attain them. The learning process is enlarged both within and beyond the classroom. Collaborative learning activities place the student in the center of the learning process, as both teacher and learner in communities of fellow learners. Co-curricular and experiential learning activities remove barriers between school and life. The institution must bring itself closer to its students with a set of learning options that can include evening, weekend, and accelerated programs; off-campus locations; partnerships in the community; and varieties of distance learning.

Although the student is the center of the learning college, all other members of the institution have new roles relating to student learning. Faculty can employ their skills and experience to their fullest, creatively developing and practicing new techniques, approaches, and assessments. Others who work directly with students and teachers—both professional and support staff—can contribute more effectively in the overall educational effort. Even those who don't participate directly in the learning process—financial managers, plant staff, etc.—can be assured that efficient business processes and well-maintained facilities are indeed essential to learning.

Finally, the learning college believes that it is necessary both to demonstrate and improve its work through continuous student, program, and institutional assessment. Student learning outcomes must be documented and the results used to drive further teaching and learning improvement. All other functions of the institution must practice their own assessment-improvement cycles. Assessment culminates in a rigorous institutional accreditation process that itself embodies learning college principles.

The Learning College at FCC

In 2002, the College carried out a campus-wide Visioning Day, which launched its transition to a learning college. Four years later, the transition continues. Many changes have occurred. Some, like a college-wide functional reorganization, are highly visible; many others are less sweeping and more subtle. They all contribute to the College's continuing efforts in behalf of student learning.

The reorganization was one of three major steps to strengthen the college and put learning college principles into daily practice; the other steps were the adoption of a comprehensive, student-centered planning and resource allocation process, and the creation of a thorough assessment structure.

Reorganization

FCC's 2003 reorganization moved away from the traditional college organizational structure, and toward an innovative model that has created many new partnerships to advance student learning. There are three main organizational units: *Learning*, *Learning Support*, and *Administration* (Figure 1: General Management Structure). They have been structured without regard for conventional patterns, but rather to enable every unit to function more effectively in the learning process.

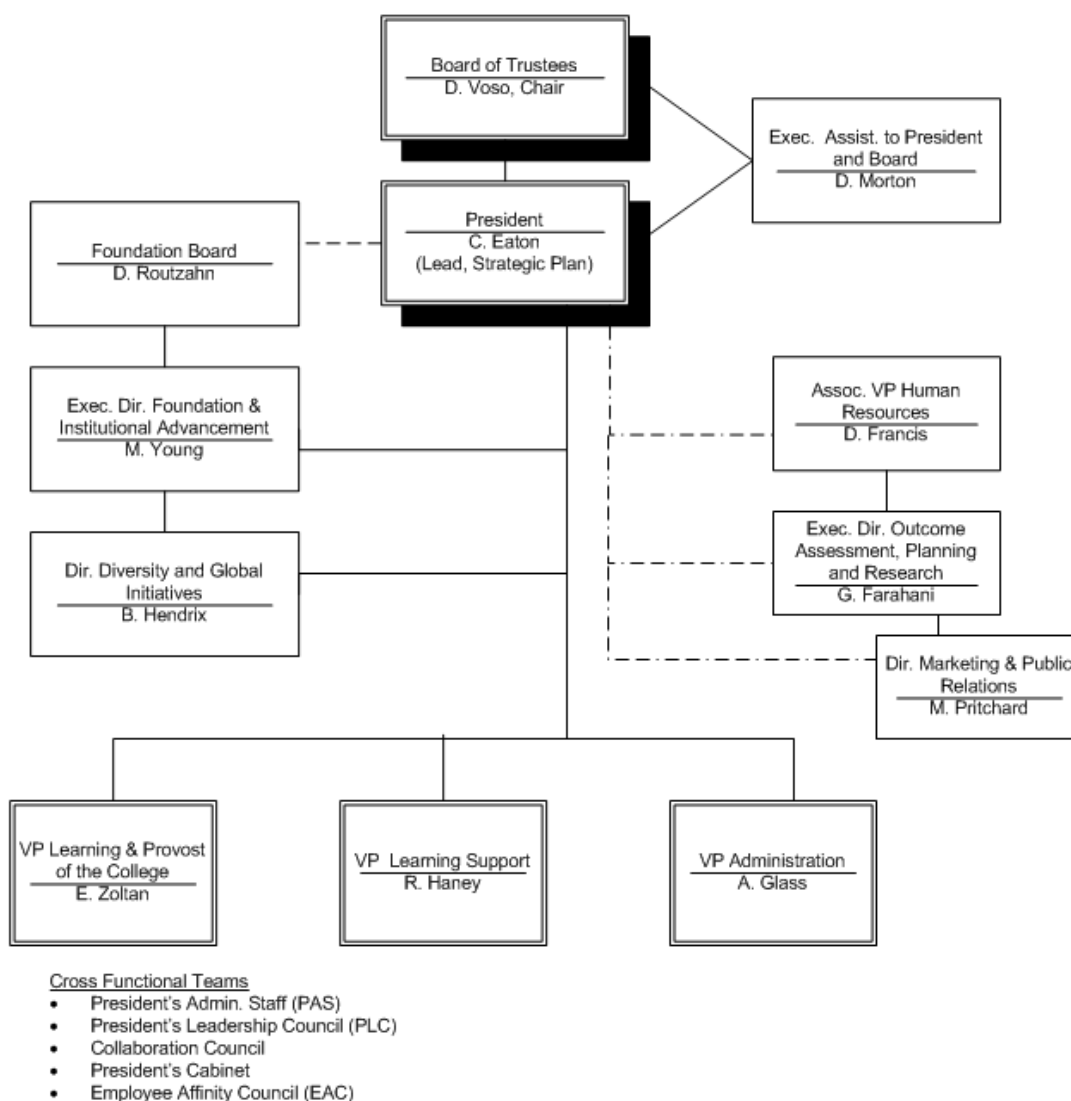


Figure 1. General Management Structure

The *Learning* area (Figure 2: Learning Area) embodies two major innovations: the merger of credit and non-credit instruction, and the integration of instruction with numerous student support functions.

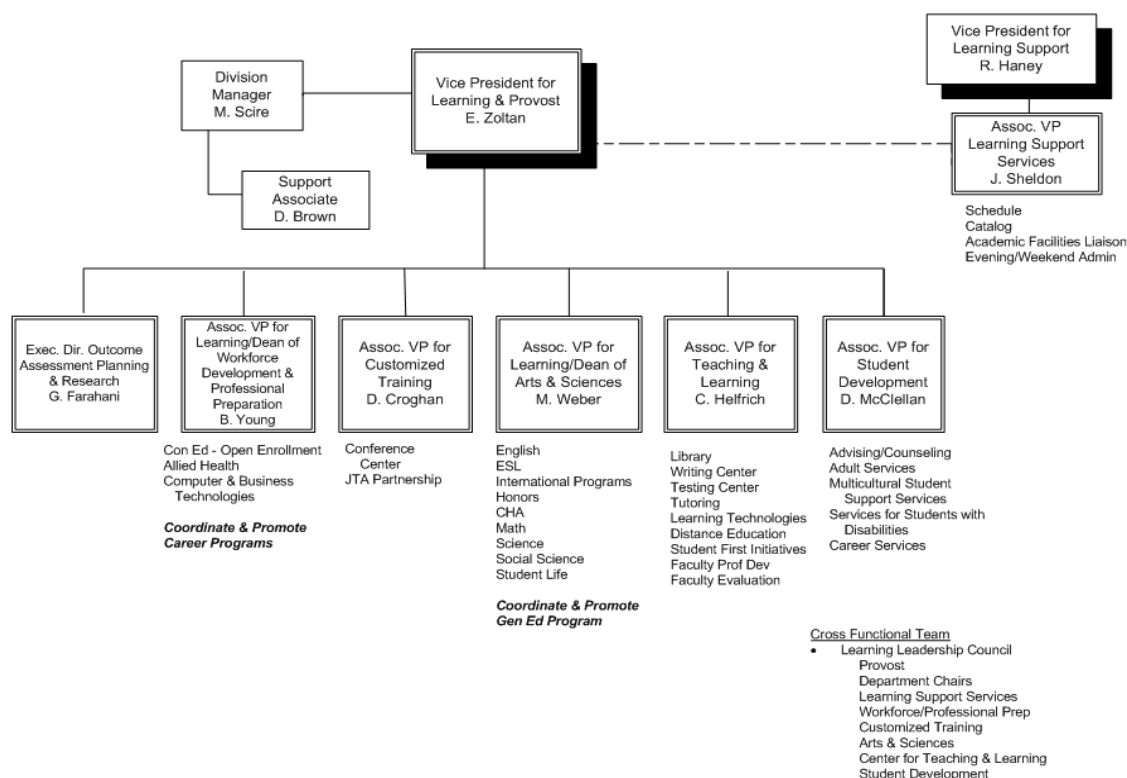


Figure 2. Learning Area

The Learning area's components include:

- *Credit programs*, organized in two groups: Arts and Sciences and Workforce Development and Professional Preparation. Arts and Sciences contains programs for students who expect to transfer to a baccalaureate-level institution. Arts and Sciences also includes Student Life, which houses student government, organizations, and activities. This linkage reinforces co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as learning opportunities. Workforce Development and Professional Preparation has numerous programs to prepare students for immediate entry into the workplace.
- *Noncredit programs*, also in two groups: Continuing Education and Customized Training. Continuing Education conducts a wide range of academic, professional, technical, and personal interest programs. Several are closely integrated with their credit counterparts. Customized Training provides custom-designed professional and technical training for area businesses and organizations.
- *The Center for Teaching and Learning*, which contains several learning support functions: Library, Testing Center, Tutorial Services, Writing Center, Distance Learning, Learning Technologies, Faculty Evaluation and Professional Development, and First Year Student Initiatives (*CTL – Organizational Chart: #7.305, CTL – Mission and Goals: #7.380*).
- *Student Development*, including counseling, advising, adult services, career services, Services for Students with Disabilities, and Multicultural Student Support Services.
- *Institutional Research*, which is carried out by the Outcomes Assessment, Planning,

- and Research department. It has responsibility for student learning assessment and other research and assessment tasks. As part of the Learning area, it is able to work closely with faculty and academic administrators to carry out assessment tasks.

The *Learning Support* area (Figure 3: Learning Support Area) merges admissions and student support functions with departments that are traditionally located in separate administrative units.

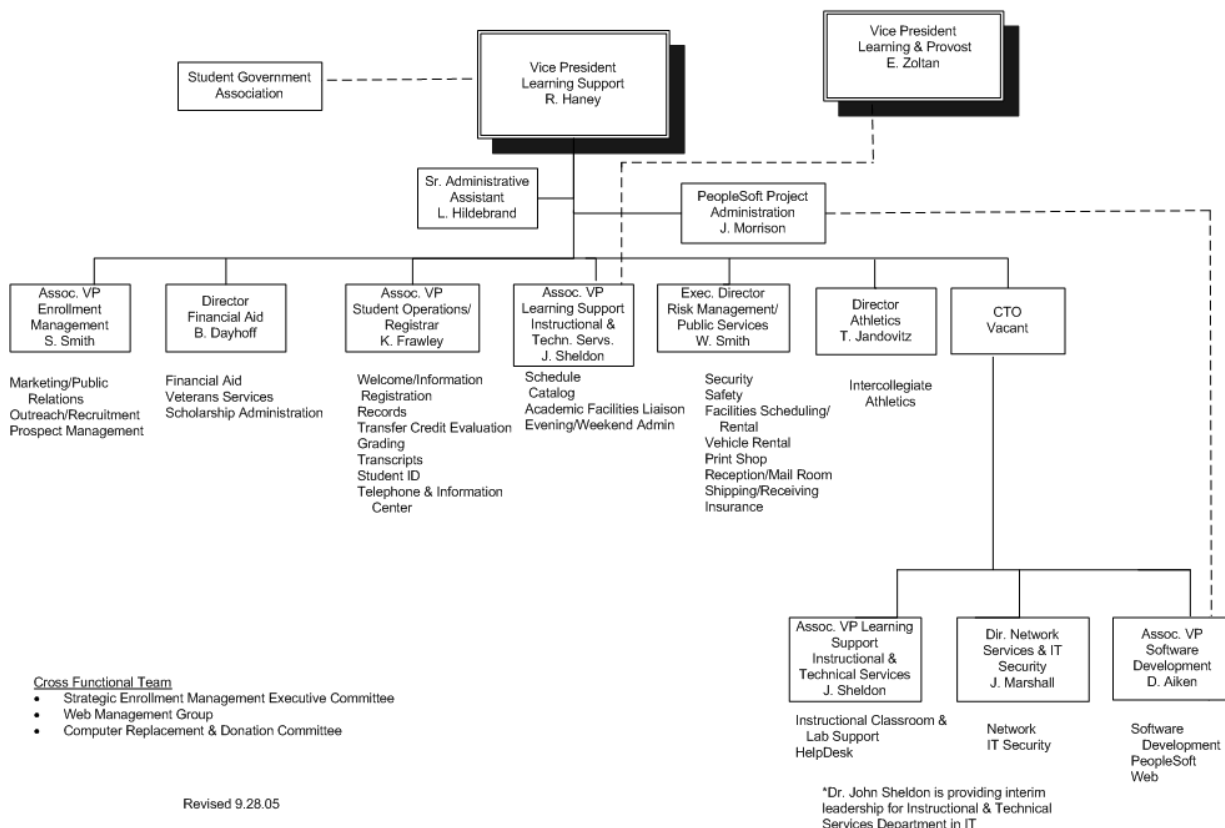


Figure 3. Learning Support Area

As with the Learning area, the goal is to focus all college services to serve student needs. Learning Support administers several conventional services, including admissions, registration, records, enrollment management, and financial aid. Furthermore, it administers information technology, athletics, and risk management—all services that usually are independent or are part of other administrative units.

The *Administration* area (Figure 4: Administration Area) contains finance, human resources, facilities, plant operations, and auxiliary enterprises, including the Children's Center, Bookstore, and Food Service (*Organizational Charts: #1.123-#1.127, Appendix E*).

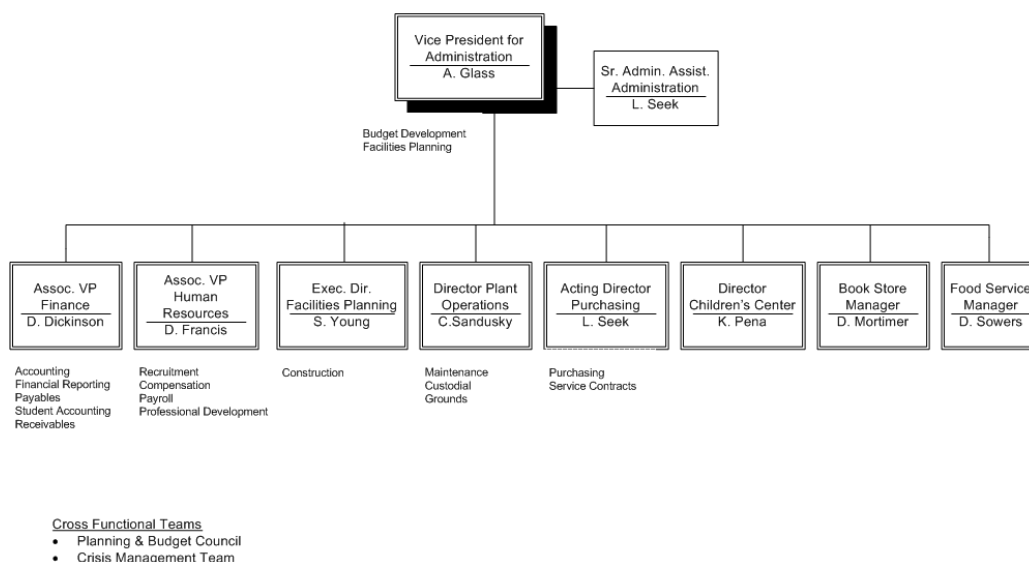


Figure 4. Administration Area

Planning

Visioning Day inaugurated a new, student-centered planning process. In 2003 the College completed a new Strategic Plan with an updated Mission statement, a new set of Core Values, and a completely new set of goals and objectives (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The common theme for all is enhancing student learning.

The plan is integrated with the resource allocation process and is carried out through an outcome-oriented, assessment-tested implementation structure. In the budget development process, funding requests must be linked to corresponding strategic plan goals and objectives, and are justified by their projected contributions to student learning. The Strategic Plan objectives are themselves carried out by specific action plans that contain benchmarks, outcomes, and assessment measures (*Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D*).

Assessment

Student learning and all other processes are measured with a comprehensive assessment structure. Courses, educational programs, and departments have distinctive assessment metrics and structures to effect assessment-driven improvement (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H*). Student learning itself has a comprehensive plan whose principle is continuous assessment-driven improvement (*Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan: #4.705, Appendix I*).

The Learning College Culture

Large formal structures for organization, planning, and assessment are merely the framework to support the real work of the learning college: the countless interactions among students, faculty, and staff in joint pursuit of student learning. Frederick Community College's Self-Study Report covers all levels. It of course analyzes the formal structures and recommends

how they can be improved. The report also presents and celebrates, throughout its entirety, how everyone in the Frederick Community College community is committed to student learning.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Part Two: The Self-Study Report

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Key Documents

Strategic Plan: #1.720

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports: #1.712, Appendix B; #1.713, Appendix C

Introduction

The motto of Frederick Community College is “Student Learning First.” This theme underlies the College’s Mission, goals, and objectives, as well as its Vision and institutional Core Values. These in turn direct planning, decision-making, resource allocation, program and curriculum development, definition of program outcomes, and all other efforts toward institutional improvement.

Consistent Mission, Goals, and Objectives

FCC Mission

Frederick Community College prepares students to meet the challenges of a diverse, global society through quality, accessible, innovative lifelong learning. We are a student-centered, community focused college. FCC offers degrees, certificates, and programs for workforce preparation, transfer, and personal enrichment to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of our region.

The College’s Mission statement was developed on the College’s first “Visioning Day,” a college-wide renewal event held in 1998. It is based upon a model mandated by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and was formally adopted in April 1999. MHEC revised the format of the Mission statement in 2000 as it adopted the first Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education. The College’s revised Mission statement, which was approved through the College’s governance process and by the Board of Trustees, encompassed the Vision statement as well as the 2000 Strategic Plan. As part of the review of the Strategic Plan in 2003, the Mission statement received a minor revision. Finally, MHEC requested that the College revisit and update the Mission statement by September 2005. According to MHEC guidelines, the Mission statement of the College should be consistent with the Maryland Charter of Higher Education and should promote the effective and efficient use of institutional and system resources.

During the College’s second Visioning Day in 2002, the present Vision statement and institutional Core Values were adopted, as was the 2002-05 Strategic Plan (*#1.720*). The Strategic Plan was updated in 2004 (*#1.722, Appendix A*).

Collaborative Participation

These guiding documents were adopted through a consensus process involving students, faculty, staff, the Board of Trustees, and community members. In addition to the widely attended Visioning Days, drafts of all documents were disseminated college-wide for review and comment. Mission, goals, and objectives are publicized externally through College publications and the website. They are widely applied at both the institutional level through the Action Plans (#1.725-#1.729, *Appendix D*), and locally through unit level plans. Assessment data gathered from all staff in 2004 demonstrates widespread but not pervasive familiarity with and application of the Mission, Vision, institutional Core Values, goals, and objectives (*Strategic Planning Process-Evaluation: #1.730*).

Student Learning and Other Improvements

The essence of the Mission and Vision statements is the centrality of students and student learning. The Strategic Plan's nine goals and 25 objectives, whether they deal with matters of institutional context or educational effectiveness, aim to enhance student learning and the learning college. In each unit, planning strategies, resource allocation decisions, and assessment measures are closely linked to corresponding goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan (these connections are described more thoroughly under Standard 2).

Several goals and objectives strive to improve educational effectiveness and, in particular, to implement learning college principles. Goals 1, 2, and 3 have, for example, objectives to integrate credit/non-credit curricula, expand co-curricular and civic engagement opportunities, offer more flexible delivery options, and reach out to new populations of learners.

Other goals and objectives strive to improve the overall institutional context. Goals 5 through 9, for example, have objectives to strengthen the resource base and foster a climate of mutual respect among students, faculty, and staff. A key principle of the learning college is that learning expectations and opportunities apply to faculty and staff as well as students; consequently, Goal 5 contains objectives that encourage employee development and that support scholarly and creative activity.

Goal 7, Objective 20 deals specifically with relations with external constituencies through improved communication systems. Relations with external constituencies are also essential parts of Objective 8 (integrate civic engagements into programs and services) and Objective 16 (increase private partnerships and grant funding opportunities).

Finally, the Mission, goals, and objectives state that all processes must accomplish continual assessment-based renewal. Goal 4 indicates that outcomes assessment will drive decision-making and improvement in all aspects of educational effectiveness and institutional context. Goal 4, Objective 11 relates to student learning, and states that the outcomes of all student learning must be assessed and the results used in decision making. Goal 4, Objective 12 relates to institutional effectiveness and states that the purpose of institutional assessment is to support FCC as a learning college.

Representative Accomplishments

The College's record of accomplishing its goals and objectives will be discussed throughout the report. The principal documentation of the accomplishment of goals and objectives is found in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; #1.713, *Appendix C*). However, some key examples can demonstrate that the College's Mission, goals, and objectives have indeed led to substantial institutional improvement:

- Creation of the Welcome and Registration Center (Goal 1)
- Merger of credit and non-credit instruction in the Learning Area (Goal 1)
- Systems reviews in student admissions and services (Goal 2)
- Expansion of distance learning curricula and services (Goal 3)
- Thorough assessment structure in the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (#3.380, *Appendix H*) (Goal 4)
- New internal decision-making procedure (#2.510, *Appendix G*) (Goal 5)
- New Employee Development Plan (#5.420) (Goal 5)
- Increased resources from the FCC Foundation (Goal 6)
- Communication Central, an internal communication system (Goal 7)
- Comprehensive campus climate assessment conducted (#3.520, *Appendix N*) (Goal 8)
- Recycling programs for aluminum and plastic (Goal 9)

Conclusions

Frederick Community College's Mission, goals, and objectives articulate fully the aspirations of the institution. They were created and are renewed collaboratively and, generally, are widely known and supported. They have sufficient breadth and depth to relate intimately to the College's internal and external contexts and constituencies. They incorporate significant learning college principles. Their underlying theme is the responsibility to promote student learning. They have demonstrated their efficacy through an impressive record of accomplished objectives that enhance educational effectiveness and improve institutional context. They have a renewal process that will ensure their continuing vitality.

All staff must fully understand the Mission, goals, and objectives if these are to be accomplished. Significant deficits exist in college-wide understanding of the present Mission, goals, and objectives. As the College embarks upon a new planning cycle in 2006, the need to ensure complete understanding of the process will be reinforced.

Recommendation

1. Ensure that all employees understand the philosophy, intent, and application of the Mission, goals, and objectives, through employee development events and participation in planning processes.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

Key Documents

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix G

Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports: #1.712, Appendix B; #1.713, Appendix C

Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix C

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Strategic Action Plan – Action Plan Clusters and Assigned Objectives: #1.717

Introduction

Over the past four years, the College has devoted extraordinary time and energy to renewing its entire planning structure and process. It has adopted a new strategic plan model, created a new set of goals and objectives, installed a comprehensive assessment system, developed an accountability structure, and renovated its resource allocation process.

This enormous task has been governed by several principles:

- *It is based on continuous renewal and improvement.* Renewal is driven by ongoing planning-assessment cycles, in which plans are tested by assessments, which in turn are used to effect improvements.
- *It is comprehensive.* All areas of the College are expected to contribute in achieving the Mission, Vision, Values, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- *It is collaborative.* The Strategic Plan is created, evaluated, and renewed by those who are charged with implementing it.
- *It is informed by the learning college model.* Learning college principles are embodied in the College's Mission, Vision, goals, and objectives, and extend throughout individual strategies, initiatives, and assessments.

Background

The College's current planning era began in 2002 with the second "Visioning Day," a college-wide planning event. Under the leadership of the then President, the College committed itself to the learning college model. This is articulated in the College's Vision, with the motto of "Student Learning First," and the Vision statement that "FCC is a premier Learning College, a student-centered system of relationships that facilitates, values, and measures learning" (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*).

The 2002 Visioning Day also inaugurated a new strategic planning process that would embody learning college principles and be based upon outcomes assessment (Figure 2.1: Strategic Plan Process). The Planning and Budget Council started a college-wide consultation that created specific goals and objectives. The process was highly collaborative and elicited input from the affinity groups—Administrative Staff Association (ASA), Faculty Association (FA), Student Government Association (SGA), and Supportive Personnel Association (SPA), the College Senate, and community members. The effort resulted in the Strategic Plan 2002-2005 (#1.720), which had nine broad goals and 28 major objectives.

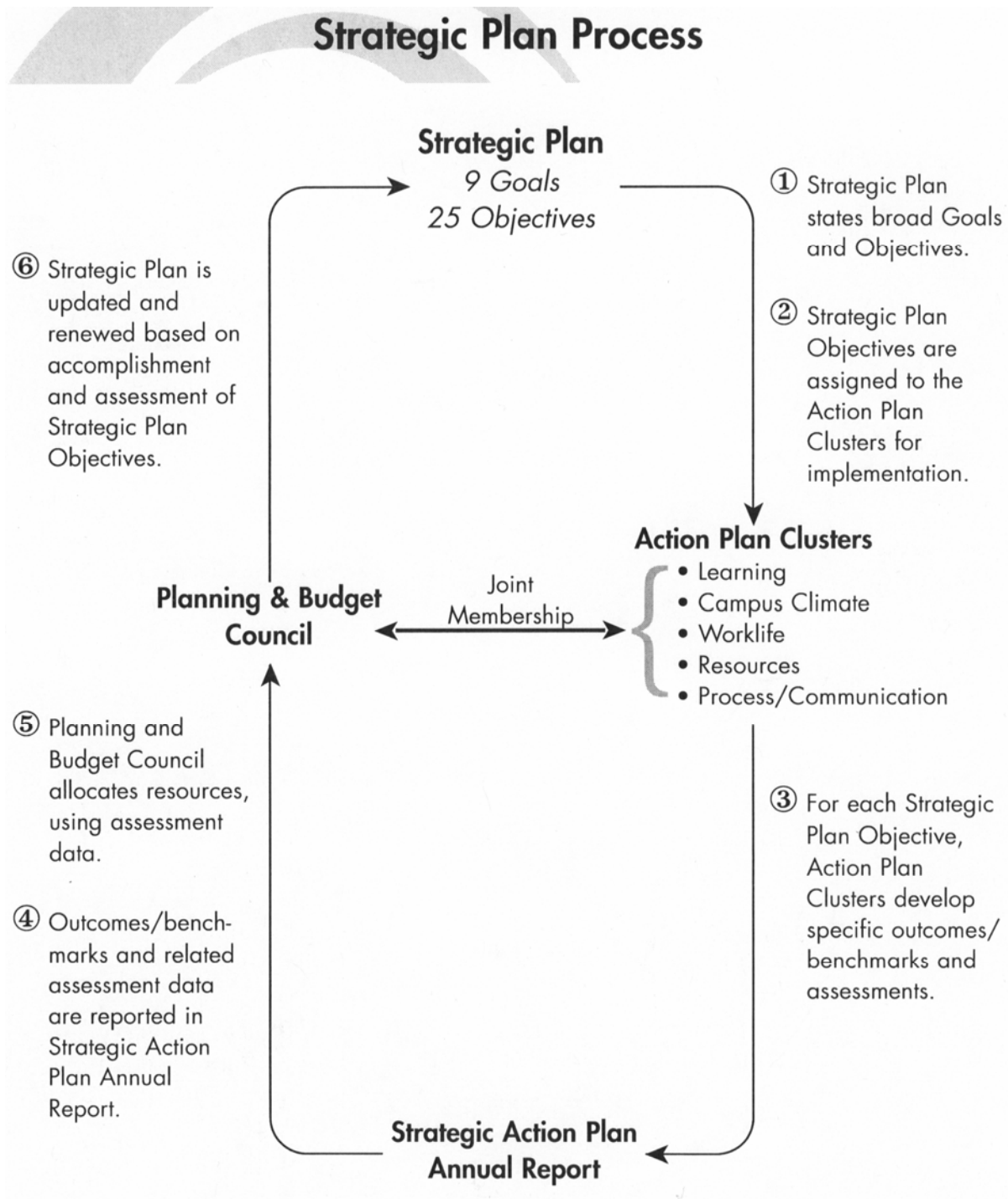


Figure 2.1: Strategic Plan Process

The Strategic Plan 2002-2005 has been an engine of great renewal. It has generated major structural changes; the new organizational structure, the Welcome and Registration Center, and student learning and institutional assessment plans are among the most prominent examples. It has also inspired hundreds of other changes, large and small, everywhere throughout the College; all of them, in their own ways, are improving student learning.

The Plan has been renewed throughout its own lifespan, as experience has suggested improvements. The lessons from the Strategic Plan 2002-2005 will inform and enrich the next planning cycle, which begins in spring 2006.

The Strategic Plan: 2002 to 2005

The Strategic Plan's goals and objectives provide broad direction. To translate them into specific actions, the College established five teams, known as "Action Plan Clusters" in March 2003. Each Cluster represents a major sphere of activity, and was assigned specific goals and objectives from the Strategic Plan (See Figure 2.1: Strategic Plan Process):

- *Learning* encompasses all educational programs and related functions.
- *Process/Communication* includes operational and communications processes.
- *Resources* covers the College's physical and fiscal resources.
- *Worklife* deals with sustaining an effective College workforce.
- *Campus Climate* refers to employee and student perceptions of campus atmosphere/ambiance.

In January 2004, the Action Plan Clusters published the Strategic Objective Action Plan (#1.710), which had 298 individual strategies. Each strategy was tied to a Strategic Plan objective, and each included outcome/benchmark, timetable, assigned responsibility, and assessment measure. However, the need to continue refining the new plan soon became apparent. In particular, a college-wide assessment conducted in spring 2004 indicated the need to simplify the planning process and its products (*Strategic Planning Process - Evaluation: #1.730*). This survey showed general satisfaction with the Strategic Plan itself, but much less awareness and use of the strategies in the Strategic Objective Action Plan.

Nevertheless, the Strategic Objective Action Plan generated considerable achievement. These accomplishments were reported in the first Strategic Action Plan Annual Report in summer 2004 (#1.712, *Appendix B*), which indicated progress on several goals, in particular:

- The integration of credit and non-credit programs (Goal 1)
- New and enhanced Welcome and Registration Center services (Goal 2)
- Practice guidelines for Community Partnerships & Grants (Goal 2)
- Expanded decision-making from the President's Leadership Council (Goal 2)
- Tuition increases held below state averages (Goal 3)
- Significant expansion in alternative course delivery, including distance learning and short-term courses (Goal 3)
- Formation of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (Goal 4)
- Creation of the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (#3.380, *Appendix H*) (Goal 4)
- New orientation methods for full- and part-time faculty and staff (Goal 5)
- Completion of the successful Frederick First fund-raising campaign (Goal 6)
- Creation of the Communication Central information system (Goal 7)
- Comprehensive campus climate assessment conducted (#3.520) (Goal 8)
- Formation of Sustainability Task Force (Goal 9)

The next steps to improve planning occurred in July 2004, starting with the adoption of a new, simplified planning model. Rather than monitoring individual strategies—the method of the old Strategic Objective Action Plan—the new model instead tracked expected outcomes/benchmarks, while leaving execution to individual units (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004: #1.712, Appendix B*).

The College's assessment structure was further enhanced by the adoption of the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (#3.380, *Appendix H*), which gathers all of the College's assessment processes under a single umbrella; the plan is managed by the executive director, Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department, working with managers who oversee all assessment activities.

Finally, the Planning and Budget Council was reorganized to include the Action Plan Cluster managers; this step was intended to help the Council monitor the Action Plans more successfully and thus make better informed resource allocation decisions.

Improvements to the plan and the process continued in FY05. In October 2004 the goals and objectives were revised, with a majority of objectives updated or changed (*Strategic Plan-Revision: #1.722, Appendix A*). Finally, the old Strategic Objective Action Plan, recognized as unwieldy and excessively complex, was revised in accordance with the new planning model. The new, streamlined Action Plans (#1.725-#1.729, *Appendix D*) concentrated on prescribing outcomes/benchmarks, while empowering individual departments to develop specific strategies. The Action Plans, however, were still closely tied to the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Even during a year of considerable change in planning and assessment processes, the College continued to demonstrate significant progress on its goals and objectives. The 2005 Strategic Action Plan Annual Report (#1.713, *Appendix C*) documents the accomplishment of numerous outcomes/benchmarks with some accompanying assessment results, in particular:

- Expansion and improvement of advising services (Goal 1)
- Continuing credit/non-credit integration (Goal 1)
- Progress on co-curricular programming (Goal 1)
- Systems reviews in student admissions and services (Goal 2)
- Distance learning piloting courses using streaming video (Goal 3)
- Refinement of the student learning outcomes assessment structure (Goal 4)
- Formation of a new Employee Development process (Goal 5)
- Internal Decision-Making Procedure in place (Goal 5)
- Grant awards exceed benchmarks (Goal 6)
- Budget development process aligned more closely to Strategic Plan (Goal 6)
- Award-winning public information campaign (Goal 7)
- Training for new "Cultural Competency" employee appraisal criterion (Goal 8)
- Recycling programs for aluminum and plastic (Goal 9)

The renewal of the Strategic Plan will continue in FY06, with a major revision scheduled for spring. Early expectations are that the next plan will be simplified and will provide realistic accountability (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005. p.vii: #1.713, Appendix C*).

Planning Structure and Process

The basic planning structure that originated in the 2002 Visioning Day remains in effect (Figure 2.1: Strategic Plan Process). All planning ultimately derives from the Vision and Mission statements, which are the lead elements of the Strategic Plan. The Plan has nine broad goals and 25 major objectives. The objectives are carried out through the Action Plans (#1.725-#1.729, *Appendix D*), which state outcomes/benchmarks and their related assessments, status, and assigned responsibility.

The overall process continues to be collaborative and public. The Strategic Plan is posted on the College intranet; it is discussed during college-wide events such as the fall and spring convocations; and it is consulted during planning and budget development by all units. The principal collaborative governance groups—the affinity groups (ASA, FA, SGA, and SPA) and the Senate—are invited to comment.

The process also involves outside contexts and constituencies. The Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department conducts periodic environmental scans (#1.130, #1.131) to identify external and internal trends that affect the College. Many academic and administrative units have community-based advisory boards that provide regular formal reviews. College officials also network through membership in community service organizations. Drawing upon all of these inputs, the Planning and Budget Council approves the final plan.

The Action Plans are carried out by the Action Plan Clusters, which maintain their original five-part organization. The Action Plan Clusters are teams of key stakeholders organized around collections of related objectives. Each Cluster is headed by an Action Plan manager, and its membership includes staff members who are responsible for specific objectives (*Strategic Action Plan – Action Plan Clusters and Assigned Objectives: #1.717*). The Strategic Plan's 25 objectives are allocated among the Clusters, so that each objective is assigned to the unit best suited to implement it. The Action Plans contain specific outcomes and benchmarks, which are accompanied by corresponding assessment measures, assigned responsibility, expected completion date, and priority.

The executive director of the Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department coordinates and documents the work of the Clusters. Progress is reported annually in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004 #1.712, *Appendix B*; #1.713, *Appendix C*). These results are used to update the Strategic Plan and are published on Communication Central.

Resource Allocation

Data gathered from planning and assessment is central to the resource allocation process. The College's planning and budgeting activities are united in the Planning and Budget Council, a broadly representative group that is co-chaired by the vice president for administration and the executive director of Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research. Its membership includes the Action Plan managers, and elected representatives from the affinity groups (ASA, FA, SGA, and SPA) and the Senate. With planning and budgeting functions joined in a single management group, the College ensures that planning and

resource allocation decisions are integrated. The Council is responsible for implementing and updating the Strategic Plan and the Action Plans. The presence of the Action Plan managers ensures that officials who have primary responsibility for implementing plans are also involved in shaping and funding them.

In presenting their annual budget requests, departments indicate how requests relate to the Strategic Plan and justify them with assessment data (*Budget Development Guidelines and Instructions: #6.132*). The Council takes these justifications into account in making resource allocation decisions.

Unit Level Planning

The College's Strategic Plan is complemented by unit level plans. Unit level plans contain two kinds of outcomes/benchmarks. First, each of the outcomes/benchmarks from the Action Plans is assigned to the appropriate unit; in other words, the College's individual units—departments, offices, etc.—are the agents for carrying out the Strategic Plan. Second, unit level plans have their own unique outcomes/benchmarks for carrying out their own local objectives. Unit level plans follow the same principle as the Strategic Plan: a continuous assessment-improvement cycle. They are expected to contain outcomes/benchmarks, assessment measures, assigned accountability, timetables, and priority.

Overall, the College's unit level planning is less thorough and less consistent than its strategic planning. Not all units have plans. Not all unit plans have mission statements, goals, and objectives that drive planning and resource allocation. There is no common format for unit level plans, so they are often incomplete. There is no uniform process for reporting and monitoring unit level plans, so both accomplishments and shortcomings may escape notice.

This is not to suggest that unit level planning does not thrive at the College. Many units have sound plans, exemplified by Learning Support – Strategic Initiatives (#8.410) and IT – Strategic Initiatives (#8.350). Unit level assessment is also widespread, sophisticated, and very well utilized, as represented by the Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06 (#8.403). The Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; 2005: #1.713, *Appendix C*) also document numerous examples of unit level planning and assessment-driven improvement. Nevertheless, the College must make considerable progress to accomplish comprehensive and consistent unit level planning.

Challenges

In the past four years the College has carried out extensive renewal and made great progress in its planning. These impressive accomplishments have occurred during a period of other significant institutional change, especially the learning college reorganization and major transitions in leadership.

Nevertheless, employees are not completely engaged with the plan and the planning process. A significant minority has expressed lack of understanding of and dissatisfaction with the College's planning. As the College begins a new strategic planning process in spring 2006, it should strive to achieve optimum levels of employee involvement and understanding.

There is significant evidence that the Strategic Plan is succeeding. This is documented in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, Appendix B; 2005: #1.713, Appendix C), which identify numerous outcomes/benchmarks that have been accomplished. The planning structure still has room for improvement in its accountability. It is also necessary to ensure that objectives make satisfactory progress.

The College's documentation of its planning accomplishments, represented particularly by the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports, demonstrates substantial success in achieving its goals and objectives. Of greater long-term significance, this evidence demonstrates that the College has established a sustainable culture of continuous assessment-driven improvement.

Conclusions

The College has in place the principle elements of sound planning:

- Overall direction, represented by the Vision and Mission statements
- Structure, represented by institution-wide goals and objectives
- Specific implementation methods, with outcomes, benchmarks, assessment, timetables, and assigned responsibility
- Comprehensive assessment program
- Close connection to resource allocation processes
- Collaborative input to plan development and evaluation
- Processes for continuous, assessment-driven renewal

Recent experience with the Strategic Plan demonstrates that it can achieve its objectives, and strongly suggests that there is a foundation for long-term success.

Despite the Strategic Plan's accomplishments, opportunities for improvement are apparent. Experience with the present plan has suggested ways to simplify it. Greater understanding of the plan by all staff will improve their ability to implement it in their daily work. Institutional and unit level plans can complement each other more effectively. The major revision of the plan in 2006 is an opportunity to strengthen it significantly in these respects.

Recommendations

2. Simplify the Strategic Plan, so that it can be understood more easily and implemented more effectively.
3. Improve unit level planning to satisfactory levels of organization, participation, and integration with the Strategic Plan.
4. Ensure that priorities established in all plans are commensurate with available staff and fiscal resources, so that goals and objectives can be accomplished promptly and completely.
5. Increase college-wide understanding of the Strategic Plan, including its development, implementation, and role in resource allocation, through employee development events and participation in planning and budgeting processes. [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

Key Documents

Approved Operating Budget FY06: #6.121, Appendix L

Annual Budget Process: #6.105

Budget Development Guidelines and Instructions: #6.132

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Professional Development – Employee Development Plan: #5.420

Facilities Master Plan: 2003 to 2023: #6.420

IT- Strategic Initiatives FY05: #8.350

Management of Institutional Resources and Budget Processes

The College's stewardship of its institutional resources has evolved steadily over the past several years. The theme has been the integration of planning, assessment, and resource allocation, including the budget process. The result is a rational and consistent process for resource allocation that is intimately aligned with the College's Strategic Plan. This approach needs to be continued effectively, because the College faces a long period of steady enrollment growth in a revenue environment that is expected to be generally stable, but which has little prospect of significant enrichment.

The College's FY06 budget is \$29,742,180 (*Approved Operating Budget FY06: #6.121, Appendix L*). County revenue provides the largest share at 39%; tuition is 36% and state aid is 22%. The remaining 3% comes from several small sources. The College spends 71% of the total budget on students, represented by the combined total for instruction, instructional support, and student services (*MACC 2005 Databook, Table VD: #13.510*). This percentage compares favorably with the state average of 67% and suggests that the College's resource allocation philosophy is student-centered. The FY06 budget is 5.8% higher than the previous year. Most of the increase is for staff, including new positions, salary and wage increases, and benefit expenses, all of which represent a significant commitment to staff (*Operating Budget: Changes FY05 to FY06: #6.123*).

An extra budget funding source of increasing importance is the FCC Foundation, which has an endowment of nearly \$5,000,000 (*Foundation Annual Financial Report 2004: #1.632*). From FY00 to FY04 the Foundation has disbursed funds for several purposes. The largest share has gone to student scholarships, with an average of almost \$139,000 annually. Comparable expenditures have supported a variety of other activities, especially employee development and technology. In FY04, the Foundation made a one-time grant of nearly \$400,000 for the expansion of the Children's Center.

There is also a recently strengthened grants and partnerships program. In FY04 the Community Partnerships and Grants unit was created, headed by the assistant to the president, Community Partnerships and Grants, reporting directly to the president (*Community Partnerships and Grants: #1.127*). In its first year, Community Partnerships and Grants unit was active on both fronts. Several local partnerships were established or renewed, and more than \$247,000 in grant funding was raised (*Community Partnerships and*

Grants Annual Report 2005. #1.411; CP&G: Grants Roster 2004-05: #1.416).

Integrated Planning, Assessment, and Budgeting

The College's planning and budgeting activities are united in the Planning and Budget Council, which is co-chaired by the vice president for Administration and the executive director of Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research. The Council's membership includes the Action Plan Strategic Managers and elected representatives from the affinity groups—Administrative Staff Association (ASA), Faculty Association (FA), Student Government Association (SGA), and Supportive Personnel Association (SPA)—and from the Senate. The Council is responsible for implementing and updating the Strategic Plan and the Action Plans and for formulating the budget. With planning and budgeting functions joined in a single management group, the College ensures that planning and resource allocation decisions are integrated.

The integration of planning, assessment, and budgeting is the College's principal strategy for efficient utilization of institutional resources. The budget process is based upon the systematic solicitation and review of resource needs from everywhere in the College (*Annual Budget Process: #6.105*). All units follow a consistent process for presenting requests for strategic initiatives, base budget increases, and non-capital budget construction requests. In their annual budget requests, units are required to demonstrate how their requests relate to the Strategic Plan and the Action Plans, and to include assessment data (*Budget Development Guidelines and Instructions: #6.132*). There is a three-year forecast, which will be updated in FY06 (*Budget – Financial Forecast FY03-07: #6.141*).

The Strategic Plan also has a specific objective to "Evaluate budget processes/procedures and resource allocation to determine effectiveness in meeting College goals" (*Strategic Plan - Goal Six/Objective 17: #1.722, Appendix A*). The corresponding Action Plan has outcomes/benchmarks relating to efficient resource allocation (*Resource Action Plan. Goal Six/Objective 17: #1.727*). In 2005, the budget development process was revised to tie requests more closely to the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives, and to strengthen the need for evidence-based justifications (*Strategic Action Plan – Annual Report 2005, p. 38: #1.713, Appendix C*).

Adequacy of Faculty, Staff, and Administration

The College has undertaken budgetary and other initiatives to ensure adequate faculty, staff, and administration to support the institution's mission and outcomes expectations, including salary adjustments and employee development. Because of recent and future enrollment growth, there is continual pressure to maintain adequate staffing levels.

The Strategic Plan Goal 5: Objective 15 is to "Provide appropriate compensation and promote a climate where employees are rewarded and recognized for their contributions." The corresponding Worklife Action Plan has two objectives: one for compensation and the other for employee recognition and rewards.

For compensation, the Worklife Action Plan objective is that "salary scale midpoints for benchmark positions will be in the top third of community colleges in Maryland" (*Worklife*

Action Plan - Goal 5, Objective 15.1.2: #1.728, Appendix D). Faculty salaries have achieved this objective; in FY04 the College completed a five-year plan to raise faculty salaries through an annual 2% extra increase (*Faculty Five-Year Salary Adjustment Plan: #5.115*). Faculty salaries are now in the top third among state community colleges (*Faculty Salaries – Maryland Community Colleges: #5.1145*). The status of administrative and support salaries is less clear. These salaries are compared through a survey of benchmark positions conducted by state community college Human Resource offices, but the latest available data is too old for valid analysis. When results of the fall 2005 survey are reported in January 2006, the College will assess its administrative and support salary structure.

The other Worklife Action Plan objective concerns employee rewards and recognition (*Worklife Action Plan - Goal 5, Objective 15.1.1: #1.728, Appendix D*). This objective reflects widespread staff sentiment that their contributions are not sufficiently acknowledged. The 2003 PACE Campus Climate Survey (*Q. 61: #3.520, Appendix N*) showed strong dissatisfaction with the College's employee recognition and rewards program. In response, the Worklife Action Plan (*Objective 15.1.1, #1.728, Appendix D*) has outcomes/benchmarks for employee reward programs and salary scales. A Rewards and Recognition Committee is developing a survey instrument to identify employee expectations for a rewards and recognition program.

Finally, in 2005 the College strengthened its Employee (Professional) Development program, reflecting the learning college principle that learning is as important for faculty and staff as it is for students. The new program has more effective criteria for employee compliance and greater integration with the appraisal process (*Professional Development – Employee Development Plan: #5.420*). It identifies three distinct aspects of employee development and provides opportunities for each:

- *Professional* covers job-related knowledge and skills.
- *Organizational* includes knowledge about the College and its operations.
- *Personal* is concerned with enrichment of the employee's personal life.

The administrator and support personnel appraisal form now asks how proposed development activities will improve and/or expand learning (*HR Forms – Appraisal: #5.215*). In their appraisals, faculty members are asked to document improvements to student learning based on outcomes assessments.

Institutional Controls and Resource Allocation Policies and Procedures

The Planning and Budget Council develops a draft budget, which is submitted to the Board of Trustees for their input, and then to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval (*Trustees Recommended Operating Budget: #6.125*). The resulting Approved Operating Budget (*#6.121, Appendix L*) sets the parameters for the year's financial actions, including baseline operations, strategic initiatives, and capital projects. Day-to-day conduct of financial activities is strictly governed by guidelines in the Accounting Procedures Manual (*#2.110*). Guidelines for managing the College's investments are specified in the Policy Manual (*Section 6.25: #2.310, Appendix G*).

The Approved Operating Budget includes individual budgets for the College's auxiliary enterprises: the Bookstore, the Children's Center, and the Dining Service. To improve planning and institutional controls for the auxiliary enterprises, each enterprise is developing a business plan. Plans for the Dining Service (#6.232) and the Children's Center (#6.220) have been completed.

The Annual Financial Report provides a complete record of the year's financial events, including management discussion and financial statements (#6.110-#6.114). For the fiscal year 2004 financial audit, the College contracted with a new audit firm, which performed a thorough review of the College's internal controls related to the audit. The audit firm identified seven weaknesses that needed to be addressed by the College, two of them considered material weaknesses and reportable conditions under the provisions of the Single Audit Act. The College has corrected the two identified material weaknesses, and has corrected or is in the process of correcting the five additional weaknesses.

Facilities Planning

The College's facilities consist of 10 buildings situated on 94.2 acres of land on Opossumtown Pike, as well as a rented site in Frederick City utilized by the professional truck-driving program. An off-site computer training facility (not owned or leased by FCC), the FCC IT Institute, is part of a training partnership. These facilities provide more than 265,000 gross square feet of space for College and community use. The College also uses the Career and Technology Center, owned by Frederick County Public Schools, for evening programming. The overall condition of campus facilities is rated excellent by an independent Facilities Condition Assessment (#6.405), and is due to an aggressive preventive maintenance and renewal program (*Facilities Maintenance Report*: #6.410). Additionally, the Facilities Department maintains a running list of deferred maintenance and small projects, which are accomplished on a priority basis within budgeted funds.

The College faces a long period of steady enrollment growth with associated demands upon all facilities. Based on projections provided by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (*Facilities Master Plan*: #6.420), the College can expect its headcount enrollment to increase 19.2% from FY05 to FY15. This is consistent with state population growth projections for the county. Full-time enrollments are projected to grow by 30.1% during this period, while part-time enrollments are projected to grow 14.5%. Although enrollment projections are not available from MHEC beyond 2014, the College believes enrollment growth for this second decade (from 2010 to 2020) will be close to projected County population growth of 18.2%. Increases in Frederick County population and Frederick County Public School enrollment, increases in demand for adult and career training, and immigration into the county will all contribute to the College's growth.

The FY07 CIP Bond Bill/Computation of Space Needs (#6.435) shows a current campus deficit of 67,208 net assignable square feet (according to state space calculations). A continued shortage of 50,923 in FY2015 is projected over the next 10 years. The Facilities Master Plan identifies several major needs, especially for student life and for credit and non-credit programs. In the meantime, the student body continues to grow, challenging capacity during peak attendance periods and straining space scheduling systems. An analysis of space

constraints was undertaken by the Scheduling Task Force, which issued a detailed report in fall 2005 that identified numerous opportunities for improvement and made specific recommendations (*Scheduling Task Force Report: #6.711*). College managers are evaluating the report, along with other input on space and scheduling problems. It is important to continue this analysis and make recommendations that will ensure the most efficient use of the College's facilities.

In order to accommodate growth over the next two decades to a potential enrollment of 8,200 credit students, a significant increase in square footage is required, along with increased parking. Additionally, the ability of the public road system to accommodate traffic to the campus is a concern. This growth will utilize practically all of the campus space that can be developed over the next 20 to 25 years (*Facilities Master Plan: #6.420*).

This growth is foreseen and managed by the College's Facilities Master Plan (#6.420). It is a comprehensive document that covers facilities, landscape, utilities, telecommunications, and signage. The plan is consistent with the Strategic Plan and has a scheduled five-year update. It is reviewed annually by the vice president for administration and the executive director for facilities planning, with interim updates as needed. It is coordinated with state and county government partners who share funding for many projects. The plan will permit the College to continue to expand to community needs, to provide high quality instruction, and to foster an environment conducive to learning. Budget implications are addressed through a six-year capital budget (*Capital Improvement Program FY07 – FY12: #6.431*) and long-range capital budget; each is updated annually as part of the budget process.

The current plan, completed in 2003, projects eight new buildings or major expansions, increasing on-campus square footage by 80% (from 265,000 to 454,000 square feet), to serve a projected enrollment of 8,200 students. Parking will need to be increased by 793 spaces, from 1,289 to 2,182. Other infrastructure needs and upgrades are also addressed.

Preliminary discussion is underway concerning a proposed Workforce Development Center and a possible second campus (*Workforce Development Center/Second Campus – Options: #6.441*). Workforce training is now offered at the Career and Technology Center, but it is only available in the evening; a new facility would allow daytime programs as well. The College is considering a second campus as an option that would help address the long-term growth discussed above.

To accommodate these ever-changing and increasing demands, the College is undertaking an update to the 20-year Facilities Master Plan. The current plan was completed in 2003. This update is three years earlier than originally planned. The new plan is being developed to analyze the most recent projected need to increase the campus by 100% for an increase of 266,200 GSF.

Proposed projects are based on the FY2007 – 2012 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which includes seven new structures totaling 184,000 GSF and an investment of more than \$55 million. The FY07 CIP also projects FY 2013 – 2024 growth projects to include three new structures totaling 82,200 GSF with an estimated investment cost of almost \$43 million.

Current projects are on schedule. The Roads, Athletic Fields, Parking project and Children's Center Addition project have recently been completed. Design program specifications were submitted to MHEC for the Classroom/Student Center. Designs of science lab renovations have been accomplished and sent to MHEC. Architectural and engineering design of a new Administrative Services Building has begun. This 15,000 SF building will house administrative offices that are now located in Administrative Hall ("A" building). The freed-up space will serve student needs and will allow classrooms and faculty offices to be located more closely to one another. The College has entered into a campus wide Energy Performance Contract, based on guaranteed cost savings, as part of its sustainability program.

Support of Learning Facilities

The Facilities Master Plan intends to meet the student learning needs of higher education in the 21st century. As such, it is concerned not only with size and number of buildings, but also with space functionality and technical infrastructure. The plan therefore reflects Strategic Plan Goal 6; Objective 19: "Plan for and provide facilities, technology, and equipment to support a Learning College" (#1.722, *Appendix A*). The Master Plan's Short-Term Capital Improvements Plan (2003-2009) concentrates upon construction and renovation of instructional space, including classrooms, labs, and the Library. The Telecommunications Plan is based upon the "converged network" —in which data, voice, and video use a common infrastructure; it calls for extensive network infrastructure renewal that will serve present and future instructional needs

Equipment and Technology Planning

Since spring 2004 the College has been energetically renovating its information and educational technology program, with new management, organizational structure, planning, and assessment, and with improved infrastructure and service. This renewal is occurring in response to a period during which management issues retarded service delivery and progress (*Analysis of and Recommendations for IT Services: #8.320*). This problem was reflected in the PACE Campus Climate Survey (*Question 43: #3.520, Appendix N*), which indicated substantial dissatisfaction with the state of campus technology.

The Information Technology department is part of the Learning Support area and provides service to all administrative and educational units (*College Organizational Chart - Learning Support: #1.125*). Additional leadership and support for educational technology is provided by the Office of Learning Technologies, which is part of the Center for Teaching and Learning (*College Organizational Chart – Learning: #1.124*).

An important part of the information technology renewal was the creation of a new unit strategic plan (*IT - Strategic Initiatives 05 #8.350*). The plan represents a comprehensive effort to continue revitalizing management and staff, to extend infrastructure, and to improve service to students and staff. It includes relevant outcomes/benchmarks from the Resources Action Plan (#1.727, *Appendix D*); progress is documented in the IT plan and in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (#1.712, *Appendix B*; #1.713, *Appendix C*). The main purpose of the plan was to stimulate renewal in IT services. With this goal accomplished, future versions of the plan should integrate more closely with the Facilities Master Plan, to ensure

smooth infrastructure growth, and with the Strategic Plan itself, to ensure sound information technology support for all College functions. The College also maintains a separate schedule for information technology equipment acquisition and replacement, which has detailed three- and four-year plans (#8.323).

Since spring 2004, managerial and structural changes, along with a concerted effort on the part of IT staff, have greatly improved staff satisfaction with IT services, as indicated by highly favorable assessments from the 2005 *HelpDesk Satisfaction Survey* (#8.325). The *Learning Support FY05 Annual Report* (#8.402) and the *Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06* (#8.403) both record significant progress in all aspects of IT service. Technology planning and operations should be further strengthened when the position of chief technology officer (now vacant) is filled, as planned in spring 2006.

Assessment of the Use of Institutional Resources.

The College has a range of measures for assessing the effective and efficient use of resources. The two main constituent surveys—the Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.650) and the PACE Campus Climate Survey (#3.520, *Appendix N*)—provide assessments of resource use by students and staff, respectively. These surveys are to be conducted periodically.

In the Strategic Plan, Goal 2 “Insure College systems support learning” and Goal 6 “Provide resources to support a Learning College” contain objectives that deal primarily with resource utilization. The corresponding Action Plans (#1.725; #1.727, *Appendix D*) contain specific outcomes/benchmarks and related assessment initiatives. In the College’s integrated planning-budgeting process, allocation requests and decisions are supported by assessment data. Unit level plans follow the same model, in which operational decisions and budget requests are directed by unit level assessment measures.

Conclusions

FCC is an effective and responsible steward of its institutional resources. Its integrated planning/budgeting/assessment processes ensure that resource allocation decisions are evidence-based and closely related to major goals and needs. The physical plant is in excellent condition and is very well maintained. Facilities and capital plans are designed to maintain long-term sufficiency of the physical plant. The technical infrastructure is positioned to meet tomorrow’s evolving expectations. The College is acting upon plans to expand and strengthen its staff.

The principal challenges to institutional resources will be to keep pace with expected continuing growth. Staff and facilities face an ongoing struggle to keep up with growing demand into the foreseeable future, especially with little prospect of significant increases in revenue streams.

Recommendations

- 6.** Integrate the information technology strategic plan fully with the Strategic Plan and the Facilities Master Plan.
- 7.** Critically review procedures and systems for space scheduling, in order to optimize space utilization throughout the campus.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

Key Documents

Internal Decision-Making Procedure (Procedures Manual 2.11: #2.510, Appendix G

MD Code EDUC. §16: #13.551

Policy Manual: #2.310, Appendix G

Procedures Manual: #2.510, Appendix G

Board of Trustees – Annual Goals 2005-2006: #1.021

Collegial Governance

Frederick Community College operates under a structure of collegial governance and formally states that it is “committed to an open internal decision-making process with the intent to build consensus whenever possible” (*Procedures Manual, Section 2.11: #2.510, Appendix G*). For the College, collegial governance means that the campus community participates in governance by providing input for institutional decisions.

The College’s principal shared governance instrument is the President’s Cabinet, whose purpose is to “provide final recommendation of policies that are sent to the Board of Trustees and recommend agenda items for Board of Trustee meetings” (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120, Appendix F*). All constituencies are represented in the Cabinet’s membership, including:

- President’s direct reports: vice presidents; diversity and foundation directors
- Chairs of the affinity groups: Administrative Staff Association (ASA), Faculty Association (FA), Student Government Association (SGA), and Support Personnel Association (SPA)
- College Senate chair

The presence of affinity group and Senate chairs on the President’s Cabinet contributes significantly to collegial governance. The affinity groups represent all students and virtually all full- and part-time employees. They discuss pending policies and procedures, and their chairs represent their groups’ views at the Cabinet. The Senate is an umbrella deliberative group whose membership includes faculty, administrators, and students. Matters of policy, procedure, budget, and governance fall under its purview. Affinity group and Senate chairs also meet individually each month with the president to represent their constituencies.

Collegial governance is also formally sanctioned by the Internal Decision-Making Procedure (*Procedures Manual, Section 2.11: #2.510, Appendix G*). This procedure covers all proposed new policies and procedures or proposed changes to existing ones. It provides for formal, college-wide notification of proposed changes, discussion by the affinity groups, and feedback to the President’s Cabinet.

In the College’s collegial governance model, communication, including the announcement and discussion of proposed changes, is essential. The College has several other means by which information is distributed and exchanged college-wide. All-college convocations are held at the start of fall and spring terms to make major announcements and promote staff-wide unity. The president conducts regular “open door” sessions (*Carol’s Corner: #1.404*).

Communication Central, an internal communication utility that is hosted on the College intranet, is the principal means for campus-wide information dissemination. It posts several kinds of news, documentation, and forums, including:

- News announcements from throughout the College
- Policies and procedures, including proposed changes
- Minutes and documents from campus committees
- Internal documents and reports, including key documents like the Strategic Plan, operating budget, assessment reports, Self-Study Report drafts, etc.
- Forms, such as travel expense reports and appraisal forms
- Campus calendars, including campus events and employee development opportunities
- Minutes of affinity group meetings and online bulletin boards for their members

To ensure that all employees have an opportunity to check Communication Central, it is set as the Internet Explorer home page for all employee computers, so that any employee who goes to the Web automatically receives a campus news update.

The most recent large-scale assessment that addressed collegial governance and communication was the PACE Campus Climate Survey conducted in October 2003 (#3.520, *Appendix N*). Questions dealing with governance and communication (#9, 17, 19, and 35) scored somewhat lower than the College's generally favorable average. It is important to note that this survey was conducted during a period of great transition, including a new planning structure, the adoption of the learning college model, a major reorganization, enrollment growth, and leadership change.

The College continues to work toward better communication. Goal 7 of the Strategic Plan is to "Promote and enhance effective communication." This goal includes Objective 21, which is to "Integrate effective communication systems internally among employee groups, students, systems, and areas." Progress on these is recorded in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (#1.712, *Appendix B*; #1.713, *Appendix C*). Several opportunities for student-focused communication were identified in the 2005 Communications Audit (#3.140). College-wide participation to develop the Internal Decision-Making Procedure (*Procedures Manual, Section 2.11*: #2.510, *Appendix G*) is another indicator of progress.

An examination of affinity group minutes (*Administrative Staff Association*: #10.110; *Faculty Association*: #10.460; *Support Personnel Association*: #10.910) indicates that there is open discussion regarding issues that affect the College community. Concerns regarding morale and the lack of a step increase in FY05 are examples. Collegial governance has fostered the open discussion of such issues. The minutes of each constituency reflect that each group is doing its job so that decision-makers and goal-setters can make informed decisions for the College. By openly discussing issues, the College practices shared communication, and thereby strengthens its collegial governance.

Governance Documentation

FCC, as a public institution, is regulated by the state of Maryland under provisions in the Maryland Annotated Code (*MD Code EDUC. §16*: #13.551), which places primary governance responsibility in a Board of Trustees. Section 16-103 of the Code authorizes the

Board of Trustees to establish a community college, and outlines the responsibilities and powers of the governing body, “each board of trustees shall exercise general control over the community college, keep separate records and minutes, and adopt reasonable rules, regulations, or bylaws to carry out the provisions of this subtitle.” Furthermore, the College’s Board has established more specific governance responsibilities in its by-laws (*Policy Manual, Section 1 “Board of Trustees”*: #2.310, *Appendix G*). Actions of the Board are recorded and published in minutes of each meeting (*Board of Trustees Minutes*: #10.210).

The Maryland Annotated Code (§16.104) also delineates governance structure by providing that “each board of trustees shall appoint a president” and the president “shall report directly to the board of trustees.” The code states that the president “is responsible for the conduct of the community college and for the administration and supervision of its departments.” The College’s organization charts illustrate how authority and accountability are assigned throughout the institution (*College Organizational Charts*: #1.123-#1.127, *Appendix E*).

Conflict of Interest and the Governing Body

Board members are in a fiduciary relationship and owe loyalty to the institution, including avoiding conflicts of interest. State law regulates the Board of Trustees and requires Board members to act in accordance with the state’s Public Ethics laws (*MD Code STATE & GOV’T. §15-101*: #13.557). Each trustee is provided an ethics package from the state. Through signed affidavit the Board members pledge to avoid conflicts of interest. The College has not been notified of any complaints regarding alleged ethical violations from the State Ethics Commission.

Under the Board of trustee by-laws (*Policy Manual, Section 1.18*: #2.310, *Appendix G*), the Board adopted a Code of Ethics (#1.030) to which each trustee pledged through signed affidavit. The Code of Ethics expressly states that a trustee pledges to “avoid situations leading to conflicts of interest.”

Governing Body Sufficiency

The Board of Trustees is the overall governing body and consists of seven community members appointed by the governor for five-year terms (*Board Members*: #1.050). When a position opens, the Board sends a profile of the current makeup and desired skill sets to the governor’s office. The job description of a trustee prominently states the duty to represent the interests of constituents and the public to the College (*Board Member Job Descriptions* #1.040). The job description also requires supporting the College’s financial well being and avoiding conflicts of interest.

Governing Body and Policy Governance

The Board’s job description also calls for members to concern themselves with broad issues of governance, rather than with administrative details (#1.040). To this end the Board has adopted “policy governance,” in which the Board concentrates on broad policy issues, while leaving more specific procedural aspects to the administration (#1.060). Part of this effort was a yearlong process to separate policies from procedures, which was completed in 2005 and is embodied in separate manuals for policies (*Policy Manual*: #2.310, *Appendix G*) and

procedures (*Procedures Manual: #2.510, Appendix G*). Prior to this revision, the Policy Manual was an uneven accumulation of policies and procedures, with no centralized source for employee access; now all policies and procedures are centralized on Communication Central. The College's president, vice presidents, and Board of Trustees routinely and periodically review policies and procedures.

Policy governance has allowed the Board to focus on long-term issues and vision for the College, while entrusting operational and procedural matters to the administration. Decisions concerning the operation of the College are not delayed unnecessarily, while oversight is still maintained by the Board of Trustees.

Chief Executive Officer Appointment and Responsibility

The president of Frederick Community College serves as the chief executive officer. In this capacity, the president is responsible for the overall operation of the College and for achieving the College's Vision, Mission, goals, and objectives. The president also plans and establishes the organizational structure to support these goals and objectives. The president is appointed by, and reports directly to, the Board of Trustees (*MD Code §16-104: #13.551*).

The College welcomed a new president in August 2005. The search process was similar to earlier presidential searches (*Presidential Search Documents: #1.671*). The search committee was representative of the community and the College. All employees had an opportunity to be involved in the selection; each candidate attended an open, college-wide forum, which included a Q&A opportunity, and forum attendees prepared written evaluations that were considered by the search committee. The current president's background, job-related training, and experiences meet the qualifications of the position and job description (*Policy Manual 2.12: #2.310, Appendix G*).

Governing Body Communication to the Commission and other Accrediting Agencies

The governing body communicates comparable necessary and relevant reporting to the Middle States Commission and other accrediting agencies. The following programs have accreditation through a separate agency or are in the process of applying for accreditation: Nursing, Surgical Technology, Respiratory Therapy, and Emergency Medical Services. The Nursing Program Self Study Report: Executive Summary (*#7.9347*) presents similar information to that which has been reported to the Commission (*#1.210-#1.270*).

Each year the College's Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department coordinates the submission of 49 reports to oversight agencies: Maryland Higher Education Commission (31), Maryland Association of Community Colleges (11), Maryland Department of Education (3), US Department of Education (3), and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (1)—the Institutional Profile (*#3.510*). Managers of these documents are responsible for providing accurate information. All reports that have financial implication are reviewed by an external auditor to ensure conformity. In addition, two enrollment reports: Credit Enrollment Report (*#13.210*) and Non-Credit Enrollment Report (*#13.215*)—which the Maryland Higher Education Commission uses to calculate the state share of Frederick Community College's budget—are reviewed by the Frederick County auditor. MHEC officials also reserve the right to audit any other report that has financial implications.

Finally, all internal and external reports are generated by queries or SQL reports, and are prepared by IT staff with oversight by managers responsible for the reports. All internal and external reports have documentation for assessing the integrity of the data and consequently the reports (*MHEC Reporting Schedule: #13.606*).

Governing Body Orientation and Informational Practices

Each new Board member receives a comprehensive orientation conducted by the president, president's staff, and returning Board members. It includes meetings, discussions, and visits to all College locations. There is also a new trustee orientation during the Association of Community Colleges Trustees conference.

New members are given an *Orientation Handbook*, which contains key documents on the operations of the Board and the College, including Board mission and vision, Trustee job description, President and Board goals, Strategic Plan, operating budget, and trend reports (*BOT – Orientation Resources: #1.047*). This documentation provides comprehensive, in-depth information, which establishes the background essential for a new Board member.

The Board receives regularly scheduled communication on the state and activities of the College. Before each monthly meeting, the Board holds “Conversations” with small groups from the College; these provide for informal discussion and information exchange (*Board Conversations: #1.032*). The Board receives eight specific annual reports each year from major college areas: facilities, finance, enrollment, student outcomes, fund raising and alumni, human resources, marketing/recruitment, and instructional programs (*Cabinet and Board Report Schedule: #1.048*). The Board receives biannual minutes of the College's external advisory boards. Of course, individual agenda items at each meeting typically involve information dissemination to the Board.

Governing Body Assessment

The Board undergoes periodic assessment. It holds an annual retreat, during which it establishes goals for the following year (*Board of Trustees – Annual Goals 2005-2006: #1.021*). At the end of the year, the Board conducts two self-evaluations: The Board of Trustees evaluates itself as a whole, based on the job description and the goals the Board set for the year; and each Board member completes a self-evaluation form based on the job description (*BOT-Board Evaluation Instrument: #1.025*).

State attendance requirements for Board members are a form of external evaluation. The Maryland Code (§8-501) provides that “a member of a State Board or commission appointed by the Governor who fails to attend at least 50% of the meetings of the board or commission during any consecutive 12-month period shall be considered to have resigned.” To monitor attendance, the Maryland Secretary of Appointments requires the Board to submit an annual attendance roster. All FCC Board members are active and attending meetings.

Institutional Leadership and Governance Assessment

The Board evaluates the president annually based on mutually set goals (*President – Goals FY06: #1.405*) using an appraisal form (*President's Evaluation Form: #1.407*). The Board is informed of the College's—and thus the president's—accomplishments most specifically

through the president's annual report (*President's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees: #1.403*). The eight monthly reports and monthly conversations described previously provide substantial additional information for the Board to assess the overall performance of the College.

The Trustees have external means to assist their evaluation of the College's leadership. The program advisory boards (#7.935) represent the assessments of expert community members. Finally, individual Board members have established ties throughout the community, which are a source of feedback on the College's performance and reputation.

Conclusions

Frederick Community College has a collegial governance structure that has several means for the president and the Board of Trustees to receive input from students, faculty, and staff, regarding both operations and planning. The governance structure has evolved rapidly in recent years and has improved internal communication. The College's governing body, its Board of Trustees, has a long and exemplary record of effective participation in the College's management and support for the College and its financial well-being. The recent change to policy governance enables the Board to concentrate on matters of broad importance.

The College has formal communication and governance processes in place, in the form of the affinity group structure and the Internal Decision-Making Procedure. Nevertheless, employees express noteworthy levels of dissatisfaction with communication and with their ability to participate in governance. This contradiction might be addressed by ensuring that the affinity groups are functioning at greatest effectiveness.

Recommendation

8. Examine ways to improve affinity group participation in the governance process, in order to strengthen collegial governance and expand communication on issues that affect the College community.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 5: Administration

Key Documents

Office of the President. Policy Manual, Number 2.12: # 2.310, Appendix G

President – Goals FY06: #1.405

Job Descriptions: #5.310

Career Web: Administrative and Support: #5.110

Recruiting Process Flow Chart: #5.450

Employee Appraisal and Annual Development Plan: #5.215

Employee Development Plan: #5.420

PACE Campus Climate Survey. Questions 60, 61, 65: #3.520, Appendix N

College Organizational Charts: #1.123-#1.127

Core Groups Chart: #1.121

Action Plans 2005: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650

Chief Executive Officer Background, Training, and Administration

The president of Frederick Community College serves as the chief executive officer of the institution. The president is responsible for the overall administration of the College, including achieving the College's Vision, Mission, goals, and objectives. The president is responsible for planning and establishing organizational structures to support these goals and objectives.

The president is appointed by and reports directly to the Frederick Community College Board of Trustees and serves as a liaison between the Board and College staff. The duties and expectations of the president are listed in the Policy Manual (*Office of the President. Policy Manual, Number 2.12: # 2.310, Appendix G*). The duties of the president were restated in the Position Announcement for the recent presidential search, which was completed in July 2005 (*Presidential Search Documents: #1.671*). The incoming president's qualifications reflect appropriate academic background and professional training for the position (*Presidential Search Documents: #1.671*).

The president also has annual goals, which are mutually developed with the Board of Trustees (*President – Goals FY06: #1.405*). The Board assesses the president's overall performance annually, using the President's Evaluation Form (*President's Evaluation Form: #1.407*). The president's accomplishments are also presented to the Board in the president's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees (*#1.403*). Another key document for the president's stewardship is the Accountability Report that is prepared for the Maryland Higher Education Commission (*Accountability Report: #3.110*).

Administrative Leadership and Staff Qualifications

The College has several processes in place to ensure that administrators, administrative leaders, and support staff are well qualified to carry out the College's mission. Job descriptions, hiring procedures, appraisal processes, and employee development programs are all carefully structured to ensure that the College has an exemplary work force whose

skills are continually strengthened. The College's major employee satisfaction survey (*PACE Campus Climate Survey: #3.520, Appendix N*) indicates that administrative and support staff generally feel that their work is student centered (questions 46-49), relevant and meaningful (questions 38, 39), collaborative (questions 21, 25), and that they have good relations with their managers (questions 2, 3, 6).

The requirements for education, training, experience, and skills for administrative leaders and other staff are clearly defined in the College's position job descriptions (*Job Descriptions: #5.310*). All job descriptions follow a strict format to ensure uniformity and compliance with the needs of the College. In addition to listing each essential function of the position, job descriptions also include a list of "Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities" that employees must possess to carry out the job's functions, as well as a set of "Qualification Standards" that a candidate must meet to be considered for the position.

Job descriptions are kept current by several means. As a part of each employee's annual appraisal, the job description is reviewed and changed as needed. When a position becomes open, an early step in the hiring process is to review and update the job description. When job descriptions are changed substantially, the position itself may be moved, with salary adjustment, in the College's job classification structure (*Career Web: Administrative and Support: #5.110*).

Hiring processes are designed to attract the strongest possible candidate pool. The Recruiting Process Flow Chart (*#5.450*) ensures that all applications are solicited and evaluated thoroughly and consistently. All position announcements are placed prominently on the College's website, and many are published in the local newspaper or other appropriate media. Administrative professional positions are recruited nationally. Within the past two years the College has filled six leadership positions: president, vice president for learning and provost, vice president for administration, and three associate vice presidents; all were external candidates and four of the six came from out of state. The section on "Diversity in Professional Staff" in Standard 6, Integrity, contains discussion of staff diversity and hiring.

In 2005 the College revised its appraisal and employee professional development processes to promote employee advancement in concert with learning college principles. In the appraisal process (*Employee Appraisal and Annual Development Plan: #5.215*), employees are evaluated on how their accomplishments relate to the College's goals, and improve or expand learning. Employees also identify goals for the forthcoming year, which will in turn be part of the next year's appraisal.

The employee development program is integrated with the appraisal process and in 2005 was improved to offer broader development opportunities (*Employee Development Plan: #5.420*). There is a three-track program: *Professional*, for job-related knowledge; *Organizational*, for learning about College processes such as budgeting, planning, etc.; and *Personal*, for individual self-betterment activities. Employees and their supervisors together develop a training schedule that will improve the employee's ability to meet College, departmental, and personal needs. The employee's evaluation is in part based upon how well the development plan was completed. The College offers an extensive schedule of employee development

events (*Professional Development Calendar: #5.410*), which employees are encouraged to attend. In 2005, the College also reallocated funds to enable more employee attendance at off-campus events, such as conferences and conventions.

The College's many steps to improve appraisal and employee development resulted in part from perceived levels of dissatisfaction with evaluations, development, and recognition (*PACE Campus Climate Survey. Questions 60, 61, 65: #3.520, Appendix N*). A committee has been formed to examine employee expectations regarding rewards and recognition, but it has not yet reported any results. Employee recognition and reward structures have opportunity for significant improvement.

Information and Decision-Making Systems

Over the past several years the College has steadily enhanced its information and decision-making systems to support the work of all employees, including administrative leaders, in improving student learning. The College's information gathering and dissemination systems have been greatly strengthened by significant investment in staff and technological resources. Decision-making has been improved through changes in organizational structure and collaboration practices. The College has completely invigorated its information capabilities in two major ways: the expansion of the Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department; and the adoption of an integrated, college-wide information system.

The Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department (OAPR) has three full-time employees, one of whom concentrates on student learning assessment. Working with faculty and staff, the OAPR generates a rich collection of data, analysis, and reports on the College's administrative and educational operations. This data is delivered directly to appropriate administrative leaders, and is available to all employees on the OAPR site on Communication Central. The executive director of the OAPR Department is a co-chair of the Planning and Budget Council, which strengthens the link between data assessment and decision-making.

The College uses the *PeopleSoft* Finance, Human Resources, and Student modules to provide an integrated and intensive data environment. *PeopleSoft* has a robust reporting system for both preformatted and custom reports. The Student module generates extensive data on student performance, which is used by administrative leaders to assess and improve student learning outcomes.

In concert with the learning college model, the College's decision-making structure and processes are aligned to maximize student learning. In particular, the College's distinctive Learning area (*College Organizational Charts – Learning: #1.124*) unites all learning functions in a single administrative unit. In addition to transfer and career academic programs, the Learning area includes non-credit programs, many student development functions, and related functions such as the Library, Testing Center, and the Writing Center.

The College's decision-making processes position administrative leaders to provide information-based management. Several interlocking management groups provide for both vertical and horizontal (cross-functional) discussion (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120*,

Appendix F; Core Groups Chart: #1.121). Among the Core Groups, the President's Cabinet and the President's Leadership Council, in particular, are forums where the president, the vice presidents, and other administrative leaders shape decisions on the basis of shared information. The Core Groups Chart (*#1.121*) depicts numerous connections among administrative leadership groups for information sharing and decision-making.

To ensure that administrative leaders obtain the widest possible input for decision-making, the College established the Internal Decision-Making Procedure in 2005 (*Procedure #2.11. Procedures Manual: #2.510, Appendix G*). This procedure provides for prompt and thorough input from all interested employees concerning any new policies or procedures, or changes to existing ones.

Lines of Organization and Authority and the Learning College

In 2002 the College adopted the learning college model, which was accompanied by a major reorganization. Its chief element is the innovative Learning area, which unites standard academic departments with related functions like non-credit education, student development, and several others (*College Organizational Chart – Learning: #1.124. See additional discussion of college organization in Part One: Institutional Profile*). Shortly after the reorganization, the PACE Campus Climate Survey of staff opinion expressed some dissatisfaction with the College's organization (*PACE Campus Climate Survey, Question 34: #3.520, Appendix N*).

Since then the College has developed and disseminated clear and specific documentation, in the form of College Organizational Charts, on lines of organization and authority (*College Organizational Charts: #1.123-#1.127, Appendix E*). The charts have been widely distributed throughout the College and are available in the Human Resources Department site on Communication Central. Over the past three years, nearly all job descriptions have been revised to reflect current job responsibilities and reporting relationships.

Assessment of Administrative Structures and Services

The College has an extensive program, operating at both institutional and unit levels, to periodically assess the effectiveness of its administrative structures and services.

Several of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives relate to administration, particularly:

- Goal 2, Objective 5: Provide easily accessible, integrated administrative services to all students.
- Goal 2, Objective 6: Continuously review business process systems and implement approved recommendations.
- Goal 4, Objective 12: Develop and implement institutional outcomes assessment and use the results to support the effectiveness of our Learning College.
- Goal 5, Objective 14: Monitor the internal decision-making procedures to provide a voice for all employees.
- Goal 5, Objective 15: Provide appropriate compensation and promote a climate where employees are rewarded and recognized for their contributions.
- Goal 6, Objective 17: Evaluate budget processes/procedures and resource allocation to determine effectiveness in meeting College goals.
- Goal 6, Objective 19: Plan for and provide facilities, technology, and equipment to

support a Learning College.

- Goal 7, Objective 21: Integrate effective communication systems internally among employee groups, students, systems, and areas.
- Goal 8, Objective 23: Integrate diversity goals and objectives into the planning process for all work areas.
- Goal 9, Objective 25: Enhance resource conservation and waste reduction programs.

These objectives receive specific direction and assessment through the Action Plans (*Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D*), which include outcomes/benchmarks, assessment initiatives, assigned responsibility, and timelines. There are five Action Plans, corresponding to major College sectors; three of them—Process/Communications (#1.726), Resources (#1.727), and Worklife (#1.728)—deal primarily with administrative structures and services. The other two—Learning (#1.725) and Campus Climate (#1.729)—also involve administration. In other words, nearly every Strategic Plan goal has one or more objectives—with corresponding strategies and assessments—related to administration. Action Plan outcomes and assessments are reported annually in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; #1.713, *Appendix C*).

Two of the most important assessments of administrative effectiveness were large-scale surveys of students (*Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650*) and employees (*PACE Campus Climate Survey: #3.520, Appendix N*). Both instruments included numerous questions dealing with administrative structures and services, and both revealed specific areas for improvement; these have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan, the corresponding Action Plans, and selectively at unit levels, as best exemplified by the Learning Support Assessment Plan (#8.403).

Individual units also have their own strategic plans, which include outcomes/benchmarks and assessments related to administrative effectiveness (See discussion under “Unit Level Plans” in Standard 2). The overall structure of unit level plans is not complete, in that not every unit has a fully developed plan. However, the College is working toward a comprehensive set of unit level plans.

Finally, assessment of administrative effectiveness occurs during the evaluation of individual administrators. Their evaluation is tied into accomplishment of their specific individual goals, which are connected to those of their unit and the College.

Conclusions

The College has an effective, well-qualified, and well-trained administrative workforce, including the president, administrative leaders, administrative staff, and support staff. Employees at all levels have healthy relationships with managers and colleagues and strongly feel that their work is valuable and student centered. Over the past several years, most administrative structures and processes have been renewed and improved; job descriptions, hiring, evaluation, employee development, information systems, decision processes, and organizational structure are all more refined and consistent.

All College employees function in an environment of rapid and major change, occasioned by the adoption of the learning college model, major reorganization, new planning and assessment processes, rapid growth, and leadership transition. All employees have worked to make these changes succeed, and it is necessary to ensure that they are empowered through understanding of the form and function of the new structures. It is also important to have an employee reward and recognition system that acknowledges employee contributions.

Recommendations

9. Refine and accomplish Strategic Plan goals and objectives for appropriate employee rewards and recognitions.

10. Use the employee development program to ensure satisfactory employee knowledge of the College's organizational structure and its application of the learning college model.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 6: Integrity

Key Documents

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Policy Manual: #2.310, Appendix G

Procedure Manual: #2.510, Appendix G

Faculty Handbook: #2.210

Employee Appraisal and Annual Development Plan: #5.215

Introduction

Frederick Community College is committed to conducting all of its relations—with students, staff, and the external community—with the highest integrity. This principle is expressed in the Strategic Plan (*#1.722, Appendix A*). The Plan’s core value of Trust is defined as “belief and confidence in the integrity and reliability of others.” Goal 8 of the Plan is to “Foster a climate of respect among students, faculty, and staff with diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.” This goal has two objectives: Objective 22, “Create a climate of inclusion where all students and staff are able to realize their full potential,” and Objective 23, “Integrate diversity goals and objectives into the planning process for all work areas.”

Furthermore, integrity underlies the College’s educational and administrative practices. This commitment is expressed principally in the Policy Manual (*#2.310, Appendix G*) and the Procedure Manual (*#2.510, Appendix G*), but is also embodied in unit level policies and procedures.

Sound Ethical Practices and Equitable Treatment of Constituencies

The College expects that all employees will conduct themselves ethically and professionally. This expectation is embodied in the procedure “Ethical Standards of Professional Behavior” (*3.12d Procedure Manual: #2.510, Appendix G*), which obligates all employees to observe ethical standards of behavior. The procedure has a section covering conflict of interest, which includes specific guidelines and examples of unacceptable conduct. Faculty members have additional professional guidelines for ethical behavior that relate to their unique roles (*Faculty Conduct – Code of Ethics, Section 2.11- Faculty Handbook: #2.210, Appendix M*). Students are also held to standards of conduct, which are stated generally in the policy “Statement of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities” (*Policy Manual, 5.16: # 2.310, Appendix G*), and more specifically in the procedure “Standards of Student Conduct” (*Procedure Manual, 5.11: #2.510, Appendix G*).

The College has in place numerous practices to ensure that all constituencies are treated fairly and consistently. For employees, policies and procedures specifically describe conditions of employment, employee rights, and opportunities regarding job advancement, evaluation, benefits, and grievances (*Policy Manual- Section 3.00: #2.310, Appendix G; Procedure Manual, Section 3.00: #2.510, Appendix G*). Differences in these elements among administrative, faculty, and support positions are specified. The faculty has additional policies and procedures that govern its responsibilities to students (*Policy Manual, 4.12: #2.310, Appendix G*). The *Faculty Handbook* covers classroom-centered responsibilities and responsibilities for development and maintenance of the curriculum (*#2.210*).

Inconsistencies have been noted in how these separate documents treat the same subject. (*Faculty Association – Review of Policies and Procedures: #10.465*). Because of their importance in shaping both decision-making and daily practice, it is necessary to attain complete consistency throughout policy and procedure documentation.

Student Grievance

Students who wish to file a grievance have ample opportunity to learn about the procedure and to initiate the process itself. The grievance procedure, which can be used for grade-related or other complaints, is published in the Student Handbook, the Academic Catalog, the College website, and the Procedure Manual (*Grievance Procedure for Students, 5.18: #2.510, Appendix G*). The procedure includes several steps that permit a thorough hearing of the grievance according to a strict schedule, including the possibility of appeal the Board of Trustees.

Hiring Practices

The College has highly developed and strictly observed practices for the fair and impartial hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees. The College's lead principles in personnel matters are fairness and equality, as stated in the Policy Manual: "Frederick Community College is committed to providing equal employment opportunity to its faculty and staff applicants through non-discrimination in its employment practices including, but not necessarily limited to recruitment, hiring, training, promotional opportunities, compensation, discipline, and termination" (*Policy Manual, 3.10: #2.310: Appendix G*).

The College's hiring process involves a thorough review of all applicants by an appropriately populated search committee (*Recruiting Process Flow Chart: #5.450. Note: this applies also to faculty hiring*). There is no written policy about the search committee composition; it is based on unwritten internal practice (*Interview with associate vp HR: 3/3/2005*).

The hiring process is carefully documented at each stage (*HR Forms: #5.210*). General conditions of employment are specifically outlined in the Policy Manual for all employees (*Conditions of Employment - All Employees, 3.11: #2.310, Appendix G*), and for faculty, administrators, and support staff, respectively (*Additional Conditions of Employment 3.12: #2.310, Appendix G*). For each individual position, essential functions, job knowledge, required qualifications, and performance standards are explicitly stated in the job description (*Job Descriptions: #5.310*). Finally, conditions for dismissal, including the right of appeal, are also outlined in the Policy Manual (*3.14: #2.310, Appendix G*).

Evaluation Practices

All full-time employees are evaluated annually following standard processes that ensure fairness and consistency. Administrative and support staff are evaluated using the *Employee Appraisal and Annual Development Plan* (#5.215). The form is standards-based, which helps impart consistency and objectivity. The first section of the form is a self-appraisal, which gives the employee the opportunity to list achievements, including the accomplishment of the year's stated goals, all of which provide an evidence base for the process. Managers and supervisors receive guidance through workshops and printed materials to help them give fair and appropriate employee evaluations.

The appraisal process is also closely integrated with employee development. The employee and supervisor jointly create the Employee Development Plan, which identifies the employee's development needs and opportunities for the forthcoming year. The employee's appraisal is based in part upon how well the employee has carried out the Development Plan. The appraisal process supports the employee's interest because it makes the appraisal even more evidence-based, and because it is a joint employee/supervisor commitment to the employee's development.

Faculty evaluation is also strongly evidenced-based, drawing upon several sources of information, including student ratings, peer observation, self-evaluation, and portfolio creation (*Faculty Handbook, Section 4 "Faculty Evaluation Process" #2.210, Appendix M*). The faculty member's department chair conducts the evaluation using all of these inputs. As with administrative and support staff appraisals, the department chair has responsibility for the improvement of the faculty member's performance. See also discussion of faculty evaluation in Standard 10.

Academic Inquiry, Academic Freedom, and Intellectual Property Rights

The College recognizes the importance of having a climate of academic inquiry and engagement supported by academic and intellectual freedom. The College's position appears in the *Faculty Handbook (Section 2.11. #2.210, Appendix M)*, which states that the faculty is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, and in classroom discussions, and furthermore that faculty must "...be accurate, maintain appropriate restraint, and show respect for others' opinions." These positions are consistent with the standards adopted by the American Association of University Professors.

The College drafted an Intellectual Property Proposal in 2004 that is under review (#2.240). It specifically identifies the respective rights and responsibilities of the College and the employee, when the latter creates intellectual property that is somehow employment-related.

Climate of Respect among Students, Faculty, Staff, and Administration

The College's Strategic Plan strongly supports the importance of a climate of respect for diversity. One of its Core Values is Diversity, defined as "the acceptance and appreciation of the differences essential to building community" (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). Goal 8 of the plan states that the College will "foster a climate of respect among students, faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives."

This goal is associated with three objectives that encourage the appreciation and practice of diversity and inclusion on the part of students and employees:

- Objective 22: Create a climate of inclusion where all students and staff are able to realize their full potential.
- Objective 23: Integrate diversity goals and objectives into the planning process for all work areas.
- Objective 24: Increase diversity of faculty and staff to reflect the diversity of the student body.

These three objectives involve research and assessments that will lead to diversity initiatives in campus attitudes, curriculum content, employee development, and staff composition. All three objectives are implemented according to the *Action Plan - Campus Climate* (#1.729, *Appendix D*), which has specific outcomes/benchmarks and assessment measures for each. Outcomes are reported in the Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; 2005: #1.713, *Appendix C*) and the *Minority Achievement Report* (#1.524).

The College has a strong policy base for non-discrimination, addressing staff conduct (*Non-Discrimination Policy* 3.17), hiring (*Affirmative Action* 3.10), and student conduct (*Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities* 5.16. *Policy Manual*: #2.310, *Appendix G*.) The intent of these policies can be implemented by the *Discrimination Complaint Procedure* (*Procedure Manual - Section 3.17a*: #2.510, *Appendix G*).

Additionally, the College has established administrative and curricular structures to enhance diversity:

- The Office of Diversity and Global Initiatives is centrally involved in planning, assessment, and programming.
- Multicultural Student Support Services provides a variety of educational and personal support services to students of color.
- Faculty job descriptions prescribe infusion of multicultural perspectives into curriculum, as appropriate.
- Diversity is a component of the employee appraisal process.
- General education Goal 10 states that “Students will value the emergence of a multicultural society.”

Finally, the College conducts a variety of student-centered co-curricular and extracurricular programs, including:

- Office of Diversity and Global Initiatives-sponsored extracurricular events throughout the year, including programs that celebrate Black History Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month, and Women’s History Month
- Opportunities to study abroad in London and Russia
- A first year seminar class on multiculturalism and diversity, an in-depth exploration of diversity
- One-time events, such as lectures and discussions on diversity issues

Diversity in Professional Staff

The College’s 1996 Self-Study Report (#1.230) had four recommendations relating to staff diversity, including VII.10: “The College should strive to meet Affirmative Action Goals for Afro-Americans, other minorities and women by filling gaps all employment categories.” This recommendation was reinforced by the Middle States Association in a response that required a follow-up report to address “Measures taken to enhance the number of racial and ethnic minorities among professional employees of the College...” (*Middle States* 96: *Follow-up Report*: #1.210). Since then, despite numerous efforts, the College has met neither the intentions of these documents nor the diversity goals of the current Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan Objective 24 is to “Increase diversity of faculty and staff to reflect the diversity of the student body” (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The corresponding Campus Climate Action Plan has outcomes/benchmarks that by 2004, 11% of faculty and administrators would be racially and ethnically diverse (*Action Plan - Campus Climate: #1.729, Appendix D*). In Fall 2005, 4% of full-time faculty and 9% of administrators were of color (*Table 6.1: FCC Faculty and Administrators of Color, Fall 2001 – Fall 2005*). In other words, the College falls short, particularly for faculty, in achieving these goals.

The fall 2005 data does not completely reflect professional staff composition in recent years. In a staff as small as FCC’s—82 full-time faculty and 67 full-time administrators—the arrival or departure of even a single person can substantially change the percentages. Table 6.1 demonstrates that over the past five years the College has briefly met its benchmark, and that staff composition has varied significantly from year to year as a function of turnover.

Table 6.1: FCC Faculty and Administrators of Color, Fall 2001 – Fall 2005

| | F 2001 | F 2002 | F 2003 | F 2004 | F 2005 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| % FT faculty of color (benchmark 11%) | 8% | 8% | 7% | 6% | 4% |
| % PT faculty of color | | | 8% | 8% | |
| | | | | | |
| % Administrative/Professional (benchmark 11%) | 7% | 10% | 12% | 11% | 9% |
| % Top two administrative tiers | | | | 0% | 0% |

Over the past 10 years, the College has undertaken numerous steps to increase its numbers of faculty and administrators of color (*Diversity Timeline: #1.566*), including:

- Strengthening the internally-oriented Diversity Committee
- Establishing the community-oriented Community Advisory Committee on Diversity
- Hiring a director of diversity (now director of diversity and global initiatives)
- Conducting numerous employee development events relating to diversity in general, and recruiting and hiring in particular
- Adopting the *ProHire* recruiting-hiring system, which permits powerful analysis of applicant and candidate pools
- Increasing advertising for professional positions in diversity-oriented media

While these efforts have not resulted in sufficient faculty and administrators of color, they have not been completely unsuccessful. They do demonstrate a continuing commitment on the part of the College to faculty and staff diversity. Moreover, they are the forerunners of several recent initiatives:

- Starting in July 2005, the College has committed additional funds to place job postings in diversity-oriented media. Previously, individual units would use their own funds for position advertising. Because these funds are limited, units would concentrate spending for faculty and high-level administrator positions on high-yield media like the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and regional newspapers. Now, \$250-\$300 per position is designated from the Human Resources budget to advertise in additional media used by potential candidates of color.
- A new application for the *ProHire* system will better track how applicants learned of job openings, which will help analyze the success of the above initiative.

- A Recruitment and Selection policy is being developed by the Human Resources Department. It will provide specific guidance for search committee composition and operation, including steps that will support the College's commitment to staff diversity.
- A new employee development program on diversity and hiring is being developed by the director of diversity and global initiatives and the HR recruiter. It will be required for all search committee members.

All of these initiatives are still being developed or have not been in place long enough to bear fruit. It will be necessary for the College to follow their progress and outcomes closely. Another potentially fruitful line of investigation is provided by *ProHire* data on applicant pools. Preliminary analysis shows that recent applicant pools have significant representation from applicants of color. However, when those pools have been narrowed to interviewed candidates, people of color are scarcely represented. More thorough analysis of this data may provide greater insight into the College's recruitment and hiring processes.

Dissemination of Institutional Information

The College practices honest and truthful dissemination of information, including announcements, advertisements, and recruiting and admissions materials, to students and the public. The Enrollment Management Office fulfills requests for information and mails materials to prospective students; mailings range from 20 to 50 per day. Many College publications, including the catalog and schedules, are freely available on campus; credit and non-credit schedules are mailed to the county's 105,000 households. The College website (www.frederick.edu) has extensive information on all aspects of the College, including programs, services, job openings, and news. Numerous key documents are available, including the catalog, current class schedules, the Strategic Plan, the Policy Manual, and the Procedure Manual. The College's cable channel covers programs, activities, and emergency closing announcements. FCC uses the local radio stations for emergency announcements related to cancellations and for general information.

To ensure accuracy and consistency, the College's public information functions are centralized in the Marketing & Public Relations Department, which exercises editorial direction over all print publications and the website. The College gives additional attention to information for prospective and current students through the Enrollment Management Team (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120, Appendix F*). The group, which includes the associate vice president for enrollment management and the director of marketing & publication relations, coordinates information about admissions, programs, curricula, etc.

Access to Catalogs

Students have ready access to print and electronic versions of the College catalog. Print copies of the current catalog are available in the Welcome and Registration Center and elsewhere on campus. The College website offers online access to the current and previous editions of the catalog as searchable PDF documents. The College's Marketing & Public Relations Department began to put the catalog on CDs in 2004 and continue to make this medium available to students. Complete sets of the College's catalogs in print are archived and publicly available in the Welcome and Registration Center and the Library.

The College meets reporting standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and makes documents relating to its accreditation publicly available. The OAPR Department annually submits the Institutional Profile to MSCHE (#3.511). Other accreditation documents, including previous Self-Studies, Periodic Review reports, Team reports, and Commission actions, are publicly available in the Library.

Assessment of Integrity

The Strategic Plan has several goals and objectives that relate to the College's integrity (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). In particular, Goal 8—"Foster a climate of respect among students, faculty, and staff with diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives"—has three objectives concerning major aspects of integrity:

- Objective 22: Create a climate of inclusion where all students and staff are able to realize their full potential.
- Objective 23: Integrate diversity goals and objectives into the planning process for all work areas.
- Objective 24: Increase diversity of faculty and staff to reflect the diversity of the student body.

Other objectives are concerned with the integrity and efficiency of processes and practices:

- Objective 5: Provide easily accessible, integrated administrative services to students.
- Objective 6: Continuously review business process systems and implement approved recommendations.
- Objective 12: Develop and implement institutional outcomes assessment and use the results to support the effectiveness of our Learning College.
- Objective 14: Monitor the internal decision-making procedures to provide a voice for all employees.

Specific outcomes/benchmarks and assessment measures for all of these objectives are documented in the *Action Plans* (#1.724 #1.729, *Appendix D*). The Strategic Action Plan Annual Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; 2005: #1.713, *Appendix C*) present progress toward these objectives.

The College's Board of Trustees, president, and vice presidents periodically review policies and procedures for integrity and currency. The President's Leadership Council (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120, Appendix F*) has the specific purpose to "Study and analyze operational improvements (systems)..." The Council's membership includes managers from Learning, Learning Support, and Administrative areas, who work as a cross-functional team to improve processes and maintain for all processes a focus on the enhancement of student learning.

The various aspects of integrity pervade the College's units and activities, as well as the functions of all employees. As a result, unit level assessment and the appraisal of individual employees necessarily deal with the College's practice of integrity.

Conclusions

Frederick Community College's relations with all constituencies—students, faculty, staff, community, and oversight agencies—are conducted with integrity, fairness, consistency, and openness. The processes that shape the various interactions among constituencies—teaching, learning, hiring, grievances, etc. —are consistently and thoroughly documented. This documentation is widely disseminated and available to everyone. Recruitment processes include specific steps to attract applicants of color. A climate of academic inquiry and engagement is assured by widely documented, policy-level commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, including intellectual property rights. The College's public representations to current and prospective students, the general public, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education are all complete, public, and available in multiple formats. The College's website is a deep resource on all aspects of the College and contains the complete text of key documents, including the catalog and course schedules. Reports to MSCHE are maintained and accessible to the public.

The College's extensive and conscientious efforts to attract people of color to its faculty and administrative staff have not achieved stated goals. Recruitment and hiring practices need continuing evaluation and improvement to ensure that applicant pools include the largest possible representation of applicants of color, and that hiring processes treat all candidates fairly and objectively.

Recommendations

- 11.** Increase efforts to hire people of color for faculty and administrative positions through expanded and refined recruitment initiatives and expanded and refined hiring processes.
- 12.** Develop a general policy that outlines how membership representation is to be determined for search committees.
- 13.** Systematically update and reconcile policies and procedures, including those at both college and unit levels.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

Key Documents

Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H

Strategic Plan - Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Strategic Action Plan – Action Plan Clusters and Assigned Objectives: #1.717

Strategic Action Plan Status Reports: 2004: #1.712, Appendix B; 2005: #1.713, Appendix C

PACE Campus Climate Survey-Questions 21-27: #3.520, Appendix N

Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650

Written Assessment Plan and Process

The College's Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (IEAP) (#3.380; *Appendix H*) serves as the primary means for evaluating the College's effectiveness in achieving its goals, which are stated in its Strategic Plan (#1.722, *Appendix A*). The IEAP, published in May 2004, encompasses assessment initiatives related to the Action Plans (#1.725-#1.729, *Appendix D*), the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (#3.380, *Appendix H*), and a variety of other assessment activities for measuring student learning and institutional effectiveness. The linkage of Mission, goals, and objectives with assessment is represented most clearly in the Action Plans. The Action Plans are the implementation strategies of the Strategic Plan objectives, and each has accompanying assessment initiatives.

The IEAP is a systematic review and analysis of assessment initiatives that provide the College with critical information related to its performance, including student learning. These findings are then incorporated into decision making related to institutional effectiveness and resource allocation: "Assessment results reveal to the College areas in need of improvement including delivery of services to students, necessary revisions to the Strategic Plan, and increased or decreased resource allocations" (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: p.11: 3.380, Appendix H*).

Complete Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness

The IEAP demonstrates that the College carries out a complete set of assessment measures that relate to every aspect of institutional effectiveness. They fall into three broad categories:

- Assessments dictated by the Strategic Plan. These are detailed in the Action Plans (#1.725-#1.729, *Appendix D*) and described in the IEAP (*pp. 13-21: #3.380, Appendix H*). The Strategic Plan itself has two objectives relating specifically to the assessment of institutional effectiveness: Objective 6 - "Continuously review business process systems and implement approved recommendations; and Objective 12 - "Develop and implement institutional outcomes assessment *and use the results to support the effectiveness of our Learning College.*"
- Assessments mandated by external agencies, including the Maryland Higher Education Commission and the Middle States Association (IEAP *pp. 22-28: #3.380, Appendix H*).
- *Ad-hoc* assessments to achieve results not provided in categories one and two above (IEAP *p.29: #3.380, Appendix H*).

The IEAP also articulates procedures for disseminating assessment data to key College decision makers, including the President's Administrative Staff, Planning and Budget Council, the Action Plan Clusters, and appropriate departments.

The College's planning model assigns responsibility for meeting its goals and objectives to Action Plan Clusters, which are teams of key stakeholders organized around collections of related objectives (*Strategic Action Plan – Action Plan Clusters and Assigned Objectives: #1.717*). Each Cluster conducts twice yearly evaluations of its progress, which are submitted to the Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department (OAPR) and disseminated to the College community in annual Strategic Action Plan Status Reports (2004: #1.712, *Appendix B*; 2005: #1.713, *Appendix C*).

Planning and assessment are also conducted by individual departments and administrative areas, e.g. the Enrollment Management – Strategic Plan 04-06 (#9.430), the Learning Support Strategic Initiatives FY 05 (#8.412), and the Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06 (#8.403). There is no process for the college-wide review of unit level assessments comparable to that for Strategic Plan objectives. That is, results of unit level assessment, while reviewed within the administrative area responsible for that unit, are not submitted for wider review and are not included in the Institutional Assessment Effectiveness Plan, thus weakening the connection between planning and College efforts at improving institutional effectiveness. Additionally, the absence of a systematic process for the submission and review of unit level planning and assessment may contribute to a gap that is felt to exist in documenting use of assessment data to facilitate improvements.

Most assessments are conducted periodically. The schedule—after each semester, annually, bi-annually, or as requested—is determined by the nature of the assessment (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H*). However, many examples exist within the Strategic Plan in which no specific time parameters have been identified for ongoing assessment of specific objectives. Assessment frequency is described as “to be determined at a later date” (*Institutional Assessment Effectiveness Plan: #3.380, Appendix H*).

Results of assessment initiatives are widely disseminated. The OAPR Department has its own intranet site for faculty and staff to obtain information from surveys, assessment initiatives, and state reports. Additionally, OAPR routinely provides student data to various faculty and staff members for decision-making purposes (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H*). The executive director of OAPR formally reports the results of Strategic Plan assessment initiatives to the President's Administrative Staff, the Planning and Budget Council, and appropriate departments. Results of assessment initiatives conducted within the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan are disseminated to the provost, associate vice presidents, and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (*Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan: 4.705, Appendix I*). In addition, “the Executive Director of OAPR meets regularly with the President's Administrative Staff (PAS) and other constituencies to share data and begin the discussion of how data can be used to improve student learning and services at FCC” (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan, p. 9: #3.380, Appendix H*).

Faculty, Staff, and Administration Support

Faculty and staff are invested in the College's efforts to assess its institutional effectiveness. In 2002, a college-wide Visioning Day was held with all faculty and staff participating. Its theme was the President's expressed intent to transform FCC into a learning college. Learning college principles underlie the College's Vision statement and Strategic Plan (#1.722, *Appendix A*).

Administrative involvement in the College's assessment and planning process is evidenced in a number of ways. The College's planning model places responsibility for implementation of strategic goals and objectives with Action Plan Clusters, which encompass all administrative areas of the College. Each Action Plan Cluster has a manager charged with overseeing assessment of progress toward assigned goals and objectives. The Planning and Budget Council includes Action Plan Cluster managers. This arrangement ensures that those most familiar with the College's progress in implementing strategic goals and objectives are invested in the College's decision-making process, including decisions regarding resource allocation. Furthermore, the structure of the planning process ensures that the decision-making process is driven by an assessment of the effectiveness of the institution in carrying out its mission and goals. Finally, administrative involvement is ensured with the College's establishment of the President's Leadership Council, which serves as a college-wide, cross-functional team to study and analyze operational improvements by assisting in the implementation of the Strategic Plan (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120, Appendix F*).

While College leaders worked to develop an inclusive planning process for planning, faculty and staff did not entirely agree. The PACE Campus Climate Survey noted several areas of concern related to collaboration (*Questions 21-27: #3.520, Appendix N*). The Administrative Staff Association, the Faculty Association, and the Support Personnel Association each ranked the collaboration climate factor fourth of all six factors.

The College is addressing its desire to provide effective communication (Strategic Plan Objective 21) to students and staff in a variety of ways. Communication Central, an internal repository for campus communication, documents, and meeting highlights, was implemented in 2003 and is fully operational (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004: #1.712, Appendix B*). To address students' concern over their level of awareness of campus events (*Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650*), Learning and Learning Support conducted a comprehensive communications audit (*Communications Audit: Summary, Data Table: #3.140*). As a result of this audit, a communication plan is being developed to ensure that students receive appropriate information in the most efficient way and at the most effective time (*PLC Minutes, April, 2004: #10.710*).

Multiple Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

The College uses multiple qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate institutional effectiveness, as described in the IEAP. The College gathers extensive quantitative data, including evaluation of student characteristics, course grades and grade point averages, retention data, graduation and transfer rates, faculty/student ratios, full-time/part-time faculty ratios, and faculty workload. It also uses numerous self-reporting instruments, including surveys of students, staff, graduates, employers, community businesses, and state cohort

institutions. Self-reported data may be analyzed quantitatively, as in tabulating the answers to close-ended questions, or qualitatively, as in evaluating open-ended survey questions or focus group comments. Overall, there is an emphasis upon self-reported, or subjective, data.

Analysis of the assessment initiatives utilized to evaluate Strategic Plan objectives reveals use of multiple assessment instruments to evaluate specific objectives (*Strategic Objective Action Plan: #1.710*). Additionally, one by-product of conducting assessment initiatives at the department level as well as the institution level is the resultant use of multiple measures to evaluate particular aspects of institutional effectiveness. A number of College services are evaluated both at departmental and institutional levels. For example, there are departmental assessments for academic advising, career services, and job placement (*Student Development Assessment Plan: #7.721*), financial aid (*Financial Aid Student Rating, 2004: #8.217*), the Welcome and Registration Center (*Student Operations/Registrar – Welcome Center Annual Report: #8.681*), and Learning Support (*Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06: #8.403*), as well as institutional assessments through the Student Satisfaction Inventory (*#3.650*) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*#3.151 - #3.155*). Furthermore, evidence of the systematic and thorough use of assessment data to evaluate institutional effectiveness can be found in the College's use of results from administration of the *Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.650)*. In addition to an overall analysis of findings and analysis of service areas receiving low ratings of satisfaction, additional analysis was conducted on areas of particular interest to the College that cut across all service areas, including responses from students of color (*Student Satisfaction Inventory – Caucasian Students and Students of Color: #3.6513*).

Action-Oriented Results

Recognizing that the process of improvement is dynamic, the planning model allows for modifications in strategic objectives, outcomes/benchmarks, and strategies (*Request to Change Strategic Action Plan: #1.724; Budget and Planning Minutes: #10.310*). Further, the model prioritizes the strategies as well as the goals, objectives, and outcomes. This approach provides a structure for resource allocation decisions.

The planning model also ensures that decisions regarding resource allocation are tied to the planning process and are supported by assessment data. The planning model allows for prioritization of strategies to meet strategic objectives, thus ensuring that the most urgent initiatives receive favorable attention in resource allocation. The budget development process requires that all requests must be explicitly related to the Strategic Plan (*Budget Development Guidelines and Instructions: #6.132*). Finally, the restructuring of the Planning and Budget Council to include the Action Plan managers ensures the review of budget priorities within the context of strategic planning and institutional effectiveness (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004: #1.712, Appendix B*).

Realistic Goals, Timetable, and Support

The College's 2003 Strategic Objective Action Plan (*#1.710*) consisted of 298 individual strategies. Feedback obtained from the October 2003 College Professional Development Day and the 2004 Planning Process Evaluation Survey indicated that the planning process should be simplified (*Strategic Planning Process – Evaluation: #1.730*). Consequently, the

Planning and Budget Council adopted a revised planning model in September 2004 (*Budget and Planning Council Minutes, September 7, 2004: #10.315*). The revised model focuses on “decentralizing strategies and centralizing synthesis of all actions based on the Expected Outcomes/Benchmarks important to achieve each objective” (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004: #1.712, Appendix B; Budget and Planning Council Minutes, September 7, 2004: #10.315*). Objectives determined to no longer be realistic or relevant can be modified or eliminated, and established timelines for meeting objectives can be modified to produce a realistic timetable (*Request to Change Strategic Action Plan (#1.724), Budget and Planning Minutes: #10.315*).

To support the IEAP, the College has committed fiscal and staff resources to planning and assessment. The Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department is charged with conducting, synthesizing, and sharing results of institutional effectiveness research, and has three full-time employees. In FY05, a permanent full-time position was added to coordinate student learning outcomes assessment. Additionally, a number of administrative structures commit their time and attention to evaluation of institutional effectiveness, including the Planning and Budget Council and the President’s Leadership Council. Funds have been provided for administration of several proprietary-normed assessment instruments, including the PACE Campus Climate Survey (#3.520), the Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.650), and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (#3.15 - #3.155).

In order to be effective, planning and assessment must be routine and comprehensive. The College utilizes a four-step planning model (*Institutional Effective Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H*)

- Plan: Planning is based in the College’s Mission, Vision, and Core Values. The resulting Strategic Plan ensures that the College’s efforts are all directed toward the primary mission of the institution: student learning.
- Implement: The five Action Plans contain strategies for implementing the Strategic Plan objectives.
- Assess: Assessment is the process of data collection that leads to improvement in learning and institutional services.
- Report and Revise: Assessment data is used to provide continuous improvement.

This planning model is intended to ensure that assessment data is used not only to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies utilized to reach expected outcomes and benchmarks, but also to drive improvements. The College recognizes its need to place increased emphasis on the final step of the planning process - use of assessment data to facilitate improvements.

Use of Assessment Results for Improvement

In addition to the strategic planning process, the College has developed an administrative structure that supports use of assessment data to institute improvements in administrative services and processes. In 2002, the president formed a President’s Leadership Council (PLC) (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report: 2004: Appendix B; #1.712*). This group of administrators from all areas of the College was formed to “study and analyze operational improvements by assisting in the implementation of the Strategic Plan.”

PLC also reviews systems issues and/or gaps identified in assessment initiatives. In fall 2004, for example, it conducted a cross-functional analysis of the findings from the Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.650), which assessed students' satisfaction with their educational experience (*PLC Minutes, November, 2004: #10.715*). A total of 39 recommended actions were identified (*Student Satisfaction Inventory – Responses – Closing the Loop: #3.652*). A number of these initiatives have already been implemented, including professional development activities for advisors related to curricular offerings and the hiring of an additional financial aid counselor to enhance financial aid services to students. The President's Leadership Council also utilized a cross-functional team to develop and implement responses to the Closing the Achievement Gap report (#1.513), describing performance gaps between minority and white students (*PLC Minutes, 1/25/05: #10.717*).

The *Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004 (Appendix B; #1.712)* reported that several initiatives have been implemented to enhance the College's administrative processes as a result of business process reviews, conducted in response to Objective 6 of the Strategic Plan:

- Course registration processes have been streamlined for both credit and continuing education courses.
- Benchmarks were established for turn-around time related to transcript evaluation and the processing and sending of student transcripts.
- Processing time for graduation applications has been reduced.
- Self-help computer stations were installed in the Welcome and Registration Center.

The *Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005 (#1.713, Appendix B)* reported numerous examples of assessment-driven improvement, including:

- A Communications Audit (#3.140) based upon results from the Student Satisfaction Inventory
- Simplification of the planning process
- Establishment of the Internal Decision-Making Procedure

The College has made significant strides toward a formalized process for assessment of institutional outcomes, as evidenced by the IEAP and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan. Further, the College conducts a significant amount of assessment initiatives, collecting large amounts of data. However, the College does not consistently identify that a decision or change was implemented based on assessment results, thus "closing the loop." That is, despite the amount of effort and resources expended on designing, administering, and analyzing assessment initiatives, formal reports documenting the use of data to facilitate improvements have been somewhat limited, and those done are not necessarily disseminated widely or sufficiently. The principal publication for documenting assessment-driven improvement is the *Strategic Action Plan Annual Report (2004: #1.712, Appendix B; 2005, #1.713, Appendix C)*, which cites numerous examples. However, this report does not record all instances of assessment-driven change throughout the institution. In particular, the many assessment-driven changes occurring at unit levels may not be reported or, if reported, may not be disseminated.

The Institutional Strategic Plan and Assessment Data

The College has significantly enhanced its efforts at ensuring that its Strategic Plan reflects consideration of assessment data. A number of Strategic Plan objectives (4, 6, 11, and 12) explicitly address use of assessment data to improve student learning or institutional effectiveness. Thus, assessment processes are directly embedded in the College's goals and objectives. As an indication of the College's evolution in attempting to ensure that assessment is not just conducted, but also utilized to effect improvements, two Strategic Plan objectives were revised in the fall of 2004 (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*).

Originally, these objectives called for the development and implementation of outcomes assessment for student learning and institutional effectiveness, respectively. As a result of a review of the Strategic Plan conducted by the Planning and Budget Council, the College recognized the need to improve its use of data to facilitate actual improvements. Thus, both objectives were revised to incorporate an explicit statement addressing the use of assessment data to facilitate improvement (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*):

Original Objective 11: Develop and implement outcomes assessment for all student learning.
Revised Objective 11: Develop and implement outcomes assessment for all student learning *and use results in decision-making*.

Original Objective 12: Develop and implement institutional outcomes assessment to support a Learning College.

Revised Objective 12: Develop and implement institutional outcomes assessment *and use the results* to support the effectiveness of our Learning College.

Further evidence of the consideration of assessment data in the Strategic Plan is found in the requirement to stipulate an assessment initiative to measure each expected outcome or benchmark. That is, an explicit indication of the evaluation to be conducted to determine progress toward meeting every expected outcome is identified. It is the relationship between this measurement of progress and the expected outcomes that drives the assessment process toward continual improvement.

Conclusions

The College has developed a comprehensive set of measures to assess institutional improvement at both institutional and unit levels. These measures are intimately associated to planning goals and processes, which are derived directly from the College's Mission and Vision. The close integration between planning and resource allocation means that assessment data is an important factor in budget decisions.

The College has committed substantial resources to assessment, directly in the form of the Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department, and indirectly in assessment duties carried out by many faculty and staff members. Other administrative centers, particularly the President's Leadership Council, are charged with generating and using assessment data.

Nevertheless, the College's impressive assessment structure has yet to be utilized fully, particularly at the "end of the loop," where assessment data drives improvement. At this stage, the processes for gathering assessment data are further advanced than those that apply it.

Recommendations

14. Investigate new ways to utilize the large amounts of assessment data, not only to achieve Strategic Plan objectives, but also to inform the everyday decisions and tasks that create an effective institution.

15. Strengthen efforts to document more fully how assessment data is being used to facilitate institutional improvement.

16. Investigate the value of including unit-level assessment data in the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan.

17. Examine ways to obtain and utilize more qualitative data, such as focus groups.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 8: Student Admissions

Key Documents

WRC Annual Report 2004: #8.681

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Academic Catalog: #9.110

Enrollment Management – Strategic Plan 2005-07: #9.431

Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2004: #1.712, Appendix B

Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005: #1.713, Appendix C

Learning Support Strategic Plan: #8.350

Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06: #8.403

Proposal: Administrative Process for Retention: #7.052

Student Goal Attainment Plan: #7.749

Introduction

When the College adopted the learning college model, one of the first outcomes focused on student admissions and student services. The objective was to provide a smoother and more productive experience for students as they used admissions and student services. This strategy was articulated in Strategic Plan Objective 5: “Establish a one-stop student operations center to provide admissions, registration, and record services to all students” (*Strategic Plan: #1.720*). This objective was met with the creation of the Welcome and Registration Center (WRC) in 2003. Previously, admissions and student services were housed separately in several campus locations. Now, the WRC is housed in the centrally located Administration Building (A-Building). It includes admissions, registration, transcript, credit evaluation, grade processing, course and schedule information, parking, and ID card services for both credit and non-credit students (*WRC Annual Report 2004: #8.681*). Financial aid, advising/counseling, and adult student services were re-located to offices near the WRC. Other support areas (Writing Center, Testing Center, Tutorial Services, Student Life, and Bookstore) are in other buildings (See *Student Support Services Directory: #8.751*, and *Support Services: Descriptions and Assessments: #8.756, Appendix O*).

The Welcome and Registration Center concept continues to be developed. There is a proposal pending to improve the public information services now provided by the receptionist and admissions personnel. The proposal includes several improvements to security functions (*College Information Center Proposal: #8.674*).

Admissions is part of the Learning Support area (*College Organization Charts – Learning Support: #1.125, Appendix E*). Student recruitment efforts were consolidated in 2002 within an Office of Enrollment Management, which is responsible for pre-admission activities such as recruitment and outreach, marketing and publications, trend analysis, internal reporting, and recommendations for new market initiatives. The Enrollment Management Strategic Plan (#9.431) includes current and planned outreach activities, with corresponding outcomes/benchmarks and assessment measures. The plan is reviewed by the Strategic Enrollment Management Executive Group, which includes the vice presidents of learning, learning support, and administration; the deans of arts and sciences and workforce development; and the associate vice president of student development. (*Enrollment Management Annual Reports 2003: #9.420; 2004: # 9.421.*)

Admissions Policies

The College Mission statement says that FCC “prepares students to meet the challenges of a diverse, global society through quality, accessible, innovative, lifelong learning” (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The words “diverse,” “global,” “accessible,” and “lifelong” are particularly relevant when considering the admissions policies of the College. They underscore that the College is accessible to all, regardless of age, ethnic, racial, social, educational, or national background. As stated in the Academic Catalog (*p. 8: #9.110*), “FCC subscribes to an open door admissions policy which means that students 16 years or older may be admitted to the College. All who may benefit from the learning experience at FCC are welcome to apply to the College...”

The admissions policy, consistent with applicable state law, also addresses special admissions categories. It facilitates the admission of transfer students, international students, open campus students, gifted and talented students under the age of 16, senior citizens, and non-high school graduates. Several allied health programs have special admissions criteria due to limitations of staff and facilities. Otherwise, the College has no admissions requirements other than those imposed by law, nor does it bar or deter students from seeking their individual educational goals. Placement testing for mathematics, reading, and writing is required as a means to assess college readiness, and to determine if students are required to take developmental classes to prepare for college-level work (*Academic Catalog, p.8: #9.110, Appendix M*). Admissions and placement testing are also covered in the College Policy Manual (*Section 4.10: #2.310, Appendix G*). Related procedures appear in the Procedures Manual (*Section 4.10a, 410b: #2.510, Appendix G*).

In fall 2005, 4,822 students enrolled in credit courses at the College (*Enrollment Reports-Current FCC Credit: #9.460*), following a trend of continuing enrollment increase (Table 8.1: FTE Credit Enrollment Growth, Fall 2000 – Fall 2005).

Table 8.1: FTE Credit Enrollment Growth, Fall 2000 – Fall 2005

| Fall 2000 | Fall 2001 | Fall 2002 | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Fall 2005 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1,121 | 1,192 | 1,254 | 1,330 | 1,308 | 1,375 |

Recent enrollment increases are greatest in the traditional-aged, full-time population (*Strategic Action Plan 2004 Report, p. 17: #1.712, Appendix B*), including an 8% increase from fall 2004 to fall 2005. The student body is diverse in age, race, and educational goals:

- The mean age is 26.8, with ages spanning six decades.
- Under-represented groups account for 18.9% of the total.
- Primary educational goal is the AA degree: AA degree-81.8%, Certificate-4.7%, Courses of Interest-3.6%.
- Main reason for attending is transfer preparation: Transfer major-61.2%, Career major-29.1%, Courses of Interest-9.7%.

The appeal of the College to students of color is noteworthy. Racial diversity increased steadily from 2000 to 2005, and percentage of students of color exceeds that in the County’s population (Table 8.2: Comparison of Self-Reported Identification by Race among Total Credit Headcount Enrollment with that of Frederick County).

Table 8.2: Comparison of Self-Reported Identification by Race among Total Credit Headcount Enrollment with that of Frederick County (*Student Profile Report 2000-2005: #3.611*).

| | FCC % by Race Fall 2000 | FCC % by Race Fall 2005 | Frederick County % by Race 2000 Census |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| African American | 7.8% | 9.2% | 6.4% |
| Asian | 2.7% | 3.2% | 1.7% |
| Hispanic | 2.2% | 3.5% | 2.4% (included in more than one race in census) |
| Other – non white | 2.7% | 2.3% | 2.6% |
| Native American | 1.1% | 0.6% | n/a |
| White | 83.5.0% | 81.1% | 89.3% |

The Office of Enrollment Management targets different programs, both credit and non-credit, for growth each year (*Enrollment Management – Strategic Plan 2005-07, #9.431*). Several career programs targeted since FY04 demonstrated great increases: Respiratory Therapy increased its freshman class by 240%; Surgical Technology had a full class of 18; and the Hospitality program has nearly doubled its initial enrollment (*Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report, p. 21: #1.713, Appendix C*).

Continuing Education/Customized Training (CE/CT) headcount enrollment increased 12.6% from FY01-FY05. CE/CT customizes offerings and programs to meet changing needs; some CE/CT programs have shown remarkable growth since FY03, such as contract and non-contract business and computer areas (70-150%), drivers' education (30%), and vocational areas (36-55%) (*Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report, p. 21: #1.713, Appendix C*). There is no diversity data on non-credit populations.

Accurate and Comprehensive Information

Goal Two of the College's Strategic Plan includes Objective 5: Provide easily accessible, integrated administrative services to all students (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The WRC provides both information and access for a wide array of admission and registration services. All admissions and registration information is available at the WRC (*Welcome Center Annual Report 2004, p.3: #8.681*). In FY05, an academic advisor was placed in the WRC as a pilot project, whose success led to a FY06 budget initiative to fund the position permanently (*FY06 Operating Budget: #6.121, Appendix L*). In addition, an advisor from the Advising/Counseling Office will also be housed in the WRC during peak enrollment times (*Learning Support Strategic Initiatives, p. 44: #8.350*) to provide full-time advising coverage. Prospective students are provided with information in a variety of formats, including catalogs, schedules, the Student Handbook, individual program brochures, mailings, presentations, recruitment visits, the College website, TV Channel 23, Campus Open Houses, and other events on- and off-campus. Materials are reviewed and updated annually, and events are assessed each year by attendee evaluations and staff reviews. Community activities include high school visitations, open houses, major employer visits, and the "I'm Going to College Program" for Frederick County Public School fifth grade students.

The College website (www.frederick.edu) provides virtually all information that is available in hard copy, as well as online application submission and course registration. Thirty-five percent of credit students registered online in spring 2005, and online non-credit course

registration began in fall 2005 (*Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report: p.17: #1.713, Appendix C*). Increasing online enrollment is an ongoing goal of Learning Support (*Strategic Initiatives, p. 45: #8.350*).

Credit and non-credit Schedule of Classes (#9.810, #9.820) catalogs are mailed to every household in Frederick County. These and other key publications provide concise information explaining how to apply, register, and take any necessary placement tests. Prospective student phone traffic is routed through the WRC phone bank, where consistent information is provided to callers.

A summary of information availability through publications is given in Table 8.3: Information Available in Key College Publications.

Table 8.3: Information Available in Key College Publications

| Information Item | Catalog (#9.110) | Website | Class Schedules (#9.810, #9.820) | Student Handbook (#2.610) | Program Brochures (#9.210 – #9.250) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Admissions Policies | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Admissions Criteria | Yes | Yes | Some | Yes | No |
| Open Admissions Policy | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Academic Programs | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Placement Testing | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Student Learning Outcomes | N/A | Some | N/A | N/A | Yes |
| Financial Aid/Scholar./Grants | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Transfer Credit | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Experiential Learning | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No |

Through the efforts of the WRC, the Office of Enrollment Management, and related areas within the Center for Teaching and Learning, prospective and applying students have access to a wide range of information. The Student Satisfaction Inventory (*Questions 35, 33, 41, 49, 20, 13, 51, and 66: #3.650*) indicates that student awareness of admissions-related information is somewhat higher than national norms, and that the gap between importance and satisfaction at FCC is smaller than national norms for most items.

A Communications Audit (#3.140) was conducted in 2005, which identified 136 written communications currently targeting potential and current students. Its results suggested a need to clarify responsibility for content and process; recommendations were reported in the 2005 Strategic Action Plan Annual Report (*p. 4: #1.713, Appendix C*). The audit will ultimately cover all forms of communications at the College and will provide a structure for external communications.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes have recently been added to all individual career program brochures. These are mailed to all prospective students who request program information and are available at events on and off campus, in area high schools, and on the College website. The administration is currently considering updating catalog descriptions to include learning outcomes.

Financial Aid

Specific information regarding financial aid, scholarships, and grants is available in the Financial Aid Office, at the WRC, and in various publications. It is distributed to potential students through mailings, high school presentations, area guidance counselors, and the College website. An annually up-dated student Financial Aid Brochure (#9.225) is included in the prospective student admissions packet. Payment and refund policies are found in the Academic Catalog, on the website, and in the Student Handbook.

As a result of the Student Satisfaction Inventory, the Financial Aid Office has taken several steps to broaden student access to financial aid services:

- Established a new staff position (financial aid advisor) to educate students about aid options and requirements.
- Conducts multiple workshops annually on the aid application process.
- Includes an information brochure as part of the admissions packet sent out by enrollment management.
- Established an Emergency Book Fund, which helps eligible students purchase texts.

The Financial Aid Office has also created a Financial Aid Awareness Week. This program provides a series of workshops during the second week in February. The workshops include sessions on completing the FAFSA, how to apply for scholarships, information on loan options, debt management, and how to complete a federal tax return. The office also now sends email reminders to students telling them when they need to complete their FAFSA for the next academic year and information on scholarship deadlines. Additionally, the office is reviewing alternative loan options for students who need additional funding to attend college (*Closing the Assessment Loop*: #3.652). The Office has addressed the student concerns about delayed notification of awards with fixes to the *PeopleSoft* module. More detailed explanation is given in the discussion of Standard 9.

Transfer Policies and Procedures

The online *Virtual Transfer Center* (#8.813) and *Transfer Student Guide* (#8.671) provide detailed information for the student transferring to the College. These sources include information on advanced standing, credit from other institutions inside and outside the U.S., military transcripts and other training, law enforcement, and College Level Examination Program. Experiential learning information is located in the catalog, website, and a brochure entitled “Internship Education at FCC.”

Assessment of Retention and Goal Attainment

Assessment of admissions, retention, and student goal attainment is conducted at the institutional level through the Strategic Plan and variously at unit levels. The importance of these functions to the College is demonstrated by their prominence in the Strategic Plan:

- Objective 1: “Provide easily accessible comprehensive counseling, advising and assessment.”
- Objective 4: “Provide comprehensive ongoing assessment and learning support enabling student goal achievement.”
- Objective 5: “Provide easily accessible, integrated administrative services to all students.”

- Objective 7: “Achieve increased enrollment and offer competitive tuition rates based on applicable measures.”
- Objective 10: “Implement systems to identify and serve new populations of learners.”

For each of these objectives there are specific corresponding outcomes/benchmarks and assessments in the Learning Action Plan (#1.725, *Appendix D*). The Learning Support area, which includes admissions, enrollment management, and financial aid, has strategic and assessment plans for its respective units (*Learning Support Strategic Plan: #8.350; Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06: #8.403*). Finally, individual units maintain their own planning and assessment structures.

Retention efforts were formalized in 2000. An advisory board was formed, and it created a plan with specific goals and objectives to address retention and related student needs (*Retention Plan May 2000: #7.055*). In 2003, the board updated the original plan, listing accomplishments and recommending further improvements (*Retention Plan – Progress Report: # 7.056*). The report cited several examples of retention progress, including:

- Recommendation on freshman-year experiences that enhance retention resulting in a First Year Initiatives program (*First Year Initiatives Annual Report, 2004: #7.326*)
- Revised faculty orientation and development programs
- Greater emphasis in advising system upon first-time students
- Increased the number of certificate programs

Recent retention rates reported to Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) (Table 8.4) show the College performs consistently at or above the state average in retention. Transfer data received from the National Clearinghouse shows that FCC students also transfer to out-of-state and in-state private institutions, which are not reported in the four-year transfer rate provided by MHEC, and so are not included in the Table 8.4.

Table 8.4: Rates of Retention and Rates of Transfer/Graduation (to In-State Institutions) for First-time, Full-time, Degree-seeking FCC Students, Compared to State Averages for Maryland Community Colleges (2004 Accountability Report, p. 3: # 3.110)

| | FCC | State | FCC | State | FCC | State | FCC | State |
|------------------------------------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Second-year retention rate | 1999 | | 2000 | | 2001 | | 2002 | |
| | 69% | 63% | 70% | 65% | 67% | 66% | 68% | 67% |
| Four-year transfer/graduation rate | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | | 1999 | |
| | 41% | 31-33% | 38% | 31-33% | 37% | 31-33% | 41% | 31-33% |
| Six-year transfer/graduation rate | 1994 | | 1995 | | 1996 | | 1997 | |
| | 33% | 30% | 32% | 27% | 34% | 27% | 31% | 28% |

The College has also seen an increase in its four-year transfer/graduation rate of students of color. MHEC data reports a 32% rate for the 1999 cohort and a 36% for the 2000 cohort for students of color who continue at a state institution. The National Clearinghouse determined a 46% performance indicator for students of color. This positive trend may be a result of several College retention and transfer information strategies (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, p. 3-4: #1.713, Appendix C*).

As a result of the reorganization and in light of the College's retention research, the provost's office adopted administrative oversight for all retention initiatives in 2004 (*Proposal: Administrative Process for Retention*: #7.052). The new structure has two basic elements:

- A retention research agenda would be developed jointly by managers from the Learning and Learning Support areas.
- Implementation of retention research would be the responsibility of appropriate departments, especially Arts and Sciences, Workforce Development and Professional Preparation, and Student Development.

Several studies have expanded the College's knowledge base on retention, including the effects of late registration (*Late Registration Study: Fall/Spring 2003—2004*: #8.627), the effects of early intervention (*Early Alert Report Intervention: Fall 2004*: #7.746), and the value of mentoring and early intervention to special populations (*Mentee Early Alert Intervention Study Fall 2004*: #7.737). Nevertheless, follow-up and reporting on retention planning has been inconsistent. There is no further update to the *Retention Plan* showing that recommendations have been acted upon. The proposed retention research agenda hasn't been developed. Numerous retention-related accomplishments in various units may not receive sufficient attention because they do not carry a retention "label."

The College is giving close attention to student goal achievement, an important learning college principle. Strategic Plan Objective 4 is to "Provide comprehensive ongoing assessment and learning support enabling student goal achievement" (#1.722, *Appendix A*). Surveys of FCC students indicate that they have a variety of goals upon entering the College (2002 *College Student Survey Results*: #3.132; *Student Satisfaction Inventory*: #3.650; *Student Profile Report*: #3.610). To assist students at all stages of goal achievement, the Learning area has established three research and assessment groups dealing respectively with developing educational and career goals, learning and learning support activities, and tracking of student goals.

The first assessment group—*Developing educational and career goals*—is led by the associate vice president for student development. It is charged with developing strategies to assist students in their own goal development. The group has identified several target populations (those who are undecided, change majors, and/or seek tutoring) and is working with appropriate faculty and staff to develop initiatives for each group. (*Student Goal Attainment Plan*: #7.749.)

The second assessment group—*Learning and learning support activities* that encourage and support student goal attainment—is led by the associate vice president for teaching and learning. Areas of primary concern are teaching/learning experiences, academic support services, and student life/co-curricular initiatives and financial support. In January 2005 the group drafted initiatives to create learning-community experiences to help first-year students clarify academic and work-related goals. (*Student Goal Attainment Plan*: #7.749.)

The third assessment group—*Tracking of student goals*—is chaired by the associate vice president for student development. It is charged with identifying ways to improve the tracking of student goals, especially changes in student goals. Previously, the College

application had allowed three student intentions on an application: Courses of Interest, Associate Degree, or Certificate. As a result, the registrar was charged with broadening the information captured about student intentions. A wider range of choices now allows the College to refine its data collection and clarify true student goals. Students often change majors without completing the appropriate forms and are consequently listed in the “wrong” major. Starting in the spring of 2005, the registration process required a student to declare one major, including an “undecided” option, resulting in a more accurate enrollment picture for each program. (*Student Goal Attainment Plan*, #7.749; *Learning Support Strategic Initiatives FY05*, p. 7: #8.350.)

These three groups overlap somewhat in their charges, and their respective efforts certainly present opportunities cross-fertilization. It is important therefore that these three groups communicate regularly in order to avoid duplication of effort and to identify areas of collaboration.

Conclusions

The College has an open-door admissions policy and, through its Mission statement, a commitment to opportunity for every potential student. Enrollment has increased steadily in recent years; student body diversity has grown even faster and exceeds that of the College’s service area. Prospective and incoming students benefit from logical, physically centralized admissions and registration services, and can readily obtain complete information about the College and its admission process on campus, on the website, and through extensive mailings and outreach efforts. Retention and goal attainment receive considerable attention, with documented change arising from assessments.

The College’s various retention and goal attainment programs should be systematically monitored to prevent overlapping and to assure that efforts are coordinated and outcomes utilized. The Communications Audit suggests opportunities for improving communications.

Recommendations

18. Improve retention planning and reporting systems to ensure that the College’s numerous retention efforts are coordinated and acknowledged.

19. Ensure that separate student goal attainment programs (now in Student Development and the Center for Teaching and Learning) complement one another, in order to achieve planning, assessment, and improvement efficiencies.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 9: Student Support Services

Key Documents

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Student Support Services Directory: #8.751

Student Support Services: Descriptions and Assessments: #8.756, Appendix O

CTL – Mission and Goals: #7.380

Policy Manual - Section 5: Student Policies: #2.310, Appendix G

Procedure Manual - Section 5: Student Procedures: #2.510, Appendix G

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650

Learning Support - Strategic Initiatives 2005-06: #8.412

Learning Support - Assessment Plan 2005-06: #8.403

Support Services Appropriate to the Mission

As a student-centered learning college, FCC provides learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom through a wide range of support services, as directed in Strategic Plan Goals 1-3 (#1.722). The learning college model promotes campus-wide integration of student support services across administrative areas of the College (Table 9.1: Major Student Support Services by Administrative Area). See also College Organizational Charts (#1.123-#1.125, Appendix E).

Table 9.1: Major Student Support Services by Administrative Area

| Learning | Learning Support | Administration |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Adult Services | Athletics | Book Store |
| Advising/Counseling | Enrollment Management | Cashier |
| Career Services | Financial Aid | Children's Center |
| First Year Student Initiatives | Safety and Security | Dining Services |
| Multicultural Student Support Services | Welcome and Registration Center | |
| Services for Students with Disabilities | | |
| Student Life | | |
| Testing Center | | |
| Tutorial Services | | |
| Writing Center | | |

A key example of learning college practice is the College's distinctive Learning area (See Figure 9.1: Learning Area), which gathers academic functions and several student support services in one administrative unit. In the typical college structure, academic and student support functions are administratively separate. The goal of FCC's Learning area is to integrate these more closely to the overall benefit of students.

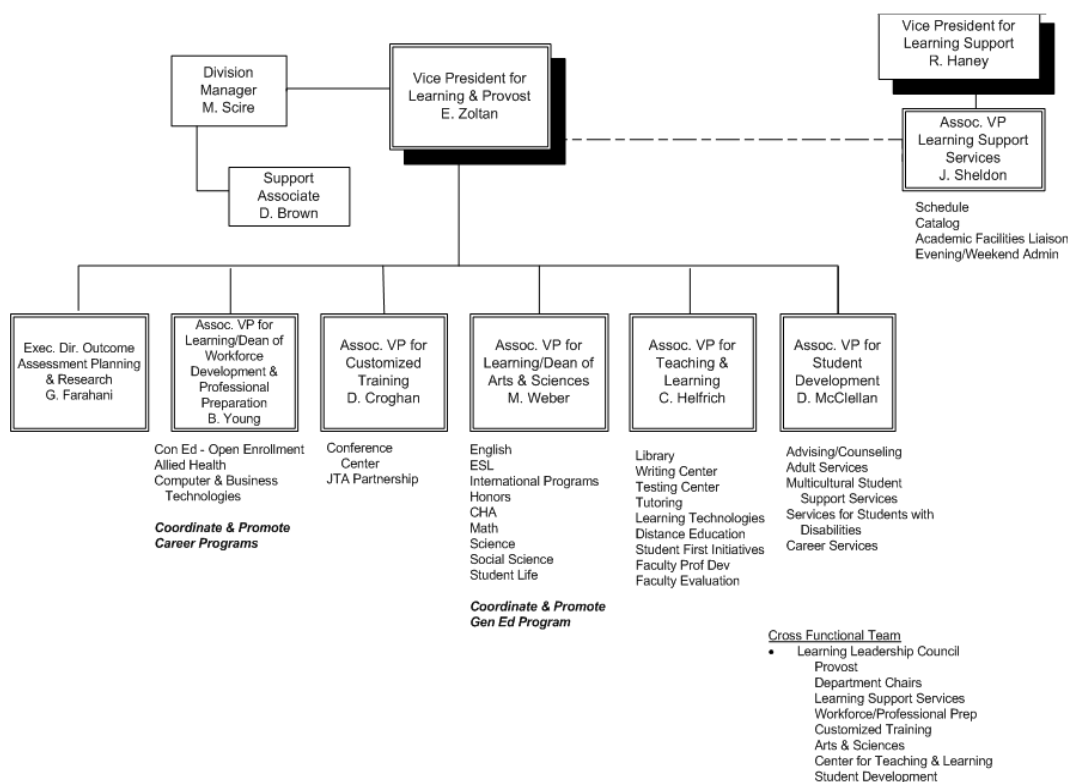


Figure 9.1: Learning Area

Within the Learning area, the Student Development unit houses several advising and counseling functions, and the Center for Teaching and Learning unit includes several learning support functions.

The Learning Support area oversees several major student services, including Athletics, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Safety and Security, and the Welcome and Registration Center. Planning and coordination of services between the Learning and Learning Support areas is carried out by the Learning Leadership Council, whose membership includes vice presidents, associate vice presidents, and department managers from both areas (*Core Group Descriptions: #1.120, Appendix F*).

Finally, the Administrative area oversees the cashier and the three auxiliary enterprises: Book Store, Children's Center, and Dining Services.

The College's complete set of academic, advising, and other support services is summarized in the Student Support Services Directory (#8.751). More detailed descriptions of services appear in Student Support Services: Descriptions and Assessments (#8.756, *Appendix O*) and CTL – Mission and Goals (#7.380). Services are readily available at several points on campus during the days; evenings and weekend coverage is more sporadic. All services have designated providers who are available during scheduled office hours or by appointment. Certain services—admissions, registration, financial aid, finance, career, transfer, and advising—have developed or are developing online delivery.

An emerging need is the provision of support services to non-credit students. Support services have always been available to non-credit students, but this group has historically made very little use of them. With credit and non-credit curricula becoming more closely aligned (particularly within several workforce preparation areas), non-credit students may find their overall experience enhanced by access to support services. At this point the support requirements of non-credit students are not well understood, suggesting the possible benefit of a needs assessment.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The College is systematically strengthening its Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) program. A new Services for Students with Disabilities director was hired in 2004, and since then the program has improved its organizational structure, increased service delivery, and developed initiatives for expanding and enhancing services (*Services for Students with Disabilities Annual Report 05: #7.746*). During FY05, SSD served 438 consumers with a variety of psychologically and physiologically based disabilities. Consumers include: students who are renewing accommodation plans or who once had accommodation plans and want to reactivate services; persons who are reporting disabilities and are requesting to be assessed for services eligibility; and parents in the community of high school special education students who have not yet enrolled at FCC and want to explore that possibility. Several important initiatives were completed, including:

- Two separate SSD offices with different management systems were integrated into one cohesive unit.
- A campus-wide ADA assessment was conducted, providing a thorough review of campus compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Existing procedures were refined which determined a student's reported disabilities as covered under the ADA and appropriate accommodations that would be provided them.
- Methods for documenting services were improved.
- The SSD website was revised to include a more thorough description of the receipt of SSD services. More than 100 disabilities informational links, as well as community resource links, were integrated into the SSD website
- An assistive technology integration project improved facilities in the Library, the Writing Center, and the Testing Center.
- Assistive Technology available directly through the SSD for student loan was upgraded.
- An in-house Deaf Services Coordination Program was established to save costs and address complaints previously experienced by the former contractor of a Deaf Services Program.
- A new Disabilities Specialist position aids in the in-processing and provision of new students presenting documentation and asking for accommodation.
- A series of disabilities information workshops was provided for staff, faculty, and tutors. Workshops covered topics related to ADA and the law in a post-secondary environment, Description and Intervention Strategies for Persons with Learning Disabilities, and Description and Intervention Strategies for Persons with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.

SSD has identified several planning initiatives for FY06-07. The principal goals are to:

- Address an imbalance between staff resources and service demands.
- Update protocols that describe all the specific steps needed to address the provision of services for persons with disabilities.

- Redesign emergency evacuation training and assess equipment needs, considering persons with physical disabilities and/or psychiatric disabilities.
- Improve the accessibility and textual content for the primary FCC website.
- Continue to develop the SSD website's descriptive content as well as provide increased online access to procedures and application for services.
- Develop a collaboration between FCC & FCPS to help students with disabilities (and their parents) better manage a difficult transition from high school to college disabilities based services. This program, for which a grant has already been awarded, will address three areas:
 - The differences in the ways in which disabilities are determined
 - The differences in what provisions for disability can be provided
 - The means by which self-advocacy (to include goal setting) are achieved
- Prioritize and complete key projects identified in the 2005 campus wide ADA assessment.
- Shift the emphasis of the SSD intervention model from scheduling classes to developing disabilities-specific learning techniques.

Qualified Professionals

Staffing of student support units follows policies and procedures of College employment (*Recruiting Process: #5.450*), with specific job descriptions that use established national and Maryland Community College standards and best practices (*Job Descriptions: #5.310*). All full-time staff members in the student support areas are thoroughly qualified for the positions they fill, and they are expected to complete a customized employee development program annually. College-wide and unit-level training programs are available on campus throughout the year (*Professional Development Calendar: #5.410, Professional Development Plan: #5.420*). All employees receive an annual appraisal of individual strengths and weaknesses and, with their supervisors, develop an agenda for further training (*Performance Evaluation Rating Standards: #5.390*). The FY06 budget increased funds for staff-oriented strategic planning initiatives within Tutorial Services, Athletics, Students with Disabilities, and the WRC (*Approved Operating Budget FY 2006, p. 2: #6.121, Appendix L*).

Procedures to Address Student Needs

Student services are defined and guided by the Mission statement and by policies and procedures at institutional and unit levels. The first three goals of the College Strategic Plan—1. Provide learning opportunities based on student goals, needs for lifelong learning, and participation in society; 2. Organize college systems to support learning; and 3. Provide access for all learners in the community—demonstrate the high priority placed upon meeting student needs (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The Policy Manual (*Section 5: Student Policies: #2.310, Appendix G*) and the Procedure Manual (*Section 5: Student Procedures: #2.510, Appendix G*) cover student services. Individual units that provide student support have their own policies and procedures.

Support services are available to all credit and non-credit students. Information about support services can be found at the WRC, in the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook, on the College website, and in numerous brochures, mailings, and posters. Advisors, counselors, faculty, mentors, and others who work with a student may refer the student to a support area, or the student may self-refer. In the Student Satisfaction Inventory (*Item 63: #3.650*), mean satisfaction levels of FCC credit students were significantly higher than the

national mean on the item: “I seldom get the run-around when seeking information on this campus.”

Student Advisement Policies and Procedures

The Student Development area provides the majority of advising on campus and is supplemented by department chairs and program managers. An extensive and comprehensive array of advising services has been developed (*Student Support Services: Descriptions and Assessments: #8.756, Appendix O*), including:

- advising for academic, certificate, career, and transfer programs
- services for adult, disabled, developmental education, and distance learning students
- mentoring and support for academically at-risk and under-represented populations
- orientation sessions
- short-term personal and social counseling
- online support

The Advising/Counseling Office has prepared an Advising Guide (#7.715) and an Advising Manual (#7.720) to aid students and staff in understanding and accessing services. Information about advising policies and procedures is available from the WRC, the Student Handbook, and from all offices within Student Development. The Student Support Services section of the Academic Catalog (*p.121-124: #9.110*) explicitly outlines all policies and procedures, including “Student and Advisor Responsibilities in the Advising Process.”

Athletics

The College offers interscholastic baseball, basketball, golf, soccer, softball, and volleyball and enjoys a very positive relationship with the community. The program serves approximately 100 student athletes each year and conducts athletic camps for hundreds of county children. Under the leadership of the athletic director, the College earned the conference’s Jack Cristiano Sportsmanship Award in 2001 and 2002 and was named as runner-up in both 2003 and 2004 (*Athletics Annual Report: #8.111*).

Athletic programs are governed by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Handbook (#8.115), which contains rules, regulations, and policies that all community colleges are required to follow. Athletic eligibility is certified on-line or by mail to the national office. All required data is compiled on an eligibility form that is sent to the national and regional offices for review and certification. If any discrepancies in eligibility are found, the College has a chance to correct the problems before any sanctions are placed on the institution. A five-person faculty/staff team reviews transcripts and pertinent data to decide eligibility. Completed forms are signed by the associate vice president of operations/registrar and by the director of athletics, and the forms are then submitted to the national office of the NJCAA for review. The men’s soccer program is on probation for the 2005 season due to an inadvertent eligibility infraction last year, the first in 16 years for any team at the College.

FCC also participates in the statewide Maryland Junior College Conference, governed by an executive committee that enforces and reviews rules and policies, that are disseminated in its operating code (*Operating Code: #8.114*).

All athletes are required to meet the same academic standards as non-athletes as set forth in the Academic Catalog. Student athletes are required to submit progress reports to faculty members on a bi-weekly basis. Progress cards are reviewed by the coaching staff to determine if additional academic/tutorial services are needed.

The College satisfies Title IX compliance by providing equal opportunities for men and women (*Athletics Annual Report: #8.111*). Information on graduation rates of athletes, Student Right to Know, and Title IX is available in the WRC, the Outcomes Assessment, Research, and Planning Department, the cashier's office, and is published in the College catalog (*Academic Catalog, p. 142: #9.110*).

In addition to a full-time athletic director, full-time athletic specialist, and part-time athletic trainer, the Athletic Department retains up to 20 part-time coaches to run its program. According to the athletic director, retaining coaches in some areas remains a challenge, and the turnover rate of coaches adversely affected the volleyball program in 2004 and 2005 and the women's soccer program in 2005-06.

Several ongoing strategic initiatives of the Learning Support area (*Learning Support – Strategic Initiatives 2005-06: #8.412*) address the needs of the Athletic Department, including an orientation and retention program for coaches, review of state community college recruiting practices, and an assessment of the declining participation of women in intercollegiate athletics in Maryland community colleges. An additional \$7,500 was allocated for athletics in the FY06 Operating Budget (*#6.121, Appendix L*).

Student Grievance Process

Students have a right to “file an academic or general grievance” and the responsibility to “follow College procedure” (*Student Handbook, p. 55: #2.610*). The process by which a student files a grievance is well documented. Written procedures for student complaints or grievances may be found in the Student Handbook, the Policy Manual (*Section 5.17: #2.310, Appendix G*), and the Academic Catalog (*#9.110*). The Student Handbook is given to students during orientation sessions and upon first-time registration at the College, and is available at the following locations: Welcome and Registration Center, Advising/Counseling Office, Student Life Office, hallway stands throughout the College, and on the website.

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, every effort is made to resolve the problem through discussion between the parties involved. An ombudsman is available to help resolve the issue early in the process. Academic Grievance Forms (*#8.050*) for initiating a grievance are maintained in the office of the vice president for learning support. The initiation of a formal grievance begins with a signature sheet, and continued documentation of the process is tracked on the Student Academic Grievance Checklist until a resolution is reached (*Student Grievance Procedures: #2.710*). Documentation of all grievances is maintained indefinitely in the office of the vice president for learning support. A total of 13 grievances were made over the past five years. Eleven grades stood and two retroactive withdrawals were granted (*Student Grievance Report: #8.678*).

In addition to individual student grievances, complaints may originate at student government meetings, student affairs committee meetings, and through suggestion boxes located around campus. Any complaints/grievances requiring follow-up are directed to the vice president of learning support, and a tracking report is maintained electronically.

Student Records

To ensure the safe and secure maintenance of student records and the release of information, all College employees adhere to the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (#8.614). The associate vice president of student operations/registrar is charged with FERPA compliance and holds periodic training sessions to ensure all employees are aware of their responsibilities. The Strategic Plan Goal 5 (#1.722, *Appendix A*) requires mandatory training for all employees. Students are informed of their rights in the following documents, which are available online and in print format: Academic Catalog (#9.110), Student Handbook (#2.610), Policy Manual (#2.310, *Appendix G*), and both the credit and non-credit Schedule of Classes (#9.810, #9.820).

Various offices on campus (Welcome and Registration Center, Testing Center, Counseling, Services for Students with Disabilities, Multicultural Support Services, Office of Adult Students, Career Services, Tutorial Services, and Financial Aid) create and maintain student records. Some student records are kept in locked cabinets or in locked offices in accordance with the *Guide for Retention and Disposal of Student Records* published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Destruction of such records is done in accordance with AACRAO procedures. The College also uses an off-site facility for record storage, which is coordinated by the accounting specialist. The College contracts with a shredding service to periodically destroy records that are no longer needed.

Student records maintained in the *PeopleSoft* database can only be accessed by a protected password system. Individual employee access to *PeopleSoft* system information is determined by employee job responsibility. Requests for access are processed through the information technology area and authorized by the established owner of the individual modules. Records are also stored offsite by the Frederick County Government.

In spring 2005, the College purchased *Document Imaging* to ensure greater security of student records and alleviate current storage issues; in fall 2005 it was implemented for the Welcome Center, Financial Aid, and Student Finance. The College's mailroom is one of the areas where sensitive and confidential information is not protected; anyone can remove sensitive or confidential information from a faculty or staff mailbox. This problem is being addressed by a pending proposal to renovate the mailroom to provide greater security through controlled access (*College Information Center Proposal*: #8.674).

Assessment of Support Services

Assessment of student services is conducted at the institutional level through the Strategic Plan and variously at unit levels. Goals 1, 2, 3, and 7 of the Strategic Plan (#1.722, *Appendix A*) include objectives that relate directly to student support services. Specific outcomes/benchmarks and assessments for Goals 1 through 3 are presented in the Action

Plan – Learning (#1.725, *Appendix D*); those for Goal 7 are presented in the Action Plan – Process/Communications (#1.726, *Appendix D*). The Learning Support area’s planning and assessment documents (*Learning Support - Strategic Initiatives 2005-06: #8.412; Learning Support - Assessment Plan 2005-06: #8.403*) have extensive outcomes/benchmarks and assessments for several student support services.

The Student Development Services unit also has a complete set of assessment plans. These are discussed in the following documents: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (#4.705, *Appendix I*), Student Learning Outcomes Assessment - Progress Report (MHEC) (#4.710, *Appendix J*), and the Student Development Assessment Plan (#7.721).

Apart from the College’s assessment projects, the Maryland Community College Deans of Students group is working with student services to develop statewide outcomes and benchmarks. The uniqueness of this program has resulted national recognition for the Deans’ efforts.

The College’s principal assessment tool for student satisfaction is the Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.650), which was conducted in 1994 and 2004 (and will be administered again in spring 2007). The survey showed that the “Performance Gap”—i.e. the gap between the student level of expectation and the student level of satisfaction—was smaller on each of the 11 scales (available for comparison to national norms) for the College than it was for the national group means of peer institutions. This result is interpreted to mean that FCC students believe the services delivered by this institution come closer to meeting their expectations and needs than is generally experienced on the national level (*Student Satisfaction Inventory: #3.650*).

The results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory, as well as other internal and external assessment measures, have received a great deal of scrutiny by various College leadership teams. Recommendations from each functional unit were made in a formal report, Closing the Assessment Loop (#3.652). Several new initiatives have resulted from this thorough analysis and are in various stages of implementation (*President’s Leadership Council Minutes: #10.710*). As dictated by the Strategic Plan, all areas that offer student support services—Learning, Learning Support, and Administration—have an ongoing responsibility to collect, analyze, dissect, interpret, and draw conclusions about assessment data in order to implement appropriate change (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan, p. 13-17: #3.380, Appendix H*). This continuous planning cycle is designed with one purpose in mind: to improve the quality of services in order to meet the learning and other needs of students (*President’s Leadership Council (PLC) meeting minutes 12/12/2004: #10.716; Closing the Assessment Loop: #3.652*).

Conclusions

The College has an extensive and highly developed set of student support services. The College’s organizational structure integrates student learning and support functions, thus embodying learning college principles. Student support is substantially represented in the Strategic Plan. Individual student support units in Learning, Learning Support, and Administration areas have highly evolved planning and assessment structures with

documented assessment-driven improvement. Assessment data generally demonstrates high levels of student satisfaction with support services.

FCC's application of the learning college model has resulted in the integration of credit and non-credit programs. One outcome is the recognition that students who take non-credit courses may benefit from support services, even though a very small number now do so. Given the great variety of non-credit courses, a greater understanding on non-credit students' needs may lead to improved publicity, referral, and provision of support services.

Recommendation

20. Strengthen the College's support of non-credit students, beginning with a needs assessment.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 10: Faculty

Key Documents

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

HERI Faculty Survey: #3.090

Faculty Handbook: #2.210, Appendix M

PACE Campus Climate Survey: #3.520, Appendix N

Policies and Procedures: #2.310 & #2.510, Appendix G

Qualified Faculty

The Strategic Plan states that the faculty is responsible for providing “an instructional process.... characterized by currentness, scholarly excellence and effective instructional design.” (*Strategic Plan, Objective 2: #1.722, Appendix A*). This Objective is carried out by a qualified and committed faculty. As of Fall 2005, FCC faculty include (*Fall 2005 Faculty Data: #5.1152*):

- 82 full-time faculty
 - 26% Doctoral degree; 70% Masters degree
 - 30% Full Professor; 32% Associate Professor; 35% Assistant Professor
 - 4% Faculty of color
 - 37% Eligible for retirement by July 2009
- 260 adjunct faculty
 - 14% Doctoral degree; 53% Masters degree
 - 5% Adjunct faculty of color

The Higher Education Research Institution (HERI) 1998 Faculty Survey found that: “FCC faculty hold higher academic qualifications...than other two-year college faculty” and they “tend to have a higher level of academic preparation than other two-year public college faculty.” (*HERI Faculty Survey, p. 22: #3.090*). The FY04 ratio of student credit hours to faculty hours taught was 15.9 to 1 at FCC, compared to a state average ratio of 18.1 to 1 (*MDACC Databook, FY05 p.55: #5.1157*). Faculty roles and responsibilities are made clear in the Faculty Handbook (*Section 2:10. #2.210, Appendix M*), in well-defined job descriptions (*Faculty: #5.316, #Adjunct: 5.314*), and through extensive mandatory orientation sessions for full-time and adjunct faculty.

The faculty falls short on certain external and internal standards. In fall 2005, the ratio of credits taught by full-time and adjunct faculty was 45% to 55% (*5.116*), which is below the 50% to 50% ratio specified within the *Code of Maryland Regulations (Section 13B.02.02.17: #13.531)*. This aggregate ratio does not expose inequities among areas. For example, the ratios in mathematics (39% to 61%) and psychology (41% to 59%) are of concern (*PS MA F2005 FT/PT: #5.1161*). Two new full-time faculty positions were added in both FY05 and FY06 to begin addressing this imbalance (*Operating Budget FY05: #6.120; FY06: #6.121, Appendix L*). In addition, another 1.5 faculty positions were added in FY05 through administrative changes outside the budget. These new positions are consistent with the vice president of learning/provost’s stated priority to increase the number of full-time faculty at FCC.

The College has a benchmark that 11% of faculty will be racially and ethnically diverse (*Action Plan – Campus Climate. Objective 24: Benchmark 1.1. #1.729*). However, fall 2004 data indicates the proportion of full- and part-time credit instructional faculty of color as 7% and 8% respectively (compared to 16% in the student population) (*Accountability Report pp. 5-6: #3.110*). Fall 2005 data shows a decrease in faculty (to 4%) and adjunct faculty (to 5%) of color, with an increase in students of color (to 19%). (*Fall 2005 Faculty Data: #5.1152; Student Profile Report: #3.611.*) Sensitivity to small changes coupled with extremely low faculty turnover contributes to this trend, despite multiple efforts by the College to increase diversity among faculty (*Accountability Report. p.15: #3.110*). The College continues to develop initiatives to increase faculty diversity, as discussed fully under Standard 6. FCC faculty are “more likely than their peers at other colleges to believe that creating a multi-cultural environment and recruiting more minority faculty, administrators, and students are high-priority issues” (*HERI Faculty Survey, pp. 23-24: #3.090*).

Workload is another faculty concern. The 1998 HERI Faculty Survey found “almost all FCC faculty feel pressured by lack of time to meet all of their obligations” (*p. 24: #3.090*). The PACE Campus Climate Survey reflected this result (*Q. 31. “the extent to which the amount of work I do is appropriate”: #3.520, Appendix N*). Although the growth in faculty numbers (9.3%) has outpaced the increase in total student headcount (5.5%) over the past five years (*MHEC Enrollment Information: #5.1154, #5.1155*), some areas of the College show the opposite trend. For example, full-time mathematics faculty numbers increased 6%, while student enrollment in mathematics classes jumped 39% over the same time period (Fall 2001- Fall 2005) (*Math Enrollment 01-05: #7.153*).

In response to workload concerns, the College raised faculty salaries by 9% over the five-year period 1999-2004 (*Faculty Five Year Salary Adjustment Plan. #5.115*). Salary adequacy is also addressed in the Strategic Plan (*Objective 15: #1.722, Appendix A*) and in the Worklife Action Plan (*Objective 15, benchmark 1.2. #1.728*), which calls for salary scale midpoints for benchmark positions to be in the top third of Maryland community colleges. The College now meets this standard for faculty positions (*Faculty Salaries – Maryland Community Colleges: #5.1145*).

Reassign time is an element of overall faculty workload that is being studied by the provost’s office (*Memo: 5.117*). Deans are working with departments and program managers to assess effectiveness, need, and equitability, with the goal of insuring that teaching remains the primary activity of all faculty members. Results of this exploration will factor into decisions concerning the adequate distribution of labor.

Design and Maintenance of Educational Curricula

College curricula granting academic credit and non-credit developmental courses are designed, proposed, and maintained by the faculty and approved by the faculty-majority Curriculum Committee (*Senate Constitution, Article IX: #2.560*). Courses designated as general education must have the additional approval of the General Education Committee, whose voting members are all faculty (*General Education Committee Membership and Duties: #4.334*). The approval process is well-defined and assures appropriate scope, rigor,

and transferability (*Faculty Handbook, Section 8: #2.210, Appendix M*).

Non-credit continuing education (CE) courses fall under two major categories: workforce development and personal enrichment. All such courses are maintained by professionals who have participated in the College's hiring process. Continuing Education program managers develop courses in accordance with guidelines developed by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (www.iacet.org). This protocol was agreed upon for all Maryland continuing education units by the Maryland Association for Continuing Education and Training. In addition, workforce development courses are submitted to MHEC for review and approval of state funding. Personal enrichment courses are not eligible for state funding so they are not submitted to or reviewed by MHEC.

Excellence in Teaching and Professional Growth

The Academic Catalog states that "The primary emphasis of FCC is teaching/learning" (*Academic Catalog, p 6: #9.110*). The HERI survey of faculty found that "FCC faculty value their teaching... they uniformly say that promoting students' intellectual development is a high priority for the institution..." (*HERI Faculty Survey, p. 23: #3.090*).

Full-time faculty have opportunities to demonstrate excellence in teaching and continued professional growth through a combination of peer observation, reflective self-evaluation, student evaluation of courses, publications, presentations at professional meetings, documented participation in professional development events, and the development of an individual portfolio. Credit adjunct faculty may demonstrate excellence through regular (each semester) supervisor observation, the results of student evaluations (each class), and participation in professional development events. Continuing education adjunct faculty may demonstrate excellence primarily through student evaluations, as well as through periodic review by the appropriate program manager.

Student evaluations of courses show very positive responses to all items reflecting instructor performance, as shown in Table 10.1. In a May 2004 Graduate Survey, 98% of 156 graduates rated the overall quality of instruction at FCC as good or very good (*Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan, pg. 42: #3.380, Appendix H*). Student ratings of satisfaction and importance for items "The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent." and "Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields." defines these items as strengths of the College (*Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory: Learning Area: #3.6514*).

Other indicators of teaching excellence include the relatively high GPAs and graduation rates of FCC students who transfer to Maryland public universities (*Matter of Fact: 3.410; Frederick Community College Student Transfer Report: #3.450*) and the positive rating of employers of FCC graduates (*Employer Survey, pp. 21-14: #3.340*).

Table 10.1: Students' Evaluation of Instructors: Aggregate Results for All Reviewed Credit and Non-credit Courses

* *Course and Instructor Evaluations: #3.230, # 3.220, # 3.221, # 3.219*

***Course and Instructor Evaluations: #3.210*

| Evaluation item: Credit classes* | Percent of all evaluators who "agree" or "strongly agree" | | | |
|--|---|-------|-------------|-------|
| | F 03 | S 04 | F 04 | S 05 |
| Instructor showed enthusiasm when communicating with the class. | 95.6% | 96.8% | 95.9% | 96.3% |
| Instructor promoted a positive learning environment. | 95.4% | 96.4% | 95.4% | 95.6% |
| Instructor encouraged me to participate in the learning process. | 91.6% | 93.1% | 92.0% | 92.2% |
| Instructor related to me with courtesy and respect. | 95.8% | 97.4% | 96.4% | 96.1% |
| Instructor explained the subject matter clearly. | 88.4% | 91.4% | 88.5% | 88.9% |
| Instructor constructed assignments and tests fairly. | 92.5% | 92.9% | 92.6% | 91.9% |
| Instructor graded assignments and tests fairly. | 94.0% | 94.2% | 93.5% | 93.6% |
| Instructor helped me achieve the core learning outcomes. | 91.3% | 93.8% | 92.0% | 91.7% |
| Evaluation item: Non-credit classes** | | | FY04 | |
| Instructor was prepared for class. | | | 99.6% | |
| Instructor had knowledge of the topic. | | | 99.4% | |
| Instructor had enthusiasm for topic. | | | 99.4% | |
| Instructor encouraged questions. | | | 98.6% | |
| I would attend another class from this instructor. | | | 98.9% | |
| Instructor answered questions. | | | 97.9% | |

FCC faculty members demonstrate professional improvement and growth by conducting and/or participating in professional development workshops, presenting in professional conferences, and participating in community and regional activities compatible with the College's Mission (*Faculty Handbook, Section 2.10: #2.210, Appendix M*). The HERI Faculty Survey (p. 22: #3.090) found that "...as a group, FCC faculty members are more likely to be involved in other professional activities, especially research and consulting, than are their counterparts at other two-year public colleges," and that "FCC faculty ...publish articles in professional journals at a rate that is equivalent to that of other 2-year public college faculty."

At present, there exists no procedure for collection of information about faculty teaching and research accomplishments. However, an informal survey (*Faculty Professional Development: #5.1165*) returned an impressive body of professional activity over the past three years. Twenty-four respondents to the survey produced 36 invited presentations at the state or national level; 12 published articles, books, or essays; 16 professional grants; state-wide teaching awards; research; and graduate study. In addition, 21 sabbatical leaves were granted from 2002-2006 for the purpose of research and continued education (*Sabbatical Roster: #5.472*).

Institutional Support for the Advancement of Faculty

The College values professional development and requires that faculty “keep abreast of developments in one’s field of specialization” (*Policy Manual, Section 3.14: #2.310, Appendix G*). Demonstration of professional involvement and growth is required for advancement and promotion of full-time faculty, as evidenced by the official job description (5.316), annual self-evaluation form, and portfolio process (*Faculty Handbook, Section 4: 2.210*). Participation in professional development is listed as an essential function of adjunct faculty as well (*Adjunct Job Description: #5.314*).

Faculty scholarship is encouraged and supported in a number of ways. Sabbatical leave is available after every six years of continuous employment for the purposes of research and professional growth, and tuition benefit is offered for continuing graduate study (*Policy Manual, Section 7.12-I & 7.14: #2.310, Appendix G*). Limited funds for travel and other professional development needs are available through departmental budgets. Additional funding is available through the provost’s operating budget, Perkins Grants, the FCC Foundation, Collaboration Council Grants, Summer Grants, Innovation Grants, and other sources.

The College has become increasingly involved in promoting on-campus faculty development. A Faculty Development Committee was formed to create a calendar of professional events on campus for full-time and adjunct faculty. Offerings include seminars, technology workshops, book discussions, round-table forums on educational issues, and presentations of faculty research. With the College’s adoption of a learning college philosophy and subsequent reorganization, responsibility for support of faculty development was placed with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). As such, the CTL provides development opportunities focusing on teaching and learning for faculty and staff. Offerings are determined in part by the expressed needs and interests of faculty and by the results of faculty evaluations (*Professional Development Calendar: #5.410; 2005 CTL Events Calendar: #7.017*).

The College also supports faculty through the Office of Learning Technologies, which is part of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Its principal responsibility is to provide professional development and training for faculty in learning technologies and related best practices in higher education. The office conducts an extensive series of workshops in instructional applications, particularly for *Blackboard*, the courseware used in all online courses and as an online resource of numerous campus courses (*Office of Learning Technologies – Annual Report 2005: #7.331*). The director for learning technologies also works with faculty members individually and participates in technology planning as a member of the Learning Leadership Council, the Web Project Management Group, and the IT Managers Group.

Although the College attempts to offer appropriate, on-campus professional developmental opportunities, there is indication that funding and opportunities offered by the College do not match Individual Development Plans (IDP) of faculty. The PACE Campus Climate Survey indicates “the extent to which FCC’s Professional Development Program supports my IDP goals” (*Table 9, p. 34: #3.520, Appendix N*) as a priority for change. The College is making

an effort to better relate needs to opportunities within the 2004 revised Strategic Plan (*Objective 13: #1.722, Appendix A*) and through the CTL's new definition of employee development as "focused on teaching and learning for faculty" and "based on the needs of that area" (*Employee Development Plan: #5.420*).

The College also supports a comprehensive professional development program for adjunct faculty. New adjuncts receive orientation training (#7.302) and are given a corresponding CD that contains extensive supplementary information about the College. Participation in this program is actively solicited throughout the year in the form of electronic announcements and participation-based incentives of \$50 stipends for attending up to two events each semester.

With the College's development as a learning college, support for the professional development of non-credit faculty is growing. There is a great opportunity for CE faculty, hired for their expertise in a given area, to benefit from stronger linkage to the CTL. To that end, a CE liaison to the CTL has been charged with collaboratively developing and meeting specific goals related to CE faculty development and broader engagement with the College at large. Currently, CE faculty members do not attend on-campus events, in part because their classes are short-term, they are not issued college e-mail accounts, and there are no stipends available to support participation.

Linkages among Scholarship, Teaching, Student Learning, Research, and Service

Evidence that the College recognizes linkages among faculty scholarship, teaching, student learning, research, and service can be found in both the job description (#5.316) and the required evaluation process, where faculty must demonstrate and reflect on activity within the following areas: teaching effectiveness, college service, community service, professional development, and professional goals (*Faculty Handbook, Appendices B and D: #2.210, Appendix M*).

Published Standards and Procedures

Faculty-related standards and procedures are published in the Policy and Procedures Manual (#2.310 & #2.510, *Appendix G*) and the Faculty Handbook (#2.210, *Appendix M*). While these publications are normally available on the College's intranet site, the Faculty Handbook is currently being reviewed for update by the provost's office. The following sections of these documents pertain to faculty conditions of employment:

- Policies: Section 3.00 Personnel Policies (including policy statement, conditions of employment, dismissal/appeal separation of employment, non-discrimination)
- Procedures: Section 3.00 Personnel Procedures (including grievance, promotion, salary increases, work/life procedures, dismissal/appeal, complaint, work/life, discipline)
- Faculty Handbook: All sections (including purpose and philosophy, evaluation process and cycles, submission dates for materials)

The 2003 PACE Campus Climate Survey identifies FCC faculty response to "the extent to which institutional procedures and policies are openly communicated" as an area of concern (*PACE Campus Climate Survey p. 34: 3.520*). The need for open and complete

communication among all constituents is of utmost importance in a learning college environment. The College has promised to “promote and enhance effective communication” (*Strategic Plan, Goal 7: #1.722, Appendix A*) and has set a high priority on assessment of communication through the Strategic Action Plan’s Process/Communication Cluster, managed by the president (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, p. 45: #1.713, Appendix C*).

Policies and procedures are continually reviewed, and issues affecting faculty are processed through the Faculty Association (*Procedures Manual, Section 2.11: #2.510, Appendix G*). The creation and review of new policy concerning intellectual property can serve as an example of effective communication. An *Intellectual Property Proposal-Draft* (#2.240) was spearheaded by faculty, created by committee, and put forth before all affinity groups for consideration and revision (*Faculty Association Minutes 12/13/04: #10.460*). The policy is pending. Reviewing the currency and consistency of published policy and procedures has been made top priority of the 2005-2006 Faculty Association (*FA Minutes, Review of Policies and Procedures: #10.465*).

Presently there is no corresponding CE/CT employee handbook outlining the staff operation and evaluation process for non-credit faculty. A faculty handbook, modeled to some extent after that employed by credit departments and incorporating orientation and evaluation issues, is in development.

Evaluation of Full-time and Adjunct Faculty

Evaluation of full-time academic faculty is a self-reflective process that includes annual self-evaluations, the development of a portfolio, and peer observations. Full-time faculty members are probationary until the first successful peer-observation/portfolio submission in the spring of their third year. Faculty members on probationary contract are evaluated by students, peers, and the department chair annually, and they submit portfolios during the second and third years. Continuous contract begins at the start of the fourth year. (*Faculty Handbook, Section 4.12: # 2.210.*)

For full-time faculty on continuous appointment, student and self-evaluations are submitted annually. Peer observations and portfolios are submitted every five years or for promotion and equivalency decisions. Each self-evaluation is processed through and acted upon by the department chair, appropriate dean, and the vice president for learning/provost. Portfolios are evaluated by the Peer Evaluation Committee (PEC), which consists of one voting faculty member from each department serving a one-year term. All recommendations made by PEC and approved by the provost are binding; compliance will be monitored by the department chair. Failure to comply with recommendations could result in the loss of future step increases. (*Faculty Handbook, Section 4.15: #2.210, Appendix M.*)

The Faculty Handbook states that “The faculty portfolio is the centerpiece of the evaluation process at Frederick Community College because it is totally faculty-driven...It is a particularly good instrument for fostering personal reflection on teaching” (*Faculty Handbook, Section 4.11: #2.210, Appendix M*). Peer observers (one from inside and one from outside the faculty member’s discipline) are chosen from a Peer Observer Pool (POP).

Both observations require a pre-meeting, the observation, a descriptive narrative of the experience, and post-meeting with faculty response. Guidelines for the peer observations and construction of the portfolio are consistent with the faculty job description and are included in the Faculty Handbook (*Section 4: #2.210, Appendix M*). From 2002-2005, PEC reviewed 23 probationary portfolios, 26 cycle-year portfolios, and 9 promotion requests. A survey of faculty concerning the evaluation process was performed in 2001; although the results were not available at the time of this report, they are in the process of being recompiled.

Academic program managers and academic department chairs are evaluated as faculty (*Evaluation forms: #5.228, #5.233*). In addition, each department chair is evaluated on administrative performance by the faculty members within the department and by the appropriate associate vice president. Individuals reporting to multiple formal or informal supervisors (i.e. career program managers) are currently evaluated only by their formal supervisor. Adjunct faculty members are evaluated by their direct program manager or department chair at least once per year. A standardized form is used to score the evaluation when the visit to the classroom has been made. Process and forms for the evaluation of managers, chairs, and adjunct faculty were formalized in Summer 2005 and will be documented in the procedures manual. (*Faculty Evaluation, Who does what: #7.319.*) Adjunct faculty members are not assessed by scholarship and service to the College.

Evaluation of CE/CT Faculty

All CE instructors are evaluated by students using a standardized form (*CE/CT Evaluation: #3.210*). Results are analyzed and measured against pre-determined goals that are recorded on the program area's annual *Balanced Scorecard* (#7.931 & #7.932), a performance management tool that links College Vision, Mission, goals, and strategies with departmental, program area, and individual actions. The chair of CE is evaluated in large part based on projected versus actual results as recorded on the CE scorecard. CE instructors are not assessed by scholarship and service to the College.

All CT courses and instructors/facilitators are evaluated by students using a *Course Evaluation/Market Survey* (#7.515). All clients contracting with CT are sent a standardized *CT Survey Form* (#7.525) that evaluates each course, the instructor, and the program manager. Evaluations are reviewed by the appropriate program manager and the associate vice president for customized training and are used in the annual performance evaluations done for all CT employees by their direct supervisors.

Evaluation of Others Responsible for the Educational Program

The vice president and associate vice presidents for learning share responsibility for the College's educational program. These administrators are evaluated by their immediate supervisors following the Administrative and Support Employee Appraisal and Annual Development Plan (#5.215).

Academic Freedom

The principle of academic freedom along with a code of ethics is described and considered an entitlement within the Faculty Handbook, Section 2.11 (*#2.210, Appendix M*). These entitlements have been adopted from the AAUP Statement on Ethics.

Conclusions

The College's faculty demonstrates excellence in teaching and professional growth. The faculty is committed to student learning and is involved in all aspects of curricular design, implementation, and review. The College exhibits recognition of linkages among scholarship, teaching, student learning, and service within the hiring and evaluation processes, and through grants, travel, and sabbatical benefits. The faculty-driven portfolio process evaluates commitment and involvement through self-reflection and peer review. Expectations and conditions of employment for faculty are thoroughly and officially documented.

Concerns exist over faculty size, workloads, and reassigned time. The full-time/part-time faculty ratio is not ideal, and faculty question whether present workloads result in satisfactory performance across all job tasks. While professional development opportunities exist on and off campus, many are unrelated to needs expressed by faculty.

Recommendations

- 21.** Analyze data on full-time/part-time faculty ratios by area, with the goal of allocating resources to achieve the state guideline in all areas.
- 22.** Strengthen the value of employee development for faculty by linking support to needs expressed on annual self-evaluation reports.
- 23.** Develop and implement a plan to increase CE/CT adjunct faculty participation in appropriate professional development opportunities through a clearly defined relationship between CE/CT and the Center for Teaching and Learning.
- 24.** Conduct a comprehensive review of faculty attitudes on issues related to work/life, communication, and the faculty evaluation process.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

Key Documents

Organizational Charts - Learning: #1.124, Appendix E

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005: #1.713, Appendix C

Academic Catalog: #9.110

Syllabi Collection: #7.031, Appendix P

Student Handbook: #2.610

Co-Curricular Calendars: #7.015, #7.016, #7.017

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan 2003 – 2006: #4.705, Appendix I

Introduction

As a learning college, FCC has placed all programs and courses (degree, certificate, credit, and non-credit) within the Learning area (*Organizational Charts: #1.123, Appendix E*). Students have access to academic and other support services regardless of their program of study. This organization is a result of the College Mission and Strategic Plan, through which the College will “provide a instructional process that integrates credit/non-credit options in a range of formats...” (*Strategic Plan, Objective 2: #1.722, Appendix A*). Full integration of credit and non-credit options has not yet been achieved, but it is a goal of the Strategic Action Plan and the process is well underway (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, pp. 5-8: #1.713, Appendix C*). The following analysis of the College’s compliance with Standard 11 will thus include certificate and non-credit offerings.

Educational Opportunities Consistent with the Mission

The College’s Mission includes provision of learning opportunities based on student goals, needs for lifelong learning, and participation in society. It states “FCC offers degrees, certificates, and programs for workforce preparation, transfer, and personal enrichment to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of our region” (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). The College provides an expansive array of educational opportunities:

- transfer and career associate degrees (A.A., A.S., A.A.T., A.A.S.)
- certificate programs
- letters of recognition and certificates of completion
- opportunities for job training and skills enhancement
- customized training for local businesses
- personal enrichment classes
- extra- and co-curricular opportunities
- cultural events

Coherent Credit Programs

Transfer programs lead to an A.A., A.S., or A.A.T degree that requires at least 60 credit hours, including an appropriate general education core of at least 34 credit hours. The 2005-2006 Academic Catalog (p. 24: #9.110) lists more than 35 transfer programs, many with specific options, designed to prepare students to transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution as juniors. Transfer programs leading to an associate degree incorporate three categories of coursework: a general education core, required departmental courses, and free

electives. Transfer certificates in Transfer Studies (30 credit hours) and Corrections (27 credit hours) were introduced in 2005.

Career programs lead to an A.A.S. degree, certificate, or letter of recognition and are geared to producing workforce-ready graduates. Currently, 19 career-specific areas offer 65 different options for credentials. Most credit career programs offer A.A.S. degrees of 60-70 credit hours with a general education core of at least 20 credit hours, corresponding certificate programs of 16-49 credit hours, or letters of recognition of 4-11 credit hours. Clearly-defined career ladders incorporate lower-level requirements into the higher-level degrees.

The certificate of accomplishment is awarded to students who complete a prescribed curriculum of specialized training. The Academic Catalog lists the objectives, requirements, and curricular sequence for certificates. In addition, the catalog indicates when the courses completed within a certificate program can be applied to a degree program offered by the College.

Some course offerings target specific populations. Examples include courses within the Honors College and First Year Initiatives. The Honors College offers an array of standard courses in a seminar format, emphasizing critical thinking and research projects, and incorporating co-curricular experiences. Students completing the program give a presentation of their independent research project each spring. First Year Initiatives for incoming freshman include summer experiences, seminar courses, and workshops related to the demands of college. (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 104, 119, 122: #9.110; *Honors College Brochure*: #9.230.)

Programs are developed and reviewed by faculty, program managers, and, if appropriate, an advisory committee of experts in the field. Procedures for submission of new courses and programs to the Curriculum Committee are described in the New Course/Program Proposal Form (#7.025) and in the Curriculum Submission Process Form (#7.028), as well as in the Faculty Handbook (*Sec. 8.10-8.20: #2.210, Appendix M*). All new credit degree programs must meet accreditation standards and be approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). New programs added to the catalog recently include Nuclear Medicine (A.A.S.), Medical Assisting Certificate, and Transfer Studies Certificate.

FCC regularly conducts environmental scans and needs assessments to determine a new program's potential. Assessments include appropriateness to the service area, lack of duplication within the region, and the potential of jobs upon exit. A task force of relevant community leaders is then gathered to focus on specific required skills and potential courses. Similar programs outside of the immediate area are researched to serve as potential models (*Challenges and Opportunities: #1.110, Environmental Scan 04: #1.130, Environmental Scan, 05: #1.131*).

Career programs require internships or work-specific classroom experiences. They have program advisory committees composed of industry leaders from the local community who provide relevant information on jobs, skills requirements, course requirements, offerings, etc.

(*Program Advisory Boards: #7.935*). Several career programs include non-credit offerings (allied health areas, information technology, construction, and early childhood). The Strategic Action Plan 2005 Annual Report (p. 8: #1.713, Appendix C) states “All programs are rated as viable.”

To provide flexibility and accessibility, many programs at the College may be completed through course offerings available days, nights, and weekends, in distance education formats as well as traditional on- and off-campus venues. All courses and programs meet ADA mandates for accessibility.

Programs may be labeled as non-viable and discontinued when one or more of the following conditions exist: obsolescence, low enrollment, lack of interest from the advisory committees, lack of jobs in the commutable area, lack of appropriateness for service area, or demographics of current student population within a program no longer appropriate for the Mission of the College. Programs in aviation maintenance, drafting, electronics, avionics, and park management were discontinued as of fall 2004 due to some or all of the above-mentioned conditions.

Stated Student Learning Outcomes for Programs and Courses

All credit programs and courses at the College are designed with specific student learning outcomes that provide a coherent learning experience appropriate to the discipline of study. Full-time faculty members determine the content and learning outcomes of programs that lead to a degree.

Syllabi must include core learning outcomes, methods of instruction and evaluation, expected student learning outcomes, and required exit skills expectancies. Full-time and adjunct instructors of courses with multiple sections follow a standard format and use the same syllabus (*Syllabi Collection: #7.031, Appendix P*). In addition, all general education courses meet state-approved standards for core learning outcomes, ensuring universal transfer to University of Maryland system institutions.

In addition to core learning outcomes included in course syllabi, career programs have published program-specific goals (*Career Program Brochures: #9.240*). Transfer programs do not now have published learning outcomes beyond those required on course syllabi.

Inclusion of Non-Credit Offerings

Since their placement in the Learning area, Continuing Education (CE) and Customized Training (CT) have been enhanced in several ways. The overall benefit is greater access to resources that support student learning and community needs in the non-credit areas. CE, in its support of the College Mission to promote lifelong learning, offers a variety of learning experiences, including career training, professional development, personal enrichment for adults, personal and academic enrichment for children, and specialized courses for senior citizens (*Schedule of Classes, non-credit: #9.820*). CT developed a marketing brochure, which enables companies to view at a glance certificate programs and classes that provide training opportunities for employees (*Tuition Reimbursement Training for Skill Development: #9.220*). This brochure features both credit and non-credit classes.

New avenues of cooperation between credit and non-credit are expanding, including those in ESL, Command Spanish, childcare, and culinary classes. Some allied health and emergency medical services classes are now co-listed and share space and equipment. The College offers an average of 23 co-listed CE/credit classes each semester, with 16 offered Fall 2005 (*F05 Co-Listed Courses: #7.019*).

Instructors, managers, or content experts design non-credit courses. A course proposal form is completed and submitted to the appropriate program manager, who is responsible for determining viability (*Non-Credit Course Form: #7.026*). Non-credit courses, except for avocational, recreational, and conference/seminar-type classes, are also submitted for MHEC approval. Continuing education courses that are part of state-approved programs also have core learning outcomes that are included in syllabi. However, there are some continuing education courses that do not have specific core learning outcomes at this time, and outcomes are not printed in course syllabi. Non-credit vocational programs are included in the Academic Catalog (*#9.110*).

Co-Curricular Offerings and Student Responsibilities that Improve Student Development

Providing “learning opportunities based on student goals, needs for life-long learning, and participation in society” is a goal of the Strategic Plan (*Goal 1: #1.722, Appendix A*). Robust curricular, advising, and assessment initiatives that foster goal attainment occur within the Student Development area and are discussed under Standards 8 and 9. This section will focus on how the College supports learning, and develops responsibility for learning and community, through co-curricular experiences and by a well-established statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

To “provide a wide variety of co-curricular integrated experiences that support learning...” is an objective of the Strategic Plan (*Objective 3: #1.722, Appendix A*). The College offers a broad array of co-curricular offerings to strengthen the learning outcomes of courses and programs. All students have the right to create and participate in co-curricular events and are welcome to choose among clubs, organizations, leadership opportunities, service learning/community service opportunities, and cultural events. (*Student Handbook, p.55: #2.610.*) A description of co-curricular opportunities and assessments can be found in Student Support Services – Descriptions and Assessments (*#8.756, Appendix O*).

To relate classroom experiences purposefully to community life, a co-curricular planning team representing the Student Life Office and a variety of academic and career program areas was created to design campus-wide activities and curriculum-infused programs around an intellectual theme. The 2004-2005 theme, “Exploring Rights and Responsibilities,” complements both the College’s Strategic Plan and the *Greater Expectations* values for student engagement (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, pp. 12-13: #1.713, Appendix C*). The theme was widely publicized through co-curricular calendars (*#7.015, #7.016*) which included an assessment tool that faculty could use to measure student learning. In this way, the “Exploring Rights and Responsibilities” theme was brought into the classroom through 68 separate co-curricular events, attended by more than 4,415 students (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, p. 28: #1.713, Appendix C*). Unfortunately there is no

data to document usage of the assessment tool, nor is there data on inclusion of events within courses. With the recent addition of Student Life representation on the newly reorganized SLOAC, a “formal and ongoing assessment process in student life” is assured (*Reorganization: OAC Next Steps: #4.611*).

FCC is making an effort to infuse an inclusive perspective into all of its programs and services. The Student Life Office involves students in dialogs and community service, directly supporting the College Mission to be community-focused (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*). Examples include participation with Advocates for Homeless Families, The American Red Cross, and The United Negro College Fund. In addition, Student Life sponsors monthly on-campus events focused on living in a multi-cultural society, such as learning luncheons, service projects, and living history lectures (*2004 Accountability Report, p. 9: #3.110*). The Office of Diversity and Global Initiatives offers films, forums, roundtables, and other events to promote an understanding of the global nature of the world. Recent examples include an International Film/Discussion Festival (*#7.175*) and the first annual Latino Festival held at the College, which was attended by nearly 2000 College and community members.

Ultimately, students become life-long learners and active community members by taking responsibility for their own learning and by acting responsibly with consideration of others. The Board of Trustees of the College, in consultation with students, instituted a list of Student Rights and Responsibilities that are published in the Academic Catalog (*p. 139: #9.110*), the Student Handbook (*p. 55-56: #2.610*), and posted in the Student Life Office. Enjoying rights is contingent upon fulfilling responsibilities, including the responsibility for one’s own learning and the responsibility for good citizenship within the College community.

To develop self-directed learning, departments reporting to the CTL provide specialized skills and opportunities for students to help themselves: the Library offers services and resources that are useful, easy to understand, readily accessible, and support independent learning; the Writing Center Mission statement includes language that encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning outcomes; Tutorial Services “supports and encourages students...to become successful, confident and active learners” with a rights and responsibilities-based tutor/student agreement (*#7.367*); expectations such as time commitment, time required on campus, level of technological expertise required, and types of assignments (*#7.315*) are clearly communicated to distance learning students. (*CTL-Department Mission Statements: #7.380.*)

A core value of the Student Development area is “self-directed learning” (*SD – Mission Statement, #7.730*). Assessment plans for Student Development services have the objective that “Students will become self-directed learners” (*SD-Assessment Plan, p.4: #7.721*). The advising model is non-intrusive, so students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning through a list of Student and Advisor Rights and Responsibilities (*Academic Catalog, p.121: #9.110; Student Handbook, p. 23: #2.610*).

Creating outstanding, self-directed student leaders is an initiative of the Student Life Office through the Maryland Community College Activities Directors Association. FCC Student

Leader Core Competencies are developed through leadership programs, community service projects, and reflective evaluation methods (*MCCADA Student Leader Assessment Plan: #7.183*). Twenty-two students participated in the Leadership Program in FY05. An assessment showed improvement in all personal and leadership competencies (*Student Leader Learner Outcomes: #7.183*).

All students are expected to be good citizens by complying with College policies (*Student Handbook, p. 55: #2.610*). Orientation sessions for first-time and freshmen students include a review of some policies, notably the code of academic honesty, classroom behavior guidelines, attendance policies, and parking restrictions (*First Year Student Advising Session: #7.3267*). While FCC students generally abide by College regulations, there is widespread disregard for the College smoking policy. Concern for the health and well-being of all in the College community motivated the current policy for a smoke-free learning environment (*Policy Manual, Section 6.21: #2.310, Appendix G*). However, with no consequences for smoking in non-designated areas, security officers, faculty, and staff report difficulty maintaining such an environment. At present, a College Senate initiative to improve compliance and offer aid (to those who want to quit) is underway (*Senate Ad Hoc Committees 05-06: #2.851*).

Library Services

As part of the Center for Teaching and Learning since 2004, the Library is well integrated into the College's instructional programs. Collaboration with faculty and support for students define the Library's service posture. Faculty members work with library staff to acquire holdings to support their programs. In FY04-FY05, for example, faculty requests for books and media represented 29% of library material expenditures. In FY06 the Library instituted a Faculty Focus Group program; in regularly scheduled small group meetings with faculty, librarians describe library services and elicit recommendations for collections and services (*Library Faculty Focus Group Plan: #7.338*). The Curriculum Committee process for new programs includes verification that library resources are adequate to meet the curricular needs. The Library's Collection Development Policy defines the basic principle that "library collections will reflect the entire range of subjects represented in the College's academic programs and research activities" (*Collections Development Policy: #7.337*). The policy assigns priority to instructional needs.

The Library is experiencing a transition toward greater reliance upon electronic content, with slightly declining print book circulation and rapidly growing use of online sources (*Library Annual Report 2004: #7.335*). In response to the latter trend, the Library provides a multidisciplinary set of 25 full-content databases. The 36 student computers have common office applications, as well as library resources, and are fully utilized during peak student hours. Library staff members are trained to answer technology questions, as well as those regarding information literacy issues.

College-wide student satisfaction surveys indicate a high, statistically-significant level of satisfaction (*Student Satisfaction Inventory, Items 14 and 26: #3.650*). Additionally, surveys of student satisfaction with library orientations have been excellent, and course-based student evaluations from FY01-05 indicate high levels of satisfaction with library staff and

collections (*Library-Annual Report 05: #7.336*). Other areas (library website, computer access) have had variable evaluations that have been addressed by the library staff. New computers were obtained in 2004, and guidelines now limit personal use time. New online resources were added to expand off-site student access (*Library Student Evaluation: #7.341*). As part of the College's information literacy efforts, the Library, in concert with faculty members, is developing student learning assessment tools.

Information Literacy

Information literacy (IL) instruction, including close faculty-library collaboration, has long been conducted throughout the College's curricula. The College has taken several steps to formalize, extend, and assess this instruction (*Information Literacy Events Timeline: #4.508*). In 2004, the College formed an Information Literacy Committee to review how IL fits into the curriculum, to identify where IL goals and objectives already exist in courses, and to investigate techniques for integrating and assessing IL competencies in FCC's General Education Goals and Objectives. (*IL Faculty Survey: #4.511; IL Information Literacy Committee Timeline: #4.521; IL Library Background: #4.531; Strategic Action Plan 2005 Annual Report, p. 27: #1.713, Appendix C.*)

The IL Committee surveyed faculty who teach general education courses with the highest enrollments to determine the types of IL competencies they taught and/or expected students to demonstrate. The *IL Faculty Survey (#4.511)* indicated that virtually all of the general education areas required students to critically evaluate and demonstrate effective use of information. General education courses were drawn from English, social sciences, and mathematics.

The Committee also developed a definition of information literacy and a rubric, which can serve as a model for incorporation into general education courses (*Information Literacy Rubric: #4.541*). The English Department already has language that supports IL in English Composition (EN 101) core learning outcomes. Discussion is currently underway regarding appropriate placement of information literacy competencies into general education goals.

Library staff and faculty routinely collaborate in the teaching/learning process. Each semester the Library conducts approximately 70 course-based information literacy presentations whose content is shaped, with faculty input, to the specific needs of the course. Presentations are conducted for all sections of English 101, which ensures that at least 90% of students receive formal information literacy instruction. In fall 2004, the EN 101 presentation script was revised to present information literacy competencies more prominently. EN 101 students regularly report that the presentations enhance their use of information (*Student Evaluations 01-04: #7.341*). The Library supports academic programs through purchasing (e.g., legal database for paralegal, specialized media for deaf studies, and information technology). Library staff provides research and technology assistance to students and faculty. Faculty members have regular input into the selection of materials through the collection development process (*Collections Development Policy: #7.337*). The Faculty Focus Group program described previously should further enhance faculty-driven collection development.

Quality of Courses Regardless of Location or Mode of Delivery

To assure quality of its courses and programs, regardless of location or delivery mode, the College requires a syllabus of record for each course, supervision by the department chair/supervisor, peer evaluation of faculty, and the student evaluation process. The same core learning outcomes exist for all sections of a course, regardless of format, to ensure consistency (*Faculty Handbook*, pp. 66-68: #2.210, Appendix M).

For transfer and career courses, department chairs oversee syllabi to ensure that the texts and/or other materials, assignments, methods of instruction, grading criteria, and topical outline are in line with those that were presented to the Curriculum Committee in the syllabus of record. In Continuing Education, this oversight is the responsibility of program managers in compliance with the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) standards (#13.430). Department chairs, program managers, and course coordinators also ensure the comparable quality of all formats by using full-time faculty and experienced adjuncts to teach courses off campus or in nontraditional delivery modes. These instructors are sometimes offered specialized training (as in the case of online and hybrid courses). Faculty members ensure the comparable quality of courses as the faculty self-and-peer evaluation process documents each faculty member's quality of teaching and academic effectiveness (*FCC Faculty Handbook*, pp. 21-22: #2.210, Appendix M).

Students also have a role in evaluating the quality of courses in their course evaluations, and these evaluations are used by department chairs and individual full-time and adjunct faculty to ascertain that quality of course offerings is maintained regardless of location or delivery mode (*Credit Course and Instructor Evaluation*: #3.210; *Customized Training Course and Instructor Evaluation*: #3.220; *Non-Credit Course and Instructor Evaluation*: #3.230; *Online Course and Instructor Evaluation*: #3.240).

Policies and Procedures Concerning Transfer Credits

The College publishes information regarding the transfer of credits between institutions within the United States, along with the transfer policies of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), in two major publications: the Academic Catalog (p. 8, 11, 12: #9.110) and the transfer manual Advanced Standing College Credit, A Guide for Incoming Transfer Students (#8.671), written by the assistant registrar for transfer evaluation. Credits from post-secondary institutions located outside of the United States can be accepted, but they must first be submitted to an evaluation service to determine equivalency to United States college credits.

Accelerated Programs

The College's only accelerated degree program is the A.A.S. Police Science Program, which prepares graduates for entry level positions with local law enforcement agencies. The curriculum was created through a partnership between Frederick Community College and three agencies: the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, the Frederick City Police Department, and the Maryland State Police. It is designated specifically for recruits employed by these agencies.

The program is completed in 30 to 31 weeks, with classes held five to six days per week, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Police recruits take 21 required FCC general education credits and 40 credits of police science at the Police Academy Program (run by local law enforcement agencies in accordance with the Maryland Police Training Commission). Police science courses are taught by Police Academy staff certified to teach by the Maryland Police Training Commission and reviewed by the College (*A.A.S. Police Science Program: #1.260*).

To assess student learning and program outcomes relative to program goals and objectives, the College evaluates and continues to review this program, using the same procedures applied to other College programs. In addition, graduates are followed for three to six months of their field training and assessed as to retention of skills learned at the Academy. The Police Science Program is evaluated within the Strategic Action Plan Learning Cluster (*#1.717*).

Adult Learners

“Adult learners” over the age of 21 comprise 52-55% of the total student population at FCC. Special programs, courses, and services are provided to meet their needs. Most adult students attend part-time due to work and/or family commitments and will traditionally seek options outside the traditional daytime classroom setting.

The Office of Adult Services offers a wide variety of programs designed to ease the transition into the classroom for adults beginning or completing a degree, needing marketable skills, or retraining for a new career. Three comprehensive Adult Services programs are offered to ease the transition into the classroom: Project Forward Step; Project Altering Lives through Independence, Vision and Empowerment (ALIVE); and the Women’s Center. These programs provide career, personal adjustment and academic counseling, support, referrals, co-curricular events, workshops, and financial assistance with tuition, books, child care, and transportation. In FY04, Adult Services provided services to 520 participants. The number of students served increased by 46% from 2001 to 2004, with a 7% increase in FY04 alone (*Adult Services, 2004 Annual Report, pp. 5-6: #7.710*). For a full description of Adult Services, see Appendix O: Support Services: Descriptions and Assessment (*#8.756*).

The credit and non-credit class schedules (*#9.810, #9.820*) show a broad array of offerings at a variety of times, days, and formats, reflecting adult learner needs. These schedules include early morning, late evening, and weekend classes; online and tele-courses; fast-track formats; off-campus and work-site classes; and classes promoting personal growth and professional development skills.

The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) within the Workforce Development and Professional Preparation area is a program for senior adults over age 55. FY05 saw a total enrollment of 1178, with 80 ILR courses offered and an enrollment increase of 11% over one year (*ILR Annual Report: #7.934*). ILR’s goal is to offer intellectual stimulation and networking opportunities for people who share an interest in learning. The ILR has developed an educational outreach program in which partnerships and contractual relationships with area programs, senior residential communities, and local government are cultivated (*Academic Catalog, p. 130: #9.110*).

FCC offers a tuition-waiver program for adults over 60. Seniors can register for open seats in credit courses beginning two weeks before the start of the semester. They can register for non-credit classes on a space-available basis beginning three days prior to the class start date. (*Academic Catalog*, p. 17: #9.110.)

Assessment of Curricular Offerings: Student Learning and Program Outcomes

Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan is to “assess programs and services to improve and facilitate decision-making focused on learning” (*Strategic Plan*: #1.722, *Appendix A*). The effectiveness of curricular experiences for current students at the College is determined through student evaluations of courses, college-wide research, and through the Institutional and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plans.

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plan 2003 – 2006 (#4.705, *Appendix I*) provides a schedule of assessment for general education goals (discussed in Standard 12) and career program goals. Information about the College’s overall learning assessment initiatives is discussed in Standard 14. Outside agencies and institutional research tools are also used in program assessment.

Students rate the effectiveness of curricular experiences on course and instructor evaluation forms. These evaluation results help faculty members adjust course activities to improve student learning and help administrators make program improvements (*Faculty Handbook*, *Section 4*: #2.210, *Appendix M*). Credit-bearing courses may use both mid-term and end-of-course evaluations. Non-mandatory mid-term evaluations allow students to reflect on course experiences in order to make appropriate changes. Course evaluations administered near the end of the term are reviewed by the instructor after final grades have been submitted. Course evaluation is both a right and a responsibility for students (*Student Handbook*, p.55: #2.610) and is part of the faculty self-evaluation process described fully in the discussion of Standard 10. After the three-year probationary period (when all courses are evaluated), full-time faculty choose two courses per year for student evaluation. Students evaluate all credit courses taught by adjunct faculty. All CE courses use a standard evaluation form (*CE/CT Evaluation*: #3.210).

Student evaluations show positive responses to all items reflecting course effectiveness with respect to general education core learning objectives, as shown in Table 11.1. A potent indication of curricular effectiveness is the fact that students who transfer from FCC to Maryland system schools do well, often obtaining higher GPAs and graduation rates than their peers from other institutions (*Matter of Fact*: #3.410; *Frederick Community College Student Transfer Report*: #3.450).

Table 11.1: Students' Evaluation of Courses: Aggregate Results for All Reviewed Academic (Including Developmental) and Non-credit (CE) Courses

** Course and Instructor Evaluations: #3.230, #3.220, #3.221, #3.219*

***Course and Instructor Evaluations: #3.210*

| | Percent of all evaluators who "agree" or "strongly agree" | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Evaluation item: Credit classes* | F 03 | S 04 | F 04 | S 05 |
| Course helped me understand basic facts, concepts, and skills relevant to the course. | 93.4% | 94.9% | 93.7% | 94.1% |
| Course helped improve my writing and/or speaking skills. | 60.9% | 61.6% | 57.5% | 60.8% |
| Course helped me think more critically about information I read or hear. | 83.2% | 84.9% | 81.9% | 82.7% |
| Course helped develop my skills and confidence in problem solving. | 76.0% | 76.5% | 74.6% | 75.2% |
| Course helped develop my ability to gather and use information from a variety of sources. | 79.5% | 81.2% | 78.4% | 79.8% |
| Course helped me understand the relevance of this field to real-world issues. | 86.3% | 89.0% | 87.1% | 88.5% |
| Course helped me feel more comfortable with complex ideas. | 81.1% | 82.0% | 79.8% | 81.3% |
| | Percent of all evaluators rating "excellent" or "very good" | | | |
| Evaluation item: Non-credit (CE) classes** | | | FY04 | |
| Course effectiveness | | | 93.0% | |
| Overall experience as a customer | | | 91.9% | |

In the 2002 Graduate Follow-up Survey (#3.370), 95% respondents rated their FCC experience as good or very good. Ninety-three percent would attend FCC over again, while 68% would choose the same program again. The May 2004 Graduate Survey found 98% rating overall quality of instruction at the College as good or very good (*IEAP, p. 42: #3.380, Appendix H*). Results of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (#3.6514) given in 2004 show: "There is a good variety of courses on campus," "I am able to experience intellectual growth here," and "Program requirements are clear and reasonable" as strengths of the College.

The College is currently assessing eight of 10 general education goals within the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plan. Specific projects and the methods used to evaluate projects are described as presented in Appendix K: Individual SLOA Plans and Reports (#4.110-#4.541). The assessment reports provide evidence of student learning and illuminate areas in which core learning outcomes are not being met. Faculty members revise assignments and projects to improve learning, as required by the Strategic Plan, Goal 4 (*Strategic Action Plan Report 2005, p.26: #1.722, Appendix C*).

Eighteen career programs have written assessment plans within the SLOA Plan. Nine career goals covered under these plans have been assessed during the FY04 and FY05 cycles. Reports of assessment results include a statement of goals/learning outcomes under assessment, a description of strategies, a report of results, and a description of how the results have been used to improve student learning. Five of these assessment reports (four in FY05)

included changes made to improve student learning (#4.146, #4.147, #4.161, #4.186, #4.191). Recommendations include changes in learning outcomes, methodology, and assignments. Each credit career program is also assessed annually or biannually through viability reports on enrollments (*Program Viability Report: #7.940*).

All individual SLOA Plans and Reports can be found in Appendix K (#4.110-#4.541). Programs that require licensure or certification (Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Surgical Technology, and Emergency Medical Services) are developed and reviewed with the curricular guidelines specified by their respective accreditation agencies (*Program Viability Report: #7.940*). Graduate pass rates on licensure exams are compared to national averages. In the last three years, FCC pass rates for students in the RN, LPN, ST, and RT programs were 97-100%, which is higher than programs in other community colleges and four-year institutions in the state (*Licensure Exam Rates: #7.911*). Outcomes for some credit and most non-credit credential-oriented programs are measured in rates of passing terminal examinations (e.g., licensure for allied health areas, truck driving).

Program managers receive the results of students' evaluations of courses within the program and use that information to help individual faculty members improve courses. Arts and Sciences began reviewing programs on a regular cycle in spring 2004. The programs to be reviewed first include Criminal Justice, Education, and Student Life.

Programs are also evaluated on employer satisfaction with program graduates. Graduate surveys are conducted to determine employer satisfaction rates with FCC graduates. Student success rates in programs are tracked by MHEC, and the graduate surveys track the number of program graduates employed in their field or a related field. In the 2002 Graduate Survey (#3.370), 95% of respondents rated their "community college experience" and the "overall quality of FCC" as good or very good. Of respondents who transferred, 81% rated their transfer preparation as good or very good. Of employed respondents, 50% rated their preparation for employment as good or very good, while 94% said college prepared them for employment.

Certificate program managers assess those programs to see if they are meeting their learning objectives. Examples can be found in career program assessment plans for Accounting through T.V. Production (#4.110-#4.195, *Appendix K*).

Conclusions

The College offers an exceptionally broad range of both credit and non-credit programs, courses, and co-curricular options that support quality learning. To reach an increasingly diverse student body, courses and programs are delivered in a variety of formats and at varying times. Commitment to the adult learner is demonstrated through several innovative programs. Rigor and quality of educational offerings are ensured by the thorough, faculty-driven review process of the Curriculum and General Education Committees, appropriate advisory boards, and accrediting agencies. The Library demonstrates outstanding student satisfaction with the services provided by its staff, exemplary database access for students conducting research, and strong support of information literacy.

The College has taken bold, innovative steps to integrate credit, CE/CT, and co-curricular learning experiences. The long-term success of these steps will depend upon accomplishing appropriate goals for learning integration and its assessment. As a learning college, FCC defines student learning in the broadest sense. Promoting self-directed learning is a priority of the College. A statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, designed to encourage learning and good citizenship, is publicized yet not communicated fully to students.

Recommendations

- 25.** Investigate the relationships between academic and CE/CT courses and programs within the Learning area, particularly with respect to the appropriateness of student learning outcomes, assessment activities, and institutional support of students and staff.
- 26.** Explore ways to ensure the education of students regarding College policies and procedures identified in the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 12: General Education

Key Documents

Academic Catalog: #9.110

Strategic Plan - Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

General Education Program Update- Summary: #4.350

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan: #4.705, Appendix I

2005-2006 Outcomes Assessment Council: #4.611

General Education Program of Sufficient Scope, Applied to the Major, and Consistent with the Mission

The Academic Catalog (*p. 25: #9.110*) states that “General education is that foundation of the higher education curriculum providing a coherent intellectual experience for all students. The general education core is designed to introduce undergraduates to the fundamental knowledge, skills and values that are essential to the study of academic disciplines, to the pursuit of life-long learning and to the development of educated members of the community and the world.” This assertion is indicative of the value that FCC places on a strong general education core.

The 2005-2006 Catalog lists 163 general education courses distributed among six areas: Arts and Humanities, English Composition, Interdisciplinary and Emerging Issues, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science. The general education program is consistent with Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) requirements, and satisfaction of a general education program at FCC will transfer without further review to any public state institution. The College’s general education program requirements for the A.A., A.S., and A.A.T. degrees consist of at least 34 credit hours and the program for the A.A.S. degree consists of at least 20 credit hours as detailed in Table 12.1 (*Academic Catalog, pp. 25, 144-145: #9.110*).

Table 12.1: Distribution of General Education Courses for Specific Degrees

| A.A., A.S., A.A.T. At least 34 credit hours which must include the following: | A.A.S. At least 20 credit hours which must include the following: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Composition 101—one course (3 credits) Arts, Humanities & Communications—three courses, one selected from each area (9 credits) Social & Behavioral Sciences—two courses, selected from different disciplines (6 credits) Biological & Physical Science—two courses, one of which must be a lab science (7-8 credits) Mathematics—one course (3-4 credits) Interdisciplinary & Emerging Issues—two courses from two different disciplines (6 credits) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Composition 101—one course (3 credits) Arts, Humanities & Communications—one course (3 credits) Social & Behavioral Sciences—one course (3 credits) Biological & Physical Science—one course (3-4 credits) Mathematics—one course (3-4 credits) |

The general education core is integrated into each of the majors and career programs through specific courses selected by faculty in that discipline from a body of courses that have been approved by the General Education Committee. The Committee is faculty-driven (all voting members are faculty), with the charge of reviewing the general education goals and core, as well as courses submitted for general education status (*Faculty Handbook, Section 8.13: #2.210, Appendix M*). Courses being submitted for general education status must pass

through the General Education Committee and the Curriculum Committee for approval (*Curriculum – New Course/Program Proposal Form: #7.025*). In 2001 the College Senate approved a set of 10 general education goals and 33 objectives, listed in Table 12.2. Syllabi for general education courses contain core learning outcomes that relate to general education goals and objectives. A sampling of syllabi may be seen in Appendix P (#7.031).

The College's general education program is consistent with its Mission: to prepare students for success in a diverse, global society (*Strategic Plan, pp. 54-60: #1.722, Appendix C*). The general education core distribution includes core learning outcomes in a broad array of skills and values chosen because they are applicable to life beyond the classroom. In particular, general education Goal VII refers to values, ethics, and diverse perspectives.

The general education core is constructed around the stated goals and objectives (Table 12.2). Embedded within these goals are statements of expectation concerning the ability to demonstrate college-level skills and/or values within the areas of communication, critical thinking, scientific reasoning, quantitative problem solving, understanding of technology and its uses, and valuing the emergence of a multicultural society. Information literacy, while implicitly part of the critical thinking, technology, and problem-solving objectives, will be adopted as a goal in the future. (*Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report, p.4: #4.710, Appendix J; Information Literacy Events Timeline: #4.508.*)

There have been several program reviews to determine the extent to which students who complete a general education core are exposed to all 10 general education goals, regardless of major. The most recent review was done in 2002, revealing interesting results; graduate transcripts show that a small subset of general education courses contributes substantially to coverage of all 10 goals. Also, many of the 33 objectives appear in very few general education courses (*General Education Program Update- Summary: #4.350*). The renewal process in general education should address these findings.

Published Information Concerning General Education

General education requirements are clearly and completely described in official College publications. Both the philosophy of general education and the specific general education requirements are described in detail in the Academic Catalog (*p.25-27: #9.110*). Individual program requirements highlight general education course requirements within the catalog as well. An initiative to revise the description of general education core and courses is underway (*Academic Catalog Revision: #4.332*). The revision effort is aimed at improving student understanding of general education skills and requirements.

The Student Handbook (*p. 41: # 2.610*), Faculty Handbook (*Section 8.12: #2.210, Appendix M*), and Policy Manual (*Section 4.13: #2.310, Appendix G*) contain details of the general education program and distribution. Specific general education requirements are listed on the College website under “programs and courses/transfer programs.”

Table 12.2: General Education Goals and Objectives-Approved in 2001(#4.330)

| |
|--|
| I. Students will demonstrate college-level communication skills. |
| 1. Students will be able to write and speak effective, organized, clear, and grammatically correct English appropriate for a specific subject, purpose, and audience. |
| 2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and interpret both written texts and oral presentations in English. |
| 3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the critical role of listening in communication. |
| II. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills. |
| 4. Students will be able to evaluate evidence by differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences. |
| 5. Students will be able to generate and evaluate alternative solutions to problems. |
| 6. Students will be able to research, analyze, compare, synthesize, and draw inferences from readings and other research materials in order to make valid judgements and rational decisions. |
| 7. Students will demonstrate a disposition toward critical thinking. |
| III. Students will display general knowledge and historical awareness. |
| 8. Students will demonstrate a general knowledge of history, culture, society, and of relationships among various disciplines of study. |
| 9. Students will display a knowledge of and appreciation for American culture. |
| 10. Students will display historical awareness and will demonstrate an understanding of contemporary issues within their historical and cultural context. |
| IV. Students will demonstrate quantitative problem solving. |
| 11. Students will apply mathematical operations to practical situations. |
| 12. Students will demonstrate a variety of problem-solving techniques with application to numerical data. |
| 13. Students will be able to interpret and analyze tables, graphs, and diagrams to convey quantitative information. |
| V. Students will demonstrate an understanding of science. |
| 14. Students will demonstrate knowledge of fundamental scientific principles. |
| 15. Students will be able to apply the scientific method in problem solving. |
| 16. Students will evaluate the historical, cultural, political and ethical issues related to the application of science. |
| 17. Students will relate scientific concepts to a changing natural environment. |
| 18. Students will be able to use instrumentation appropriate to the scientific discipline. |
| VI. Students will demonstrate an understanding of technology and its uses. |
| 19. Students will use the technology of a changing world. |
| 20. Students will evaluate historical, cultural, political, and ethical issues related to the application of technology. |
| 21. Students will be able to use computer systems and other instruments of modern technology appropriate to their discipline or program of study. |
| VII. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and be able to interpret social and educational values. |
| 22. Students will be able to identify and evaluate moral issues and conflicts. |
| 23. Students will display academic honesty and adhere to professional standards in their fields. |
| 24. Students will value the importance and responsibility of the individual. |
| 25. Students will appreciate lifelong learning and understand its applicability to their educational goals. |
| VIII. Students will be able to make informed critical responses to the arts and to the human values expressed in all art forms. |
| 26. Students will demonstrate an awareness of literature and the visual and performing arts as both a record and a reflection of our culture. |
| 27. Students will recognize that the visual and performing arts provide opportunities for self-expression and personal growth. |

(continued)

Table 12.2 continued

| |
|---|
| IX. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and pursue wellness. |
| 28. Students will develop skills and practice physical fitness activities that will promote long-term wellness. |
| 29. Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of health/wellness concepts in order to make critically informed lifestyle choices. |
| X. Students will value the emergence of a multicultural society. |
| 30. Students will acknowledge a plurality of cultural and personal values and will demonstrate respect for the right of others to express their viewpoints. |
| 31. Students will be able to examine a global issue/event from multiple perspectives. |
| 32. Students will recognize the importance of language in understanding cultural differences. |
| 33. Students will be able to work cooperatively in groups with diverse membership and contribute to the group's efforts with ideas and suggestions. |

Assessment of General Education

General education outcomes are assessed under the Strategic Action Plan's Learning Cluster (*Action Plan – Learning, Goal 4 Objective 11: #1.725*) as outlined in the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plan (*#4.705, Appendix I*). Goals and objectives are being refined within the general education renewal process, in part as a result of these ongoing assessments. The recommendations of *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning* have been adopted as the benchmark against which the general education program will be assessed, and responsibility is shared by faculty, staff, students, and the administration (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, p. 54-60: #1.713, Appendix C*).

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (SLOAC), comprised of faculty and administrators, oversaw FCC's student learning outcomes assessment. During the 2003-2004 academic year, the Committee created a complete set of general education assessment plans. During the 2004-2005 academic year, this committee discussed progress and issues relating to all student learning outcomes assessment activities. The Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research Department (OAPR) supports faculty for their assessment activities by providing training, assessment tools, and one-on-one advisement (*Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report: #4.710, Appendix J*). Note that as of fall 2005, the SLOAC was reconvened as the Outcomes Assessment Council, with a revised membership that includes representatives from academic departments, developmental education, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Student Life, and the OAPR (*2005-2006 Outcomes Assessment Council: #4.611*).

The Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plan 2003-2006 (*#4.705, Appendix I*) includes plans for assessments of all 10 goals at the course level and defines a detailed assessment and reporting schedule. Eight of the 10 general education goals have assessment rubrics designed by faculty-based committees and approved by the dean of arts and sciences and the provost. These rubrics display a variety of assessment techniques, including projects, reflective writing, term papers, and reports. Results of general education assessments in 2004 and 2005 demonstrate faculty commitment to improving student learning. Assessments of Goals III (*#4.431*), V (*#4.451*), and IX (*#4.481*) led to changes in specific courses. Of particular interest is the effort to refine the assessment of critical thinking (*#4.421*) in mathematics and

English. Appendix K (#4.410-#4.5410) includes all assessment plans and reports in general education.

A review of follow-up data on students demonstrates that general education requirements enhance the intellectual growth of students. Given the weight of the general education core in all transfer programs, the success of transfer students is a strong indicator of the contribution of general education to intellectual growth. FCC students do well as transfers to Maryland public universities, often obtaining higher GPAs and graduation rates than their peers (*Transfer Graduates: #3.410; Frederick Community College Student Transfer Report: #3.450*). Students also perceive their preparation as strong, with 81% of students rating their preparation as either very good or good (*2002 Graduate Follow-up Survey: #3.410*). Students' perception of their preparation is corroborated by area employers, who rate FCC student performance as mostly very good or good (*Employer Survey, pp. 21-14: #3.340*).

Challenges

At the time of this self-study, the College is considering a paradigm shift with respect to its philosophy of general education. With the adoption of the learning college model has come the realization that the general education program may benefit from a conceptual overhaul. While the program is solid, and while it addresses the disciplinary requirements of MHEC and the 2002 Middle States Characteristics of Excellence, its framework is discipline-based and does not adequately consider inter-disciplinary issues, curricular coherence, and transference of knowledge critical to 21st-century society. Also, the number of goals (10) and objectives (33) makes implementation very challenging. In addition to exploring opportunities to streamline the program (fewer goals and objectives), the College would like to improve its assessment processes. The challenge is to develop strategies that bring curricular coherence to the program when FCC students are so diverse in their purposes, enrollment patterns, and levels of readiness.

The process of renewing the general education program was launched with a conference on general education in April 2003, and later complemented by two faculty retreats in early 2004. The decision to adopt the recommendations of *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning* (#13.310) as the general education best practice was the primary outcome of these activities. In fall 2004, a General Education Renewal Team led by the associate vice president of learning/dean of arts and sciences was formed. The dean and five faculty members of the Team attended the AAC&U General Education Institute in May 2005. One of several goals for that institute is the development of "a shared conceptual framework to guide general education" (#13.310). (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report 2005, p 54-60: #1.713, Appendix C; General Education Renewal: #4.505.*)

Efforts to implement a shared renewal of general education at the College have brought to light several areas of concern:

- With respect to general education development and renewal, responsibilities and relationships among invested constituencies (faculty, General Education Renewal Team, General Education Committee (#4.334), Arts and Sciences Leadership (#7.135; #4.506), and those responsible for implementation of the Strategic Plan (p.2: #1.725) have not been sufficiently articulated. Lack of communication and

consensus has led to divergent strategies and timelines. (*General Education Renewal: #4.505; Gen Ed Renewal Team Report: #4.507.*)

- Communication and sharing of ideas across the College is a challenge, especially for faculty. Faculty members attending the AAC&U General Education Institute have reported frustration in sharing and applying what they learned to the renewal process. (*Gen Ed Renewal Team Report: #4.507.*)
- There is confusion concerning the role of the General Education Committee (a sub-committee to the College Senate Curriculum Committee). While traditionally serving to grant general education status to individual courses, the General Education Committee also has advocacy and assessment duties. The 2005-06 College Senate has formed an ad hoc committee to study this issue (#4.336) in light of the description of the General Education Committee passed by the Senate in Spring 2004 (*General Education Committee: Membership and Duties: #4.334*).
- The responsibility for assessment of general education is unclear. The General Education Committee (#4.334), the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (now called the Outcomes Assessment Council) (#4.611), Arts and Sciences (#4.105), and faculty (through the Outcomes, Planning, Assessment, and Research (OAPR) Department) (#4.705) all have some role in general education assessment.

Despite the above concerns, the College's commitment to general education renewal is evident, and its existing program is robust and supportive of its Mission.

Conclusions

General education is taken seriously at the College. All credit programs require a solid core of general education that has broad scope, while being applicable to the major. General education goals and objectives are comprehensive, relevant, and supportive of MHEC and MSCHE standards, in both their present form and in their projected alignment with learning college principles.

The College is beginning a process of renewal of its general education program. While the principle of reviewing the program to assure its alignment with *Greater Expectations* is manifest, considerable work remains. The role of faculty (and its representative General Education Renewal Team) within the renewal process is unclear, as is the status and function of the General Education Committee. Overlapping responsibility for general education among several groups has resulted in an unclear direction within the renewal process and an insufficient communication of initiatives to faculty.

Recommendations

27. The current distributed responsibility for general education (philosophy, function, assessment, course designation, and renewal) needs to be clarified, clearly articulated, published, and communicated to all invested groups.

28. In whatever structure emerges from the above recommendation, the general education program should be developed, owned, reviewed, and renewed by faculty.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

Key Documents

Testing Center Annual Report 2003-2004: #7.355

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Academic Catalog: #9.110

Distance Learning Annual Report 2004: # 7.310

I. Basic Skills

The College embraces the philosophy that all students who enter the institution have the right to academic experiences that will enable them to reach their maximum potentials. The primary purpose of developmental education is to provide comprehensive services and quality instruction for students who need to develop skills needed for success in college-level courses (*Two-Year Outcomes Assessment of Developmental English with Five-Year Trends*, p.3: #7.115; *Two-Year Report of Developmental Mathematics*, p. 3: #7.120; *Student Handbook*, p. 32: #2.610).

Developmental education in English, mathematics, preparation for allied health, and English as a second language (ESL) occurs within the Learning area of the College. The associate vice president for learning/dean of arts and sciences oversees the program through the Developmental Council and faculty program managers in the Arts and Sciences departments. Developmental education, assessment/placement, and related support programs were placed in the Learning area as the result of the College reorganization in 2002-2003. This change reflects the importance FCC places on linking assessment and support services to learning.

Developmental Council membership includes the developmental coordinators/managers (faculty with reassigned time) from English, mathematics, and science; the ESL coordinator (hourly); and the dean of arts and sciences. The Council develops the research agenda and outreach initiatives connected to the program. In addition, developmental coordinators/managers oversee the hiring and orientation of adjuncts, the creation of student learning outcomes and course syllabi, and the collection of data for analysis of student success. A proposal to fund a full-time (combined academic and CE) ESL program manager was accepted in fall 2005, and the position is expected to be filled by spring 2006 (*ESL Job Description: #7.124*).

Procedures for Identifying Students Who Are Not Fully Prepared

There is a robust need for effective developmental education at the College. Because the Mission is one of inclusive and open access, many learners arrive under-prepared. Of students taking the mathematics, writing, and reading placement exams in FY 2004, 74% (mathematics), 29% (writing), and 33% (reading) required developmental education. In the published Fall 2005 Schedule of Classes, 45% of all sections of English and 58% of all sections of mathematics are zero-credit developmental sections, taught in a variety of formats: lecture/lab, independently-paced, workshop, Internet, linked with subsequent courses (as part of learning clusters), and Weekend College. ESL classes are offered as academic classes within the English Department and as conversation classes within CE, with

Spring 2004 enrollments of 208 and 79 respectively. This data is representative of results over the past few years and indicates the importance of the College's developmental programs. (*Testing Center Annual Report, 2003-2004*, pp. 11-12, 23-24: #7.355.)

The College assesses all incoming students for proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and study skills. This practice is highlighted in the College's Strategic Plan, Goal 1, Objective 1: "Provide easily accessible comprehensive counseling, advisement, and assessment" (*Strategic Plan: #1.722, Appendix A*), and complies with State requirements (*Retention Plan - Progress Report*, p. 13: 7.056).

Placement testing in mathematics and English is mandatory. In FY2004, 4183 students took *Accuplacer* placement tests, representing an increase of 11% over the previous year and an increase of 39% from FY2000 (*Testing Center Annual Report, 2003-2004*, p. 7: #7.355). A score of 550 or above on the SAT, 21 or above on the ACT, or transferred college-level credits allows students to exempt the quantitative or verbal portions of the placement test (*Academic Catalog*, p. 8: #9.110). Non-native speakers are placed in an appropriate ESL class based on their *Accuplacer* LOEP (Language of English Proficiency) scores.

The Mathematics Department, in collaboration with the Testing Center, performed a two-year study and found that students passing intermediate algebra (or its equivalent) with an A or B in high school and offered a placement test exemption were as likely to pass their first college mathematics course as students who had completed the developmental placement process (*Math Pilot Study: #7.122; Testing Center Annual Report, pp.55-56: #7.355*). This finding led to a change in the mathematics placement procedure; Frederick County Public School seniors who have earned an A or a B in their senior year in an Algebra II (or higher-level) mathematics course are also exempt from the quantitative placement test, provided they enroll in a college-level mathematics course within one calendar year.

As part of the State-approved process, the English Department uses a rubric to grade student writing samples for appropriate-level English course placement. Also, as of fall 2005, students whose first language is not English take the online Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) to determine their placement in the ESL sequence, in the developmental English classes, or in college-level English classes (*Testing Center Annual Report, p.12: #7.355*). A "challenge" test is also available as an option to students to determine their readiness for college-level science courses. Challenge tests are primarily used with students in the Allied Health programs.

Referral for Underprepared Students

There are many bridges to College support services after placement assessment. A study skills inventory and a student questionnaire (documenting a student's request for more information in areas such as writing skills, mathematics skills, tutoring, etc.) are administered at the same time as the placement assessments. Students are directed to the services provided by the Learning Consultant, the Writing Center, the Math Lab, and Tutorial Services through referral. Academic counselors and support service staff may refer students, when placement results or questionnaires indicate a need or interest. Students may also self-refer. Typically, it is the developmental instructors who refer students to these College support services.

Developmental classes in English and mathematics often meet for class sessions in support areas, such as the Writing Center and the Math Lab, where students are introduced to and offered the services provided.

Developmental Courses

The College offers two types of zero-credit academic basic skills classes: those required by placement exam as pre-requisite development to college-level learning, and those voluntarily chosen to review or refresh skills. The creation, management, and assessment of English, mathematics, and science developmental education at FCC are the responsibilities of those departments, making the transition to college-level classes sensible and efficient. In order to serve their students well, faculty who teach in the developmental program must link developmental students to support services—Tutoring and Writing Centers, the Math Lab, the Counseling/Advising Office, skills workshops—for the program. In this respect, teaching within the program may present challenges beyond the college-level classroom, and yet the majority of developmental faculty is adjunct. For example, in fall 2005, 77% of all developmental mathematics sections were taught by adjunct faculty (*F2005 FT/PT: #5.116*).

Table 13.1: Developmental Zero-credit Courses Listed in the 2005-06 Academic Catalog (p. 79-82: #9.110)
Placement into those courses marked with an asterisk (*) is through a College placement exam.

| English | ESL | Mathematics | Science |
|--|---|--|---|
| EN 49 Oral English Improvement | ESL 93 American English Pronunciation | MA 1 Learning to Learn Math | BI 55 Preparation for Allied Health |
| *EN 50 Writing Skills I | *ESL 95 English Grammar II for ESL | MA 2 Building Math Confidence | NU 50 Preparation for Nursing |
| *EN 50A Writing Skills II | *ESL 96 Beginning Reading and Writing for ESL | *MA 90– Pre-algebra | NU 51 Transition to Registered Nursing - Intro to Clinical Nursing |
| *EN 51 Effective College Reading I | *ESL 97 Low-Intermediate Reading/Writing for ESL | *MA 91 Elementary Algebra I | NU 52 Transition to Registered Nursing - Reproductive Health Nursing |
| *EN 52 Effective College Reading II | *ESL 98 High-Intermediate Reading/Writing for ESL | *MA 92 Intermediate Algebra (0) [3] | NU 54 Transition to Registered Nursing -Medical-Surgical Nursing I |
| EN 53 Spelling Improvement | *ESL 99 Advanced Reading and Writing for ESL | | |
| EN 54 Vocabulary Improvement | | | |
| EN 55 Memory Development | | | |
| EN 56 College Reading and Writing | | | |

Table 13.1 lists zero-credit developmental courses designed to prepare students for college-level studies. The Academic Catalog (#9.110), Schedule of Classes (#9.810), and the Student Handbook (p.32: #2.610) make note that these classes carry no academic credit. Advisors also inform students that while developmental courses are considered part of the academic program, they do not carry academic credit.

Students taking developmental courses may complete the course in one or more semesters. A grade of Z indicates “substantial progress, continuing.” This allowance of extra time, coupled with the likelihood that a student will “stop out” for awhile, makes tracking of success difficult. Of students tracked in 2001-2003 in both English and mathematics, the “success” rate of individual courses ranges from 50% - 75%. A better measure is the success of students who passed through the developmental program going on to pass their subsequent freshman-level credit course. The Mathematics Department performs this tracking and found a “success” rate of approximately 60% within that same time period. See the *Two-Year Assessment of Developmental English with Five-Year Trend* (#7.115) and the *Two-Year Report of Developmental Mathematics* (#7.120) for detailed data on retention and success rates.

A fall 2005 Class of 2000 Cohort Study defines “successful or persisting” as having graduated, transferred to four-year college or university, or still enrolled at FCC. Results show that students who placed in and completed a developmental sequence of courses at the College exhibited a higher success rate (81%) than did peers who were developmental non-completers (40.6%) and peers who were college-ready upon entering (72.6%) (*Degree Progress: #3.245*). These results indicate the effect of the College’s developmental program on student success.

Assessment tracking and resulting recommendations serve the programs well and lead to advances in student learning. As examples, consider the decision to change testing procedures in the independent algebra sequence, the development of formal training for mathematics adjuncts teaching developmental courses, and the efforts to improve student success and retention by linking College Reading (EN052) with a general education course. (*Developmental Mathematics Outcomes Report*, pp. 22, 25: #7.120; *Developmental English Outcomes Report*, p. 13: #7.115.) Research by developmental science instructors led to a new way of presenting BI55: Preparation for Allied Health. Now offered via self-paced tutorial as well as in traditional format, BI55 now meets the needs of non-traditional-aged students (*BI 55 Tutorial: Description and Information: #7.103*). A Testing Center study that led to streamlined testing and placement of ESL students under the new online format discovered that a significant number of students who take the placement test do not actually register for class (33% in Fall 2004 and 52% in Fall 2005). This finding will inform future assessment initiatives. (*ESL Placement Testing Executive Summary: #7.123*.)

II. Certificate Programs

Certificate programs are discussed with Standard 11: Educational Offerings.

III. Experiential Learning

The College has made a concerted effort to offer a variety of opportunities for students to earn college credit for experiential learning through testing, portfolio development, independent study, or internship. Credit can be accepted for experiential learning earned prior to enrollment at FCC and/or while a student.

Students can receive credit through CLEP, Advanced Placement, DANTES, ACE, and PONSI, which are all evaluated by nationally recognized educational organizations. There were 57 CLEP/DANTES tests proctored by the Testing Center in FY2004 compared to 35 in FY2003, an increase of 63% in credit-by-examination exams from the previous year (*Testing Center FY04 Annual Report*, p. 8: #7.355). Discipline-specific instructors determine which scores on these examinations constitute course equivalencies. In addition, credit may be earned for military education and/or training as evaluated by the assistant registrar for transfer evaluation, in consultation with the department chairs for questionable or difficult evaluations. When appropriate, departmental exams may offer students an alternative method for earning experiential credit. While no formal procedures are in place for administering the exams, students who believe that their life experiences could substitute for a specific course can contact the appropriate department chair, who arranges with a discipline-specific faculty member to write and grade an appropriate exam for the college-based course. (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 10-11: # 9.110; *Policy Manual*, Section 4.13D, Appendix G; *Faculty Handbook*, Section 6.11: #2.210, Appendix M.)

To help students receive credit for experiential learning, the College has created SD 113: Assessment of Prior Learning. This one-credit course assists students in preparing a portfolio that demonstrates mastery of the appropriate core learning outcomes. Discipline-specific faculty members grade the portfolio (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 11, 115: #9.110). One student completed SD 113 in FY05.

An independent study (IS) option is available for many courses, including those with honors designation. These permit the more academically-capable students to pursue in-depth scholarly interests and experience the research methodologies and styles of particular disciplines. Faculty members serve as instructors and evaluate the student's work (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 11, 104: #9.110; *Faculty Handbook*, Section 6.11. #2.210, Appendix M). Twenty-three students completed independent studies in FY05.

Lastly, internships in the career programs allow students to earn credit for full-time or part-time employment related to their majors. The program manager or department chair selects faculty members, who work with supervisors at the work sites. The faculty members approve the assignments, assist with the development of student learning outcomes, visit the work site, and assign the final grades (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 11, 105: #9.110). Thirty-two students completed internships in FY05.

IV. Non-Credit offerings

Non-credit offerings are discussed with Standard 11: Educational Offerings.

V. Branch Campuses, Additional Locations, and Other Instructional Sites

The College has no branch campuses. It does have programs at four additional locations: the Maryland State Police Academy, the Frederick County Law Enforcement Agency, the FCC Information Technology (IT) Institute, and the Career and Technology Center (*Institutional Profile*, p. 9: #3.511). College courses are taught at off-campus sites, including State Farm

Insurance, YMCA, First National Bank, Business and Employment Center, Catoclin High School, and Frederick County Detention Center (*Strategic Action Plan 2004 Annual Report*, p. 19: #1.712, Appendix B). In addition, students have the opportunity to study abroad in England and Russia. The College's commitment to "provide access for all learners in the community" led to a new part-time outreach recruiter position, which was included in the FY05 Operating Budget (#6.120).

The Police Science program at the both the Maryland State Police Academy and the Frederick County Law Enforcement Academy is an accelerated program and is discussed under Standard 11.

The Information Technology (IT) Institute provides high-end computer training through both credit and non-credit courses. Training is provided for several industry certifications in Microsoft Systems, Net+, MCP, A+, and Security+ (*Academic Catalog*, p. 128: #9.110; *Schedule of Classes*, p.24: #9.810). In FY05, 251 credit and 100 non-credit students enrolled in IT classes (*ESS Report*: #7.517) taught by trained instructors from Engineering Systems Solutions, Inc. (ESS). Standards of instruction and assessment of the certificate programs are managed under the Strategic Action Plan's Learning Cluster. See SLOA Plans and Reports in Appendix K (#4.110-#4.541).

The Career and Technology Center offers a variety of non-credit courses for job training and technical skills. Topics include auto welding, heating and air conditioning, plumbing, and small engine repair. Some of these offerings provide training for certification exams and licensing. Credit offerings at the Center include those in culinary arts and some IT classes.

The College sponsors two study-abroad experiences. One allows students to earn six general education credits in Social Problems (SO 102) and Ethnic Diversity (ID 209) through a partnership with St. Petersburg State University in St. Petersburg, Russia. This five-week course is taught by a full-time faculty member who accompanies the class (approximately eight students annually), and the classes include the same core learning outcomes as their on-campus sections (*Academic Catalog*, pp. 10, 105,115: #9.110).

Another is a one-semester work-study program in London that serves approximately 12 students per year. Students earn 12 credits and are placed at a job in London. One three-credit course is on British Civilization and Culture while topics for the other three-credit course vary. All courses are general education courses to ensure ease in transferring. The final six credits include a work component, with students working part-time in London. A portfolio is kept by each student and is submitted upon return to the United States (*International Education Program Agreement*: #7.125; *Academic Catalog*, p. 10; *Student Handbook*, p. 26).

All credit courses taught at off-campus sites have been approved by the Curriculum Committee and are staffed by FCC faculty or certified instructors who are evaluated by department chairs/program managers at the College. Courses are evaluated along with on-campus offerings using the same procedures. Therefore, off-campus courses have the same quality, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness as courses taught on campus.

VI. Distance Learning

Introduction and Rationale

Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan (#1.722, *Appendix A*) is to “Provide access for all learners in the community.” The Distance Learning (DL) Program provides one means to reach this goal. The College offered its first telecourses in 1976 and its first online courses in 1998. The Distance Learning Program was established in 2001. With the College’s reorganization in 2002, the DL Program was placed within the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). It is the Mission of the Office of Distance Learning to enhance and administer distance learning courses and degree/certificate programs, including developing and offering telecourses, online courses, and interactive video courses (*CTL Mission Statement: #7.380*). The Office of Distance Learning staff consists of the director (faculty member with reassigned time) and a part-time administrative assistant whose position was added in FY2006 (*Operating Budget, p.2: #6.125*).

The Distance Learning Management Group (DLMG) with membership from faculty and administration, maintains standards of good practice; develops and implements an assessment plan; and controls training for DL faculty (*CTL Distance Learning Business Plan 2003-06: #7.311*). Integration of non-credit online courses into the DL program is anticipated in the near future to better reflect the learning college philosophy (*Distance Learning 2004 Report, p. 1: #7.310*). The Fall 2005 Schedule of Non-Credit Classes (*p. 8-9: #9.820*) presents 20 online options administered by Continuing Education.

The College is a member of *MarylandOnline* (MOL) (#13.612), a consortium of 16 Maryland community colleges and seven senior institutions licensed by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and accredited by MSCHE. With shared offerings of courses and certificate programs, as well as undergraduate and graduate degrees, MOL increases opportunities and flexibility for FCC students (*Distance Learning 2004 Report, p. 5: #7.310*). FCC is also part of the College of the Air Distance Education Consortium (#13.105).

Consistent, Coherent Distance Learning Offerings

At FCC, all DL classes are sections of existing courses that have gone through the Curriculum Committee procedure and have identical core learning outcomes to their on-campus counterparts. DL instructors are specially-trained full-time and adjunct faculty held to College standards (see discussion of Standard 10).

In 2004-05, the DL program offered 199 credit course sections to an enrollment of 3,061 students (*Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report, p. 23: #1.713, Appendix C*). FY04 enrollments by format were Internet courses (68.5%), televised courses (18.5%), hybrid online courses with some on-campus attendance (10.3%), and interactive courses via fiber-optic classroom (2.7%). “Teleweb” courses via Internet enhanced with TV or streaming video are in pilot stage. (*Distance Learning 2004 Report, pp. 6-8: #7.310.*) The College uses the *Blackboard* course management system, with a formatted FCC course template that facilitates course development.

Students signing up for a DL class are informed that they must have use of appropriate technology, must contact the instructor before the first class, and must attend an online or face-to-face orientation session (*Schedule of Classes*, p. 27: #9.810). Once enrolled, a DL student has access to all on-campus student support services of the College, including library privileges, tutoring, and counseling/advising. See Appendix O (#8.756) for a full description of student support services.

Since spring 2003 the College has offered two online degree programs: Business Administration and General Studies. These can be fulfilled with online courses within the usual timeframe (*Distance Learning 2004 Report*, p.6: #7.310). Growth in the DL area implies a continuation of program completion opportunities. However, there exists no written guarantee that a student beginning a DL program will be able to complete the program online.

External Partnerships and Resources

As stated earlier, at FCC DL courses are locally developed sections of existing courses and therefore rely little upon partnerships or externally produced resources. The program does, however, benefit greatly from its professional organization, *MarylandOnline*. All courses offered by MOL receive FCC credit through previously established articulation agreements and therefore meet all College standards. In addition, MOL sponsors Quality Matters, an initiative originating at FCC and now funded by a FIPSE grant. Quality Matters is a statewide peer review protocol for online courses (*Quality Matters: Peer Review of Online Courses*: #7.313; *Distance Learning Annual Report*, pp. 5, 8: #7.310). All DL courses offered through MOL will eventually be critiqued by Quality Matters, thus providing enhanced assessment of DL course construction at FCC (*Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report*, p. 23, Appendix B; #1.712, Appendix C; *Distance Learning Peer Review Documents*: #7.313; *Faculty Peer Review Documents*: #7.314). College of the Air courses use externally developed broadcast lessons, which are carefully reviewed by faculty members for quality and content compliance with FCC courses. All licensing arrangements are kept in the Office of Distance Learning (*Distance Learning 2004 Report*, pp.5-8: #7.310).

Faculty Training and Support

Training and support are available for *Blackboard*, the course template, and supplemental textbook cartridges. DL instructors are trained on a 43-item skills inventory for *Blackboard* by the Office of Distance Learning, which also provides a helpdesk function for day-to-day problems. Two mentoring pilots were developed and applied in three courses for new faculty (*Distance Learning Annual Report*, pp. 8-10: #7.310). A variety of training workshops and teleconferences, designed and taught in collaboration with the director of learning technologies, is offered to DL faculty as well. These offerings cover both pedagogical and technical areas. All DL-related training is valued as part of an instructor's employee development at the College.

Adequate Learning Resources and Facilities

The DL website lists all courses offered online where students may access syllabi with instructor contact information, a list of minimum technical requirements for online courses, and an online self-evaluation of DL readiness. Student Services features a special set of

orientation Web pages for DI students with a chat room Q&A session, and an online orientation to *Blackboard*. Technical support is augmented by an on-campus technician.

The Virtual Career Center (#8.810) and Virtual Transfer Center (#8.813) are also available online. The Library offers online services particularly useful to DL students, including content databases, term paper assistance, and e-mail forms for reference assistance (*Distance Learning Annual Report*, pp.10-11: #7.310). Students may take exams online through *Blackboard* or on-campus at the Testing Center.

Assessment of Student Learning in DL Courses

While DL courses are peer reviewed within the rigorous Quality Matters protocol, assessment of student learning has yet to occur in a broad, outcomes-based format. Student Evaluation forms are sent out for every course in both the fall and spring semester, with a response rate of about 50%. Aggregate results on course and instructor questions from FY2002 and 2004 are shown in Table 13.2. Results show overall positive evaluations of DL classes and similarity between evaluations of DL and on-campus courses, except in those items referring to “writing/speaking skills” and “complex ideas.”

Table 13.2: FY 2004 Students’ Evaluation of Courses: Aggregate Results for All Reviewed DL Credit Classes Compared to Aggregate Results for All Reviewed Non-DL Credit Classes
**Appendix L-Distance Learning Annual Report: #7.310 ** Course and Instructor Evaluations: #3.230, #3.220*

| Percent of all evaluators who “agree” or “strongly agree” | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Evaluation item: | All DL Classes* FY04 | Non-DL Classes** FY04 |
| I would recommend this course to others who want to take courses online. | 85.1% | NA |
| I was satisfied with the amount of contact/interaction I had with the instructor. | 86.7% | NA |
| The course (instructor) enabled me to achieve the stated core learning outcomes. | 88.4% | 92.5% |
| This course has helped me to understand basic facts, concepts, and skills relevant to the course. | 90.0% | 94.1% |
| This course helped me improve my writing and/or speaking skills. | 48.9% | 61.2% |
| This course has helped me to think more critically about the information I read or hear. | 77.2% | 84.0% |
| This course has helped me to develop my skills and confidence in solving problems. | 61.1% | 76.2% |
| This course has helped me to develop my ability to gather and use information from a variety of sources. | 72.3% | 80.3% |
| This course helped me understand the relevance of this field to real-world issues. | 81.0% | 87.5% |
| This course helped me feel more comfortable with complex ideas. | 65.1% | 81.5% |

Challenges

Since 2000, enrollment in DL classes has increased approximately 32.5% per year (approximately 6% comes from MOL schools), and this trend could continue. This rapid growth has increased the need for administration and faculty training, and has placed stress on supporting areas (technology, testing, and tutoring) as well. For example, the Testing Center reports significant workload and infrastructure strains resulting from dramatic increases in DL exam proctoring. (*Distance Learning 2004 Report-Appendix B: #7.310; Strategic Action Plan 2005 Report*, p. 23: #1.713, *Appendix C; Tutorial Services 2005 Annual Report*, pp.7, 12: #7.361; *Testing Center Annual Report* pp. 7, 8, 10: #7.355.) In addition, hitherto unaddressed costs (fewer students on campus) and benefits (less classroom space required) of a growing DL program have not been determined.

While approximately 40% of DL students take all of their courses online, it is unclear whether growth in DL enrollment is a result of outreach to new populations of learners (those who cannot take classes on campus) or a result of internal recruitment of existing students. Students evaluated in FY2004 overwhelmingly (84.5%) chose “I like the flexibility of an online course for my schedule” as the reason for taking an Internet class. This question did not have as a possible answer “I would not be able to take this course on campus.” (*Distance Learning 2004 Report: #7.310.*) Also unavailable at this time is a broad assessment of student learning (within DL) that goes beyond student evaluation of courses. The College’s commitment to accessibility, flexibility, and quality might well lead to new initiatives in determining the optimal growth of varying DL-format sections.

VII. Contractual Relationships and Affiliated Providers

The major contractual relationships and affiliated providers are the following:

- Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA): Course modules are developed by FEMA (#2.913) for the benefit of Emergency Services, Emergency Management, Disaster Management, and Fire Science students who need to take special examinations. A passing score allows application for credit from the College toward letters of recognition, certificates, programs, or continuing education. Courses are approved by the Curriculum Committee (*Academic Catalog, p. 11: #9.110*).
- National Park Service (NPS): A Memorandum of Understanding (#2.919) exists between the College and the NPS to host The Catocin Center for Regional Studies at the College. The NPS provides a loaned coordinator, and the College provides a part-time coordinator. The Center publishes a magazine, provides classes through Continuing Education, offers work-study and internship opportunities for students, and undertakes regional history research projects. (*Academic Catalog, p. 7: #9.110.*) Instruction is managed by the College within the Learning area.
- Engineering Systems Solutions, Inc.(ESS): ESS (#2.911) provides upper-level Information Technology courses to FCC students in return for revenue sharing. Instructors provided by ESS are certified where necessary. ESS is obligated to meet the requirements of MHEC and provide information as requested.
- Frederick Memorial Hospital (FMH): FMH (#2.915) is the setting for clinical experience in Respiratory Therapy, Surgical Technology, Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistant, and Nuclear Medicine programs. The Nursing program requires 600 hours of clinical experience; supervision for all but 24 of these hours is provided by qualified Allied Health adjuncts. Preceptors hired by the hospital (and subject to its qualification requirements) provide supervision of the final 24 hours for Nursing and all clinical time for Surgical Technology.
- Maryland Police Academy: The College, in partnership with city, county, and state government (#7.963), teaches Police Science. Police Science courses are taught off-campus by instructors within the academy. See discussion under Standard 11.
- Hood College/Mt. St. Mary’s College: An exchange agreement allows FCC full-time students to take one course per semester at Hood or Mt. St. Mary’s (#2.917) without additional payment. Instructors are qualified by their respective institutions.

Conclusions

In support of its Mission, the College has extended its core of educational offerings to include developmental, distance, off-campus, and study-abroad opportunities for learning. The quality of these programs is maintained by strict adherence to all relevant College standards. The developmental program at FCC is robust and effective and serves the majority of students enrolled in credit programs. Distance learning is growing rapidly to serve evident demand. Off-campus and partnership programs perform effective complementary learning roles.

Reliance on adjunct faculty to teach the majority of sections is a concern of program managers in developmental mathematics and English, who see an increasing need for developmental faculty to provide linkages to support services for students. In addition, the need for a thorough assessment of student retention and success in subsequent credit courses requires resources beyond those available to coordinators and managers of the program. The extremely rapid growth of distance learning has challenged the Office of Distance Learning as well as related services and facilities. An institutional assessment that considers the program's costs and benefits to both the institution and to the student would be invaluable in determining future growth of the DL program.

Recommendations

29. Strengthen developmental program at the institutional level through:

- Institutional responsibility for assessments of student retention and success, both within the program and in transitions to credit courses.
- Increased support for faculty within the program, with the understanding that developmental instructors must provide consistent linkages to auxiliary services for students.

30. Assess the absolute and relative numbers of on-campus and DL-format sections (online, hybrid, etc.) to determine the optimum ratio between the two types of instruction:

- Analyze the costs and benefits of each to both the institution and to the student.
- Conduct broad, comparative assessments in courses taught both on-campus and in DL formats, to ensure that student learning and student development is comparable in both formats.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Key Documents

Strategic Plan – Revision: #1.722, Appendix A

Action Plans: #1.725-#1.729, Appendix D

Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan: #3.380, Appendix H

Outcomes Assessment Council – Structure and membership: #4.611

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan 2003 – 2006: #4.705, Appendix I

Academic Catalog: #9.110

Student Learning Assessment Plans and Reports: #4.410-#4.502, Appendix K

Faculty Handbook: #2.210, Appendix M

Syllabi Collection: #7.031, Appendix P

Strategic Action Plan 2004 Annual Report: #1712, Appendix B

Strategic Action Plan 2005 Annual Report: #1.713, Appendix C

Introduction

The Vision of FCC is “student learning first.” The promise to facilitate, value, and measure learning is the backbone of the College Strategic Plan (*#1.722, Appendix A*). To fulfill this promise, the College continues to refine a planning-assessment-improvement process, begun in 2002, that focuses on student learning. It is understood that assessing student learning is the way to demonstrate effectiveness to students and all other stakeholders.

The Action Plans (*#1.725-#1.729, Appendix D*) outline the processes by which the College fulfills its Mission. To focus the efforts of the Action Plans, the 2004 Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (*IEAP: #3.380, Appendix H*) articulates the process by which the College carries out its assessment-improvement cycles. The IEAP asserts that “assessment of student learning is college-wide and is shared by faculty, staff, students, and administrators.” The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Plan is viewed as a “fundamental aspect” of the IEAP (*p. 32: #3.380, Appendix H*). The faculty has direct responsibility to develop measures of learning, including goals, objectives, rubrics, and evaluation of the assessment data. In addition, faculty members are responsible for implementing improvements to courses or programs under assessment.

As the manager of the Action Plan Learning Cluster, the vice president for learning/provost oversees learning assessment initiatives. Offering direction and advisement, the Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research (OAPR) Department coordinates, tracks, and records planning initiatives; provides assessment training; keeps the process on schedule; and publishes results.

For an institution like FCC, whose mission is broad and whose community is diverse, assessment of student learning at the institution level is challenging. There is no resident student body with one focus; with so many course and program options, there is no obvious capstone experience. As a result, learning goals and the means to measure their attainment are varied and depend upon the nature of the program from which they come. To be honest, useful, and efficient, any college-wide assessment plan requires flexibility and clear communication throughout the planning hierarchy.

Toward this end, in 2003, the provost assigned a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (SLOAC) comprised of faculty and administration (chair of the General Education Committee, the chair of the Curriculum Committee, a program manager from career programs, and two faculty members) to oversee the direction and policy of the SLOA Plan. This council met twice each semester and reported on the progress of learning outcomes assessment. An administrative retreat was held in August 2005 for the purpose of honestly discussing student learning assessment at the College. As a result, the SLOAC was re-organized and re-named the Outcomes Assessment Council (Fall 2005), to meet monthly with a broadened membership that includes representatives from academic departments, developmental education, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Student Life, and the OAPR. (*2005-2006 Outcomes Assessment Council: #4.611.*)

It is important to note the relative newness of the Strategic Plan (revised in 2004), and its resulting Action Plans. In particular, the IEAP, which includes a plan for assessment of student learning, emerged in 2004, after the College's re-organization along the learning college model. Since then strategic planning has undergone several changes that streamlined processes, produced a closer alignment with the Planning and Budget Council, and empowered faculty to create strategies for learning assessment at the program level. At the time of this writing, the SLOA Plan is well-defined but imperfect. Adjustments and changes will be made as experience is gained. What follows is a snapshot of the College in the midst of learning assessment-improvement cycles as prescribed by the 2003-2006 SLOA Plan (*#4.705, Appendix I*).

Articulated Expectations of Student Learning

Consistent with the Strategic Plan, expectations of student learning are articulated to varying extents at the institutional, program, and course level.

At the institutional level, goals of scholarly excellence, skills for life-long learning, respect for cultural diversity, and environmental responsibility are articulated—albeit not clearly in terms of expectations of student learning—by the Strategic Plan. More explicit expectations are outlined in individual area plans, such as those pertaining to general education, co-curricular opportunities, and student development.

The General Education Committee, composed of a faculty member from each department, wrote 10 general education goals and 33 objectives consistent with the Mission statement (*#4.330; Table 12.2*). The proposed goals and objectives were distributed to all faculty members for input and suggestions before adoption. The goals are published in the Academic Catalog (*p. 25: #9.110*), the Student Handbook (*p. 41: #2.610*), Faculty Handbook (*Section 8.12: #2.210, Appendix M*), and Policy Manual (*Section 4.13*). Within the SLOA Plan, expectations of student learning are articulated in the outcomes assessment plan for each general education goal (*Student Learning Assessment Plans and Reports: #4.110-#4.541, Appendix K*).

In 2002, an audit of all general education syllabi was conducted to ensure that general education courses articulate expectations of student learning reflective of the general education goals and objectives. Additionally, an audit of a random sample of graduates was

performed to determine the likelihood that a graduate would encounter all 10 goals and 33 objectives. (*General Program Update Summary: #4.350.*) Based on this research and a desire to renew the general education program in general, the General Education Committee is re-examining program goals to more closely reflect College practices and mission, to include information literacy, and to ensure that goals can be assessed. See discussion of Standard 12.

Consistent with the learning college principle that learning takes place in and out of the classroom, Student Development and Student Life are placed within the Learning area and considered facilitators of the Strategic Plan. Expectations for student learning within Student Development are clearly articulated (*Student Development Assessment Plan: #7.721*). These include expectations for exploring and making career goals, gaining knowledge of self, and developing research skills for lifelong learning. The Student Life Office has articulated core competencies of student leaders (*#7.183*) and is in the process of articulating student learning expectations for co-curricular offerings (*Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan Initiatives Update 2005, p.9: #7161; Arts and Sciences SLOA Projects, 2005-2006: #7.101*).

Articulated statements of student learning at the program level are found for career programs. Career program goals and objectives are consistent with professional standards and licensure requirements for each program. Each career program has an advisory board that provides input into establishing program goals that are relevant to the discipline. The goals are included in each program's outcomes assessment plan (*#4.110-#4.541, Appendix K*). Students are informed of the goals through marketing literature that is handed out to new and prospective students. Some career programs include the program goals in the Academic Catalog (*#9.110*) under programs of study. Allied health programs include their goals in student handbooks, the course syllabus, course work, and student involvement in accreditation activities.

Expectations of student learning for transfer programs are not articulated in a consistent manner. Although many transfer programs have yet to articulate program goals and objectives, there is a plan for inclusion of some program outcomes by late 2005 (*Arts & Sciences SLOA Projects: #7.101*). Expectations of student learning at the transfer program level are not currently found in the College catalog or in an assessment plan.

Learning outcomes at the course level appear in syllabi. The College has adopted a common syllabus template, which includes core learning outcomes (*Faculty Handbook, Sec 8.14: #2.210, Appendix M*). All academic syllabi must include core learning outcomes, methods of instruction and evaluation, expected student learning outcomes, and required exit skills expectancies consistent with institutional and program expectations. See Appendix P: Syllabi Collection (*#7.031*).

Most Continuing Education (CE) and Customized Training (CT) offerings are required to submit specific learning outcomes for approval by the State at the time they are approved; the outcomes are not printed in course syllabi.

Expectations of learning are articulated to the community as well. Representatives of the College regularly meet with Frederick County Public Schools faculty and high school juniors and seniors to discuss the expectations for learning in the first year of college. Programs for returning adult students serve the same purpose.

Student Learning Assessment Plans That Are Part of Institutional Assessment

As discussed under Standards 2 and 7 and outlined previously, the College has a learning-focused, assessment-driven strategic planning process that is collaborative, public, and directly linked to the allocation of resources. An important feature of institutional planning is the College's core vision of "student learning first" and its commitment to accountability for that learning.

Plans for assessment of student learning at the institutional level are found within the strategic planning process. The IEAP (#3.380, *Appendix H*) details assessments of all strategic goals and objectives, including those that address student learning. As noted above, the challenge for the College at the institutional level is to create learning goals that fit a wide variety of educational offerings. The OAPR Department routinely administers surveys to students and faculty (Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, Community College Survey of Student Engagement, Personal Assessment of the College Environment, etc.) and uses enrollment-transfer-graduation rate data to inform the College about strengths and weaknesses of its planning and programs. Respect for cultural diversity and environmental responsibility are institutional goals that are not assessed, although the College offers many opportunities for students to attain these goals through the Office of Diversity and Global Initiatives, the Multicultural Student Support Services, and the Office of Student Life.

Some learning assessment plans at the institutional and program levels are currently defined outside the SLOA Council. Student Development has assessment plans in place (*Student Development Assessment Plan: #7.721*), and outcomes and benchmarks have been written for co-curricular offerings within Student Life (*Strategic Action Plan 2004, p.27: #1.710*). Assessment plans and student learning outcomes for co-curricular activities are being developed (*Arts and Sciences Strategic Initiatives Update 2005, p.9: #7.161; Arts and Sciences SLOA Projects, 2005-2006: #7.101*).

The SLOA Council oversees the direction and policy making of student learning outcomes assessment. The SLOA Plan (#4.705, *Appendix I*) describes outcomes assessment activities for 2003-2006. Through SLOAC Progress Reports (#4.710, *Appendix J*), the College is given evidence of the success rate of meeting core learning outcomes of the program, as well as evidence showing insufficiencies in meeting these stated outcomes. Updated SLOA Plans and Progress Reports are readily available through the OAPR intranet site, within the *Matter of Fact* and *Facts-R-Us* newsletters. (*IEAP 2004, p.31: #3.380, Appendix H.*)

The SLOA Plan (#4.705, *Appendix I*) relates assessments to the College's Strategic Plan. Assessment process, methods, and timelines for continuity of the assessment-improvement cycles are all defined. The original plan calls for first-round assessment of all 10 general education goals, information literacy, and 18 career program goals by 2006, as shown in Table 14.1. To date, individual plans have been filed for eight general education goals, information literacy, and 18 career programs. The first and second cycles of the SLOA Plan

have produced nine general education assessments and nine career program assessments. See Appendix K: Student Learning Plans and Assessment Reports (#4.110-#4.541).

Table 14.1: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Reporting Calendar (#4.705)

| GEN ED Goal | Completed Plan Due | Final Report Due (for first pilot assignment) | Program Goal | Completed Plan Due | Final Report Due (for first pilot assignment) |
|--|------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|---|
| Gen Ed Goal I Writing Listening/Speaking | Fall 2003 Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 Fall 2004 | Accounting | Fall 2003 | Spring 2005 |
| Gen Ed Goal II Critical Thinking | Fall 2003 | TBD | Bioscience Lab Tech | Fall 2003 | Fall 2005 |
| Gen Ed Goal III Social Science | Fall 2003 | TBD | Business Mgmt. | Fall 2003 | Spring 2005 |
| Gen Ed Goal IV Quantitative Problem Solving | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Computer Graphics | Fall 2003 | Spring 2005 |
| Gen Ed Goal V Science | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Construction Mgmt. | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| Gen Ed Goal VI Technology | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Deaf Studies | TBD | TBD |
| Gen Ed Goal VII Social Values | TBD | TBD | Early Childhood Dev | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| Gen Ed Goal VIII Visual/Performing Arts | Fall 2003 | Spring 2005 | EMS | TBD | TBD |
| Gen Ed Goal IX Wellness | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 | Culinary | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| Gen Ed Goal X Multicultural Soc. | TBD | TBD | IT-Programming | TBD | TBD |
| | | | IT-Office Systems | Fall 2003 | TBD |
| | | | IT-Network Eng. | Fall 2003 | TBD |
| | | | Legal Assistant | Fall 2003 | Spring 2005 |
| | | | Nursing | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| | | | Police Science | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| | | | Respiratory Therapy | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| | | | Surgical Tech | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |
| | | | TV Productions | Fall 2003 | Fall 2004 |

General education and career program plans under the SLOA Plan consist of faculty-created rubrics. These rubrics may use regular course assignments (such as projects, reflective writing assignments, term papers, and reports), embedded exam questions, or capstone assignments to gather both qualitative and quantitative information concerning student learning. In the case of general education, most rubrics apply to a set of heavily-enrolled general education courses as a means of obtaining institutional-level assessment. (*SLOA Progress Report, p. 4: #4.710, Appendix J.*) Table 14.2 shows the templates for assessment plans and reports concerning general education goals.

Table 14.2: Plan and Report Templates for Student Learning Assessment of General Education Goals
(See Appendix K for individual plans and reports.)

| General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan | General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Results Report |
|---|---|
| <p>GEN ED Goal: <i>Please state the goal.</i></p> <p>GEN ED Team Leader: <i>Name of person responsible for the goal.</i></p> <p>Learning Outcomes To Be Assessed: <i>Please state the learning outcomes or intended results of instruction. What do you want your student to know or be able to do upon completion of this course?</i></p> <p>Learning Outcome 1: Learning Outcome 2:</p> <p>How Do Students Learn These Learning Outcomes? <i>What specific projects or assignments are given to enable students to learn these outcomes?</i></p> <p>Assessment Strategies: <i>Please state what methods will be used to evaluate student learning. These can be direct (i.e., capstone projects, reflective writing, exams, exhibits, licensure, certification tests, employer/internship supervisor ratings) or indirect methods (i.e., employer or alumni surveys or student perception surveys).</i></p> <p>Assessment Tool: <i>Please describe the assessment tool that will be used to evaluate student learning (e.g., rubric, rating scale, etc.). The assessment tool should be based on a set of criteria for evaluating students' work. <u>Please attach the assessment tool(s) to the Plan.</u></i></p> <p>Timing: <i>When do you expect to begin collecting the assessment information (e.g., spring 2005)?</i></p> <p>Frequency: <i>How often will you collect this assessment information (e.g., every spring or fall semester)?</i></p> <p>Submitted by: _____ Date: _____ Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____ Department Chair</p> <p>Be sure to attach your Assessment Tool (i.e., rubric or rating scale for each assessment strategy) to this Plan. Please submit all documentation to the Outcomes Assessment Coordinator Outcomes Assessment, Planning & Research Department.</p> | <p><i>Purpose Statement:</i> <i>Student learning assessment provides continuous feedback to students, faculty, and professional staff for the purpose of improving academic programs, teaching, and learning. It is through this analysis of student learning efforts that Frederick Community College is able to improve learning in a systematic and effective manner.</i></p> <p>GEN ED Goal:</p> <p>Learning Outcomes Assessed Learning Outcome 1:</p> <p>Learning Outcome 2:</p> <p>State What Assessment Strategies (e.g., Direct or Indirect) Were Used To Collect Information Regarding the Attainment of each of the Learning Outcomes? <i>For example, rubric-scored writing assignment research report, reflective writing assignment, course evaluations, etc.</i></p> <p>What Are the Findings (e.g., Results/Outcomes) From the Assessment Endeavors? <i>Based on the assessment data collected, please provide a summary of the results (both quantitative and/or qualitative) regarding student learning.</i></p> <p>How Will Those Findings Be Used For Course Improvement? <i>Please state how assessment results are being used for course improvement or any action taken to improve student learning.</i></p> |

Similar templates exist for career program goals. Appendix K (#4.110-#4.541) includes all individual plans and reports submitted as of fall 2005.

In addition to individual SLOA plans for assessment of student learning within general education and career programs, state-mandated licensure or certification pass rates are used as assessment indicators for career programs such as nursing and emergency medical services. Graduate pass rates on licensure exams are compared to national averages.

(*Program Viability Reports: #7.940*). Also outside the SLOA Plan are graduate and employer surveys to assess student learning generally, or at the program level. See program assessment discussion under Standard 11.

A learning assessment plan for student leadership has been articulated in collaboration with the Maryland Community College Activities Directors Association (*MCCADA Student Leader Assessment Plan: #7.183*).

The most robust learning assessment occurs at the course level, although plans are rarely articulated outside the departments from which they come. Several different course-level assessment plans are noted within the SLOA Plan. These include continuing gateway course assessments in the areas of mathematics, allied health, and physics. The initiation of three new course-level plans per year is stated as a goal of the SLOA Plan (*p. 3: #4.705, Appendix I*). Course-level assessment-improvement cycles are also discussed under Standards 12 and 13.

At FCC, the faculty demonstrates excellence in teaching and professional development, and student success is taken seriously, as discussed under Standard 10. Assessment of student learning is an essential function of faculty (*Faculty Handbook, Section 2.10: #2.210, Appendix M*.) Arguably, the professor's evaluation of student work and progress within a course is an invaluable assessment of student learning. Evaluation methods are required on all syllabi and may include quizzes, exams, essays, papers, journals, oral presentations, portfolios, video tapes, and scientific reports. The Faculty Handbook (*Section 8.14: #2.210, Appendix M*) states that instruction should contain "...a variety of evaluation tools so that students with different learning styles will have an opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the Core Learning Outcomes." See examples from syllabi in Appendix P (*#7.031*).

Evidence of Improved Learning Based on Assessment

The main goal in assessment is improved student learning. While realizing that no institution is perfect, the College conducts assessment to "drive improvement and facilitate decision-making focused on learning," a goal of its Strategic Plan (*Goal 4: #1.722, Appendix A*).

Communication of the structure and function of a relatively new and complex strategic planning process is understandably problematic. The original 2002-2006 SLOA Plan timetables have not been followed. However, recent evidence of successful assessment-improvement cycles is available, and some of these are described on the following pages. Also, there is a trend over the first two cycles of the SLOA Plan that shows deepening understanding of what it means to "close the loop" —Only one of the eight SLOA Plan assessments completed in 2004 resulted in changes to improve student learning, while nine of 10 completed in 2005 (see Table 14.3 for an example) resulted in significant course or program improvement. This trend indicates a maturing of the process, spirit, and value of student learning assessment. See Appendix K (*#4.110-#4.541*) for all assessment reports.

Table 14.3: Example of 2005 SLOA Report from Appendix K (Gen Ed Goal 3 Report: #4.431)

| <p align="center">General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Results PS 101 General Psychology Report</p> | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Purpose Statement:</i> <i>Student learning assessment provides continuous feedback to students, faculty, and professional staff for the purpose of improving academic programs, teaching, and learning. It is through this analysis of student learning efforts that Frederick Community College is able to improve learning in a systematic and effective manner.</i></p> <p>GEN ED Goal: Goal III: Students will analyze and interpret ways in which individuals, groups, institutions, or societies behave, function, and influence one another.</p> <p>In this project the faculty assessed three learning outcomes for each section of a rubric scored writing assignment. In each section of the personal case study faculty expected students to demonstrate that they were able to:</p> <p>Learning Outcome 1: Communicate the topic using appropriate vocabulary and terminology.</p> <p>Learning Outcome 2: Identify and demonstrate an understanding of the basic concept and theories presented in each chapter as they relate to human behavior.</p> <p>Learning Outcome 3: Apply the concepts/theories as they relate to the student's own traits and behaviors.</p> <p>State What Assessment Strategies (e.g., Direct or Indirect) Were Used To Collect Information Regarding the Attainment of each of the Learning Outcomes?</p> <p><i>For example, rubric-scored writing assignment research report, reflective writing assignment, course evaluations, etc.</i></p> <p>The strategy used by the psychology faculty was a rubric-scored writing assignment in the form of a personal case study. The case study was designed with an introduction in which students wrote about themselves and their families. In parts two through seven students then used their learning of concepts in the course to apply and write about various aspects of themselves. The topics about which they wrote were biology and behavior, learning, memory, human development, personality and a general reflection on their learning in the course. In section two on biology, students wrote how a favorite activity of theirs could be described through the various parts and interactions in the brain and nervous system, for example.</p> <p>What Are the Findings (e.g., Results/Outcomes) From the Assessment Endeavors?</p> <p><i>Based on the assessment data collected, please provide a summary of the results (both quantitative and/or qualitative) regarding student learning.</i></p> | <p>We found that the PS 101 sections of students sampled for this assessment performed the best in the parts of the case study on biology and behavior where the average scores were between proficient and exemplary in our rubric and in the parts on learning and memory where the average scores were in the proficiency range. The students performed less well on the assignments on human development, personality and in the last section which was a general reflection. In those areas, the average scores were just below the proficiency range. (see attachment)</p> <p>How Will Those Findings Be Used For Course Improvement?</p> <p><i>Please state how assessment results are being used for course improvement or any action taken to improve student learning.</i></p> <p>Upon reflection we believe that students performed better in the biology and behavior, learning, and memory portions of the assessment for two reasons. One reason is that the directions for those three areas were explicit so students had more clarity as to what was expected. Secondly, we believe that the biology and behavior, learning and the memory assignments required more concrete than abstract thinking. The directions given to students for the human development, memory and general reflection parts of the assignment were more vague and required markedly more sophistication in critical thinking. With this in mind the faculty has a three-step plan for the fall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In our general psychology courses we plan to work more on critical thinking skills by facilitating their development through a step by step process. For example, in the teaching of several topical areas we have developed assignments that begin with the concepts and then move to assignments where students develop concept maps or hierarchies before they move to a personal application. We believe that the assessment project illuminated a deficiency in student learning in our course. It appears that in the assessment students tried to apply psychological concepts without really understanding the complex interaction of those concepts. We are hopeful that the new activities/assignments that we are developing will help students make the connection of abstract concepts to one another before they try to apply those concepts to themselves. 2. Barbara Angleberger and I plan to work with the adjuncts teaching sections of PS 101 to help them incorporate some of the assignments in their classes. We will be using part of the adjunct orientation on August 24th to review the assignments. 3. We will also revise the assessment instrument over the fall semester with particular attention to the clarity of the directions. The new revised instrument will then be used for the spring 2006 assessment project. |

One example of improvement at the institutional level comes from the design process itself. The initial attempt to design student learning assessment activities challenged faculty in a number of areas. The first was the problem of how to assess critical thinking. A 2004 faculty retreat was dedicated to assessment of critical thinking, and as a result a rubric was tested in several general education courses. The second was in the area of infusing information literacy into the general education curriculum and then assessing its attainment. A committee was formed and instructors of popular general education courses were surveyed (*Information Literacy – Faculty Survey: #4.511*). As a result, an information literacy rubric (#4.541) was tested in two general education courses. Results of the assessment will inform the renewal process for including information literacy as a general education goal (*SAP Reports, 2004 p. 22: #1712; 2005, p.26: #1.713*).

There have been several examples of changes made to teaching and learning based on assessment results at the program level. As a result of a study conducted by the Mathematics Department, placement procedure was changed (*Math Pilot Study: 7.122; Testing Center Annual Report, pp.55-56: 7.355*). A second study led to format changes in developmental mathematics courses (*Goals from Annual Report for Developmental Mathematics 2003-2004: #7.121*). Several studies conducted by the Developmental English program have resulted in curricular and placement testing changes (*Developmental English Outcomes Report 2003: 7.115; Arts & Sciences Strategic Initiatives Update 2005, pp. 7-8: #7.161*).

At the course level, there is no doubt that changes based on assessment are made every day to improve student learning. Instructors receive learning assessment results from a multitude of sources, including: feedback during class; information from mid- and end-of-semester evaluations; and performance on papers, oral reports, exams, etc. While these assessments seem obvious to anyone involved in higher education, they are not insignificant. In fact, traditional measures of learning—reflected in detailed comments written on papers and exams, in the face-to-face conferences between teacher and student, and in the grades issued for work—are immensely valuable. Excellent professors continually update and improve their courses to improve student learning based on assessments that are not part of any institutional plan.

Evidence of course-level assessment is reported not to the SLOAC but does occur within individual annual reports and performance appraisals, where instructors are required to demonstrate teaching effectiveness and improved student learning that result from evaluation and adjustments to courses. See discussion of Standard 10. The fact that these measures of student learning and the changes that result are not acknowledged within a formal SLOA Plan does not diminish their importance.

While examples of improvements to the teaching and learning process as a result of assessment initiatives are evident, they appear for the most part to lie outside the College's SLOA Plan, which mainly addresses general education goals and career programs, with small mention of other department- and program-level initiatives. As of fall 2005, there is no institutional-level assessment plan for developmental and distance education. Student Development and Student Life are placed within the Learning area of the College, yet their contributions to learning assessment are not part of the 2004 SLOA Plan.

The trends and examples cited previously do, however, demonstrate a College culture that continues to improve its understanding of the use of assessment data to improve teaching and learning at all levels. Further examples of closing the assessment-improvement loop will come with the maturation and communication of the SLOA Plan and processes, and with improved acceptance by the College community.

Demonstrated Institutional Support of Assessment of Student Learning

At FCC, funding and resource allocation are closely tied to the Strategic Plan, and therefore to learning assessment, through Action Plan Managers who are on the Planning and Budget Council.

While ultimate responsibility for assessing student learning resides with the provost, primary responsibility falls on the OAPR Department. The College added a full-time assessment coordinator position in the FY2005 budget (#6.210), with 75% of the position dedicated to student learning assessment. Additionally, the director of planning and research devotes approximately 25% time to student learning assessment.

No members of the faculty have reassigned time for student learning assessment; however, learning assessment is an essential function of the job (*Faculty Job Description: #5.316*). There is no FY06 budget (#6.121, *Appendix L*) line item devoted to student learning assessment.

Having a viable strategic planning structure in place is necessary, but not sufficient, for valid assessment of student learning at all levels. A community of faculty and administrators who both understand and sanction the plan is also important, as is funding for special assessment initiatives and staff. The College has been supportive of these needs. In 2002 a consultant was hired to help the College coordinate a plan to assess student learning. This training resulted in the SLOA Plan assessment rubrics described earlier.

In Spring 2004, the OAPR surveyed all full-time employees in order to gauge understanding of and satisfaction with the College's strategic planning process (*Strategic Planning Process Evaluation: #1.730*). Results were well below the benchmark satisfaction rate. The existing planning process was felt to focus too much on the specific strategies to be utilized to meet expected outcomes, rather than focusing on the outcome itself. Based on these results, a new model for planning was recommended by the OAPR Department and endorsed by the President's Administrative Staff. The 2004 revised strategic planning model (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report, Preface: #1.713*) de-emphasizes strategy and emphasizes action based on the expected outcomes for individual objectives within the Strategic Plan.

Also, as a result of the survey, the planning coordinator rewrote planning information so as to present it in ways that accommodate different learning styles (*Strategic Action Plan Annual Report, pg. 29 and #1.713, Appendix C*). In addition, a 2005-06 Innovation Grant was awarded to the assessment coordinator and a member of the faculty to create a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Training Video that defines assessment and shows how it will improve teaching and learning at FCC. General education, career, transfer, developmental education, and distance learning programs will be covered. The video will

assist faculty in understanding how student learning assessment fits into the big picture of the College's Vision and Strategic Plan. (*Innovation Grant Application: 4.715.*)

Conclusions

The College has proven strengths in the area of student learning assessment. The original 2003-2006 SLOA Plan is comprehensive and ambitious, with faculty-designed rubrics at the course and program levels. Course-level expectations of student learning are articulated very well through core learning outcomes and specific learning outcomes required on all syllabi. There are clear administrative connections among planning, assessment-improvement cycles, and resource allocation through the budget process. Sufficient resources, principally in the form of staff, are devoted to student learning assessment. With SLOA assessment results reported for FY04 and FY05, the College has a record of assessment-driven improvement and experience in conducting a formal student learning assessment plan.

While the College demonstrates serious commitment to student learning and student learning assessment, opportunities for important improvements do exist. The 2003-2006 SLOA Plan has not been implemented to full benefit and assessment schedules have not been met, perhaps as a result of unreasonable timetables. Some assessment projects lack rigor and reflect mere compliance with assessment efforts, rather than a commitment to assessment as a means to improve and expand student learning. College efforts to explain the process and function of the SLOA Plan are commendable, yet there remains misunderstanding and lack of acceptance on the part of faculty members and academic managers. Finally, the SLOA Plan does not recognize extensive and valuable course and program-level assessments that are reported outside the plan, nor does it include assessment of student learning that occurs at the institutional level, specifically within developmental and distance education, student development, and student life.

Recommendations

31. Assure an appropriate balance of student learning assessment activities, so that those within the SLOA Plan, and those within individual courses or programs, effectively complement one another:

- Focus the responsibility of the SLOA Council on assessment plans and activities at the institutional level, such as high enrollment general education courses, programs, student life, student development, developmental education, and distance learning.
- Focus the responsibility for other course assessment plans and activities with faculty members and managers in the respective areas (obtained from existing annual self-assessment).

32. Ensure that all assessment plans have realistic timetables and sufficiently defined leadership and accountability.

33. Increase support for student learning assessment through clear communication of plan, process, and function to all responsible parties.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Part Three: Recommendations

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

1. Ensure that all employees understand the philosophy, intent, and application of the Mission, goals, and objectives, through employee development events and participation in planning processes.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

2. Simplify the Strategic Plan, so that it can be understood more easily and implemented more effectively.

3. Improve unit level planning to satisfactory levels of organization, participation, and integration with the Strategic Plan.

4. Ensure that priorities established in all plans are commensurate with available staff and fiscal resources, so that goals and objectives can be accomplished promptly and completely.

5. Increase college-wide understanding of the Strategic Plan, including its development, implementation, and role in resource allocation, through employee development events and participation in planning and budgeting processes.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

6. Integrate the information technology strategic plan fully with the Strategic Plan and the Facilities Master Plan.

7. Critically review procedures and systems for space scheduling, in order to optimize space utilization throughout the campus.

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

8. Examine ways to improve affinity group participation in the governance process, in order to strengthen collegial governance and expand communication on issues that affect the College community.

Standard 5: Administration

- 9.** Refine and accomplish Strategic Plan goals and objectives for appropriate employee rewards and recognitions.
- 10.** Use the employee development program to ensure satisfactory employee knowledge of the College's organizational structure and its application of the learning college model.

Standard 6: Integrity

- 11.** Increase efforts to hire people of color for faculty and administrative positions through expanded and refined recruitment initiatives and expanded and refined hiring processes.
- 12.** Develop a general policy that outlines how membership representation is to be determined for search committees.
- 13.** Systematically update and reconcile policies and procedures, including those at both college and unit levels.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

- 14.** Investigate new ways to utilize the large amounts of assessment data, not only to achieve Strategic Plan objectives, but also to inform the everyday decisions and tasks that create an effective institution.
- 15.** Strengthen efforts to document more fully the use of assessment data to facilitate institutional improvement.
- 16.** Investigate the value of including unit level assessment data in the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan.
- 17.** Examine ways to obtain and utilize more qualitative data, such as focus groups.

Standard 8: Admissions

- 18.** Improve retention planning and reporting systems to ensure that the College's numerous retention efforts are coordinated and acknowledged.
- 19.** Ensure that separate student goal attainment programs (now in Student Development and the Center for Teaching and Learning) complement one another, in order to achieve planning, assessment, and improvement efficiencies.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

20. Strengthen the College's support of non-credit students, beginning with a needs assessment.

Standard 10: Faculty

21. Analyze data on full-time/part-time faculty ratios by area, with the goal of allocating resources to achieve the state guideline in all areas.

22. Strengthen the value of employee development for faculty by linking support to needs expressed on annual self-evaluation reports.

23. Develop and implement a plan to increase CE/CT adjunct faculty participation in appropriate professional development opportunities through a clearly defined relationship between CE/CT and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

24. Conduct a comprehensive review of faculty attitudes on issues related to work/life, communication, and the faculty evaluation process.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

25. Investigate the relationships between academic and CE/CT courses and programs within the Learning area, particularly with respect to the appropriateness of student learning outcomes, assessment activities, and institutional support of students and staff.

26. Explore ways to ensure the education of students regarding College policies and procedures identified in the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Standard 12: General Education

27. The current distributed responsibility for general education (philosophy, function, assessment, course designation, and renewal) needs to be clarified, clearly articulated, published, and communicated to all invested groups.

28. In whatever structure emerges from the above recommendation, the general education program should be developed, owned, reviewed, and renewed by faculty.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

- 29.** Strengthen developmental program at the institutional level through:
- Institutional responsibility for assessments of student retention and success, both within the program and in transitions to credit courses.
 - Increased support for faculty within the program, with the understanding that developmental instructors must provide consistent linkages to auxiliary services for students.
- 30.** Assess the absolute and relative numbers of on-campus and DL-format sections (online, hybrid, etc.) to determine the optimum ratio between the two types of instruction:
- Analyze the costs and benefits of each to both the institution and to the student.
 - Conduct broad, comparative assessments in courses taught both on-campus and in DL formats, to ensure that student learning and student development is comparable in both formats.

Standard 14: Student Learning Assessment

- 31.** Assure an appropriate balance of student learning assessment activities, so that those within the SLOA Plan, and those within individual courses or programs, effectively complement one another:
- Focus the responsibility of the SLOA Council on assessment plans and activities at the institutional level, such as high enrollment general education courses, programs, student life, student development, developmental education, and distance learning.
 - Focus the responsibility for other course assessment plans and activities with faculty and managers in the respective areas (obtained from existing annual self-assessment).
- 32.** Ensure that all assessment plans have realistic timetables and sufficiently defined leadership and accountability.
- 33.** Increase support for student learning assessment through clear communication of plan, process, and function to all responsible parties.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Part Four: Documents Referenced in the Report

| Frederick Community College Documents Referenced in the Report | | |
|---|--|------|
| Reference Number | Document Title | Year |
| Institutional Planning and President's Office | | |
| 1.021 | BOT – Annual Goals 2005-06 | 2005 |
| 1.025 | BOT – Board Evaluation Instrument | 2005 |
| 1.030 | BOT – Code of Ethics | 2001 |
| 1.032 | BOT – Conversations with the Board | 2005 |
| 1.040 | BOT – Job Descriptions (Entire Board and Members) | 2001 |
| 1.047 | BOT – Orientation Resources | 2005 |
| 1.048 | BOT – Report Schedule | 2006 |
| 1.050 | BOT – Roster of Members | 2006 |
| 1.060 | BOT – Policy Governance | 2005 |
| 1.110 | Challenges and Opportunities: The Next Ten Years (Comm. Part & Grants) | 2004 |
| 1.120 | Core Group Descriptions (Governance Groups) | 2005 |
| 1.121 | Core Groups Table | 2005 |
| 1.123 | College Organizational Chart - General Management Structure | 2005 |
| 1.124 | College Organizational Chart - Learning | 2004 |
| 1.125 | College Organizational Chart - Learning Support | 2004 |
| 1.126 | College Organizational Chart - Administration | 2005 |
| 1.127 | College Organizational Chart - Community Partnerships and Grants | 2004 |
| 1.130 | Environmental Scan 04 | 2004 |
| 1.131 | Environmental Scan 05 | 2005 |
| 1.210 | Middle States '96: Follow-up Report | 1997 |
| 1.220 | Middle States '96: Periodic Review Report (PRR) - Executive Summary | 2001 |
| 1.230 | Middle States '96: Self-Study | 1996 |
| 1.240 | Middle States '96: Team Report | 1996 |
| 1.250 | Middle States Substantive Change Report: Distance Learning MSA Action | 2003 |
| 1.260 | Middle States Substantive Change Report: Police Science | 2003 |
| 1.270 | Middle States - Standards Compliance Audit | 2003 |
| 1.403 | President - BOT Report | 2004 |
| 1.404 | President – Carol's Corner | 2005 |
| 1.405 | President – Goals FY06 | 2005 |
| 1.407 | President – President's Evaluation Form | 2004 |
| 1.411 | President – CP&G: Annual Report 2005 | 2005 |
| 1.416 | President – CP&G: Grants Roster 2004-05 | 2005 |
| 1.524 | President – Diversity: Minority Achievement Report 2005 | 2005 |
| 1.566 | President – Diversity Timeline | 2005 |
| 1.632 | President - Development - Foundation Annual Financial Report | 2004 |
| 1.671 | Presidential Search Documents | 2005 |
| 1.710 | Strategic Objective Action Plan - 2003 | 2003 |
| 1.712 | Strategic Action Plan - Annual Report 2004 | 2004 |
| 1.713 | Strategic Action Plan – Annual Report 2005 | 2005 |
| 1.717 | Strategic Action Plan – Action Plan Clusters and Assigned Objectives | 2004 |
| 1.720 | Strategic Plan 2002-2005 | 2003 |
| 1.722 | Strategic Plan 2002-2005 - Revision (Fall 2004) | 2004 |
| 1.724 | Action Plan – Request to Change Strategic Action Plan | 2003 |

| | | |
|--|--|------|
| 1.725 | Action Plan – Learning (Spring 05) | 2005 |
| 1.726 | Action Plan - Process Communications (Spring 05) | 2005 |
| 1.727 | Action Plan – Resources (Spring 05) | 2005 |
| 1.728 | Action Plan – Worklife (Spring 05) | 2005 |
| 1.729 | Action Plan - Campus Climate (Spring 05) | 2005 |
| 1.730 | Strategic Planning Process – Evaluation (Spring 2004) | 2004 |
| Policies & Procedures | | |
| 2.110 | Accounting Procedures Manual | 2003 |
| 2.210 | Faculty Handbook | 2004 |
| 2.240 | Intellectual Property Policy (draft) | 2004 |
| 2.310 | Policy Manual | 2005 |
| 2.510 | Procedures Manual | 2005 |
| 2.560 | Senate Constitution | 2004 |
| 2.610 | Student Handbook 2005-06 | 2005 |
| 2.710 | Student Grievance Procedures | 2005 |
| 2.851 | Senate Smoking Committee Charge Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 2.911 | Contractual Relationships: Engineering Systems Solutions | 2003 |
| 2.913 | Contractual Relationships: FEMA | 2004 |
| 2.915 | Contractual Relationships: Frederick Memorial Hospital | 2004 |
| 2.917 | Contractual Relationships: Hood College/Mt. Saint Mary's College | 2004 |
| 2.919 | Contractual Relationships: National Park Service | 2004 |
| Institutional Research and Assessment | | |
| 3.090 | Faculty Survey (Higher Education Research Institution) | 1999 |
| 3.110 | Accountability Report (inc. Indicators) (MHEC) | 2004 |
| 3.132 | College Student Survey | 2002 |
| 3.140 | Communications Audit: Summary Data Table | 2005 |
| 3.151 | Community College Survey of Student Engagement – Comparative Data | 2005 |
| 3.155 | Community College Survey of Student Engagement – At-Risk Students | 2005 |
| 3.210 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: CE/CT | 2004 |
| 3.219 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: Credit Spring 05 - Summary | 2005 |
| 3.220 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: Credit Spring 04 | 2004 |
| 3.221 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: Credit Fall 04 | 2004 |
| 3.230 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: Credit Fall 03 | 2003 |
| 3.240 | Course and Instructor Evaluation: Distance Learning | 2004 |
| 3.245 | Degree Progress: Class of 2000 Cohort Study | 2005 |
| 3.340 | Employer Survey (Bi-annually since 1979) | 2004 |
| 3.370 | Graduate Survey 2002 | 2002 |
| 3.380 | Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan | 2004 |
| 3.410 | Matter of Fact: 2000 FCC Transfer Graduates. | 2003 |
| 3.450 | Matter of Fact: FCC Student Transfer Report. | 2003 |
| 3.510 | Middle States Institutional Profile Report | 2004 |
| 3.511 | Middle States Institutional Profile Report | 2005 |
| 3.520 | PACE Campus Climate Survey | 2003 |
| 3.610 | Student Profile Report: Fall 1999-2004 | 2004 |
| 3.611 | Student Profile Report: Fall 2000-2005 | 2005 |
| 3.650 | Student Satisfaction Inventory (Noel-Levitz) | 2004 |
| 3.6513 | Student Satisfaction Inventory: Caucasian Students and Students of Color | 2004 |
| 3.6514 | Student Satisfaction Inventory: Learning Area | 2004 |
| 3.652 | Student Satisfaction Inventory - Responses (Closing the Assessment Loop) | 2005 |
| 3.660 | Student Survey (UCLA Higher Education Research Institute) | 2002 |
| 3.720 | Trends in Transfer Students (MHEC) | 2004 |
| Student Learning Outcomes Assessment | | |
| 4.105 | Assessment Processes (Arts & Sciences) | 2005 |

| | | |
|-------|--|------|
| 4.110 | Career Program – Accounting - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.111 | Career Program – Accounting – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.115 | Career Program - Business Management – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.120 | Career Program – Certified Nursing Assistant – Assessment Plan | 2005 |
| 4.125 | Career Program - Computer Graphics – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.130 | Career Program - Construction Management – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.131 | Career Program – Construction Management – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.135 | Career Program – Culinary – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.140 | Career Program – Deaf Studies – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.141 | Career Program – Deaf Studies – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.145 | Career Program – Early Childhood Development - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.146 | Career Program – Early Childhood Development – Assessment Report 2004 | 2004 |
| 4.147 | Career Program – Early Childhood Development – Assessment Report 2005 | 2005 |
| 4.150 | Career Program – EMS – Assessment Plan | 2004 |
| 4.155 | Career Program - IT-Network Engineering – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.156 | Career Program - IT-Network Engineering – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.160 | Career Program - IT- Office Systems – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.161 | Career Program - IT- Office Systems – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.165 | Career Program - IT-Programming – Assessment Plan | 2004 |
| 4.170 | Career Program - Legal Assistant – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.175 | Career Program – Nursing – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.180 | Career Program - Police Science – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.185 | Career Program – Respiratory Therapy – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.186 | Career Program – Respiratory Therapy – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.190 | Career Program - Surgical Technology – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.191 | Career Program - Surgical Technology – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.195 | Career Program - TV Productions – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.330 | Gen Ed Goals and Objectives (2001) | 2001 |
| 4.332 | Gen Ed – Academic Catalog Revision (Arts & Sciences) | 2005 |
| 4.334 | Gen Ed Committee – Membership and Duties | 2004 |
| 4.336 | Gen Ed – Ad Hoc Committee of the Senate | 2005 |
| 4.340 | Gen Ed Courses – Status of Goals and Objectives | 2003 |
| 4.350 | Gen Ed Courses, Objectives, Enrollments Summary | 2003 |
| 4.410 | Gen Ed Goal 1 – Writing – Assmt. Plan Listening/Speaking – Assmt. Plan | 2003 |
| 4.412 | Gen Ed Goal 1 – Listening/Speaking – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.420 | Gen Ed Goal 2 - Critical Thinking – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.421 | Gen Ed Goal 2 - Critical Thinking – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.430 | Gen Ed Goal 3 - Social Science – Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.431 | Gen Ed Goal 3 - Social Science – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.440 | Gen Ed Goal 4 - Quantitative Problem Solving - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.441 | Gen Ed Goal 4 - Quantitative Problem Solving – Assessment Report 2004 | 2004 |
| 4.442 | Gen Ed Goal 4 - Quantitative Problem Solving – Assessment Report 2005 | 2005 |
| 4.450 | Gen Ed Goal 5 – Science- Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.451 | Gen Ed Goal 5 – Science- Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.460 | Gen Ed Goal 6 – Technology - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.461 | Gen Ed Goal 6 – Technology – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.470 | Gen Ed Goal 8 - Visual & Performing Arts - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.471 | Gen Ed Goal 8 - Visual & Performing Arts – Assessment Report | 2004 |
| 4.480 | Gen Ed Goal 9 – Wellness - Assessment Plan | 2003 |
| 4.481 | Gen Ed Goal 9 – Wellness – Assessment Report | 2005 |
| 4.502 | Gen Ed – Information Literacy – Assessment Plan | 2005 |
| 4.505 | Gen Ed Renewal - Program Elements (Arts & Sciences) | 2005 |
| 4.506 | Gen Ed Renewal – Status Report (Arts & Sciences AVP Memo) | 2005 |

| | | |
|---|--|------|
| 4.507 | Gen Ed Renewal – Renewal Team Report | 2005 |
| 4.508 | Information Literacy Events Timeline | 2005 |
| 4.511 | Information Literacy - Faculty Survey | 2004 |
| 4.521 | Information Literacy - Information Literacy Committee Timeline | 2004 |
| 4.531 | Information Literacy – Library Backgrounder | 2004 |
| 4.541 | Information Literacy Rubric (draft) | 2005 |
| 4.611 | Outcomes Assessment Council – Structure and Membership | 2005 |
| 4.705 | Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan | 2004 |
| 4.706 | Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan – Institutional Level | 2005 |
| 4.710 | Student Learning Outcomes Assessment - Progress Report (MHEC) | 2004 |
| 4.715 | Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Training Video | 2005 |
| Human Resources | | |
| 5.110 | Career Web: Administrative and Support | 2005 |
| 5.112 | Educational Attainment: Faculty/Staff (Alphabetical order by title) | 2005 |
| 5.113 | Educational Attainment: Faculty/Staff (Rank order by title) | 2005 |
| 5.114 | Faculty: Evaluation Schedule | 2005 |
| 5.1145 | Faculty: Faculty Salaries – Maryland Community Colleges | 2005 |
| 5.115 | Faculty Five-Year Salary Adjustment Plan | 2004 |
| 5.1152 | Faculty: FCC Faculty Data – Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 5.1154 | Faculty: Full-Time Faculty – MD Community Colleges 93-03 | 2005 |
| 5.1155 | Faculty: Part-Time Faculty – MD Community Colleges 93-03 | 2005 |
| 5.1157 | Faculty: Ratio of Student Credit Hours to Faculty Hours (MD CC) | 2005 |
| 5.116 | Faculty: Full-Time/Part-Time Ratio (Fall 2004) | 2004 |
| 5.1161 | Faculty: Full-Time/Part-Time Ratio – FCC Math and Psychology Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 5.1163 | Faculty: Full-Time/Part-Time Ratio – Provost Memo 9/1/05 | 2005 |
| 5.1165 | Faculty: Professional Development Activities, 2002-05 | 2005 |
| 5.117 | Faculty – Reassign Time Planning | 2005 |
| 5.118 | HR – Board of Trustees Report | 2005 |
| 5.210 | HR Forms | 2005 |
| 5.215 | HR Forms - Appraisal | 2005 |
| 5.217 | HR Forms – Appraisal: Cultural Competence Definitions | 2005 |
| 5.228 | HR Forms – Department Chair Evaluation | 2005 |
| 5.233 | HR Forms – Program Manager Self-Evaluation | 2005 |
| 5.310 | Job Descriptions | 2005 |
| 5.314 | Job Description – Adjunct Faculty | 2005 |
| 5.316 | Job Description - Faculty | 2005 |
| 5.390 | Performance Evaluation Rating Standards. Definitions. | 2002 |
| 5.410 | Professional Development Calendar | 2005 |
| 5.420 | Professional Development – Employee Development Plan Areas | 2005 |
| 5.450 | Recruiting Process Flow Chart | 2004 |
| 5.472 | Sabbatical Roster 2002-06 | 2005 |
| Facilities, Finance, and Auxiliary Enterprises | | |
| 6.105 | Annual Budget Process | |
| 6.110 | Annual Financial Report FY01 | 2001 |
| 6.111 | Annual Financial Report FY02 | 2002 |
| 6.112 | Annual Financial Report FY03 | 2003 |
| 6.113 | Annual Financial Report FY04 | 2004 |
| 6.114 | Annual Financial Report FY05 | 2005 |
| 6.120 | Approved Operating Budget FY05 | 2005 |
| 6.121 | Approved Operating Budget FY06 | 2005 |
| 6.123 | Operating Budget: Changes FY05 to FY06 | 2005 |
| 6.125 | Recommended Operating Budget - FY 2006 | 2005 |
| 6.132 | Budget Development Guidelines and Instructions | 2007 |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------|
| 6.141 | Budget - Financial Forecast FY03 - 07 | 2005 |
| 6.210 | Auxiliary Enterprises – Bookstore: Consultant’s Report | 2003 |
| 6.220 | Auxiliary Enterprises - Children’s Center: Business Plan | 2005 |
| 6.232 | Auxiliary Enterprises - Dining Services Business Plan | 2004 |
| 6.405 | Facilities Condition Assessment | 2002 |
| 6.410 | Facilities Maintenance Report | 2004 |
| 6.420 | Facilities Master Plan-2003-2023 | 2003 |
| 6.431 | Facilities – Capital Improvements Program FY07 – FY12 | 2005 |
| 6.435 | Facilities – Computation of Space Needs | 2005 |
| 6.441 | Facilities – Workforce Development Center/Second Campus - Options | 2005 |
| 6.711 | Scheduling Task Force Report | 2005 |
| Learning | | |
| 7.015 | Curriculum – Co-Curricular Calendar Fall 2004 | 2004 |
| 7.016 | Curriculum – Co-Curricular Calendar Spring 2004 | 2004 |
| 7.017 | Curriculum – Co-Curricular Calendar Fall 2005 | 2005 |
| 7.019 | Curriculum – Co-Listed Courses (Credit/Non-Credit) Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 7.025 | Curriculum – New Course/Program Proposal Form | 2005 |
| 7.026 | Curriculum – Non-Credit Course Proposal Form | 2005 |
| 7.027 | Curriculum – Removal/Reinstatement of Course - Form | 2005 |
| 7.028 | Curriculum – Submission Process Form | 2005 |
| 7.031 | Curriculum – Syllabi Collection | 2005 |
| 7.052 | Retention – Administrative Process | 2004 |
| 7.055 | Retention – Retention Plan | 2000 |
| 7.056 | Retention – Retention Plan: Progress Report | 2003 |
| 7.058 | Retention - Retention Totals 2004-05 | 2005 |
| 7.101 | Arts & Sciences – Assessment Projects 2005-06 | 2005 |
| 7.103 | Arts & Sciences – BI 55 Tutorial: Description and Information | 2005 |
| 7.115 | Arts & Sciences - Developmental English: Outcomes Report | 2003 |
| 7.120 | Arts & Sciences - Developmental Math: Outcomes Report | 2003 |
| 7.121 | Arts & Sciences - Developmental Math: Goals 2003 – Current Assessment | 2005 |
| 7.1213 | Arts & Sciences - Developmental Math: Math 92 Grade Analysis FY04 | 2004 |
| 7.122 | Arts & Sciences - Developmental Math: Pilot Study | 2004 |
| 7.123 | Arts & Sciences – ESL: Placement Testing – Fall 04 - Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 7.124 | Arts & Sciences – ESL: Program Manager Job Description | 2005 |
| 7.125 | Arts & Sciences - International Education: Program Agreement | 2004 |
| 7.135 | Arts & Sciences - Leadership | 2005 |
| 7.153 | Arts & Sciences – Math Course Enrollments: Fall 01-Fall 05 | 2005 |
| 7.161 | Arts & Sciences – Strategic Plan Initiatives | 2005 |
| 7.175 | Arts & Sciences - Student Life: International Film Festival Schedule | 2005 |
| 7.183 | Arts & Sciences - Student Life: Student Leader Initiative. Documents | 2005 |
| 7.302 | CTL – Adjunct Orientation | 2005 |
| 7.305 | CTL – Organizational Chart | 2005 |
| 7.310 | CTL - Distance Learning: Annual Report 2004 | 2004 |
| 7.311 | CTL – Distance Learning: Business Plan 2003-06 | 2004 |
| 7.313 | CTL – Distance Learning – Course Peer Review Documents | 2004 |
| 7.314 | CTL – Distance Learning – Faculty Peer Review Documents | 2005 |
| 7.315 | CTL - Distance Learning Services | 2004 |
| 7.319 | CTL – Faculty Evaluation: Who Does What | 2005 |
| 7.326 | CTL - First Year Initiatives: Annual Report | 2004 |
| 7.3267 | CTL – First Year Student Advising – Student Presentation | 2005 |
| 7.327 | CTL - Learning Strategies - Mission and Goals | 2004 |
| 7.331 | CTL - Learning Technologies: Annual Report 05 | 2005 |
| 7.335 | CTL - Library: Annual Report ‘04 | 2004 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------|
| 7.336 | CTL – Library: Annual Report ‘05 | 2005 |
| 7.337 | CTL – Library: Collection Development Policy | 2004 |
| 7.338 | CTL – Library: Faculty Focus Group Plan | 2005 |
| 7.341 | CTL – Library: Student Evaluations 01-04 | 2001-04 |
| 7.355 | CTL - Testing Center: Annual Report ‘04 | 2004 |
| 7.361 | CTL – Tutorial Services: Annual Report ‘05 | 2005 |
| 7.367 | CTL – Tutorial Services: Tutor/Student Agreement | 2005 |
| 7.375 | CTL - Writing Center: Annual Report ‘03 | 2003 |
| 7.376 | CTL - Writing Center: Annual Report ‘05 | 2005 |
| 7.380 | CTL - Mission and Goals | 2004 |
| 7.515 | Customized Training – Course Evaluation/Market Survey Results | 2004 |
| 7.517 | Customized Training – Engineering Systems Solutions Courses 03-04 | 2005 |
| 7.525 | Customized Training Survey Form – Customer Service | 2000 |
| 7.710 | Stud Dev - Adult Services: Annual Report 04 | 2004 |
| 7.715 | Stud Dev - Advising Guide | 2004 |
| 7.720 | Stud Dev - Advising Manual | 2004 |
| 7.721 | Stud Dev - Assessment Plan | 2004 |
| 7.730 | Stud Dev - Mission Statement | 2004 |
| 7.737 | Stud Dev – Mentoring Program: Mentee Early Alert Intervention Study | 2004 |
| 7.746 | Stud Dev - Services for Students with Disabilities: Annual Report 05 | 2005 |
| 7.749 | Stud Dev – Student Goal Attainment Plan | 2004 |
| 7.911 | W&PP - Allied Health & Wellness – Nursing Licensure Exam Results | 2002-04 |
| 7.931 | W&PP – Con Ed: Scorecard Form | 2005 |
| 7.932 | W&PP – Con Ed: Scorecard Form, Program | 2005 |
| 7.934 | W&PP – Institute for Learning in Retirement: Annual Report | 2005 |
| 7.9347 | W&PP – Nursing Program Self Study Report: Executive Summary | 2005 |
| 7.935 | W&PP – Program Advisory Boards | 2005 |
| 7.940 | W&PP - Program Viability Report | 2004 |
| 7.963 | W&PP – Police Science: Memoranda of Understanding | 2005 |
| Learning Support | | |
| 8.050 | Academic Grievance Forms | 2005 |
| 8.111 | Athletics - Annual Report | 2004 |
| 8.114 | Athletics – MD JuCo Athletic Conference Operating Code | 2004 |
| 8.115 | Athletics – NJCAA Handbook and Casebook | 2005 |
| 8.217 | Financial Aid – Student Rating 2004 2003 | 2004 |
| 8.320 | IT: Analysis of and Recommendations for IT Services Status Report 2005 | 2004 |
| 8.323 | IT: Computer Replacement Plan | 2005 |
| 8.325 | IT: HelpDesk Satisfaction Survey | 2005 |
| 8.350 | IT: Strategic Initiatives FY05 | 2005 |
| 8.402 | Learning Support – Annual Report FY05 | 2005 |
| 8.403 | Learning Support – Assessment Plan 2005-06 | 2005 |
| 8.410 | Learning Support – Strategic Initiatives 2004-05 | 2004 |
| 8.412 | Learning Support – Strategic Initiatives 2005-06 | 2005 |
| 8.614 | Student Operations/Registrar - FERPA Compliance | 1998 |
| 8.627 | Student Operations/Registrar – Late Registration Study | 2004 |
| 8.671 | Student Operations/Registrar - Advanced Standing (Transfer Credit) | 2004 |
| 8.674 | Student Operations/Registrar – College Information Center Proposal | 2005 |
| 8.678 | Student Operations/Registrar – Student Grievance Report | 2005 |
| 8.681 | Student Operations/Registrar - Welcome Center Annual Report | 2004 |
| 8.751 | Student Support Services - Directory | 2005 |
| 8.756 | Student Support Services – Descriptions and Assessments | 2005 |
| 8.810 | Virtual Career Center | 2005 |
| 8.813 | Virtual Transfer Center | 2004 |

| Marketing and Enrollment | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------|
| 9.110 | Academic Catalog | 2005 |
| 9.210 | Brochures – Athletics | 2005 |
| 9.220 | Brochures - Customized Training | 2005 |
| 9.225 | Brochures - Financial Aid | 2005 |
| 9.230 | Brochures - Honors Program | 2004 |
| 9.240 | Brochures – Programs | 2005 |
| 9.250 | Brochures - Viewbook for High School Students | 2003 |
| 9.410 | Enrollment and Marketing - Annual Report to BOT | 2003 |
| 9.420 | Enrollment Management - Annual Report | 2003 |
| 9.421 | Enrollment Management - Annual Report | 2004 |
| 9.430 | Enrollment Management - Strategic Plan 04-06 | 2004 |
| 9.431 | Enrollment Management - Strategic Plan 05-07 | 2005 |
| 9.450 | Enrollment Reports - Credit State Aid Eligible (CC -2) | '95–'03 |
| 9.460 | Enrollment Reports – Current FCC Credit | 2005 |
| 9.810 | Schedule of Classes - Credit | 2005-06 |
| 9.820 | Schedule of Classes - Non-credit | 2005-06 |
| Committee Meetings Minutes | | |
| 10.110 | Administrative Staff Association | 2005 |
| 10.210 | Board of Trustees | 2005 |
| 10.310 | Planning and Budget Council | 2005 |
| 10.315 | Planning and Budget Council Meeting Notes 9.7.04 | 2004 |
| 10.460 | Faculty Association | 2005 |
| 10.465 | Faculty Association – Review of Policies and Procedures | 2005 |
| 10.710 | President's Leadership Council | 2005 |
| 10.715 | President's Leadership Council-Highlights 11.15.04 | 2004 |
| 10.716 | President's Leadership Council-Highlights 12.12.04 | 2004 |
| 10.717 | President's Leadership Council-Highlights 1.25.05 | 2005 |
| 10.910 | Support Personnel Association | 2005 |
| Additional External Documents | | |
| 13.105 | College of the Air Distance Education Consortium | 2005 |
| 13.210 | Enrollment - Credit Enrollment (MACC Databook I-J) | 2004 |
| 13.215 | Enrollment - Non-Credit Enrollment (MACC Databook II-E) | 2004 |
| 13.310 | Greater Expectations: National Panel Report, AAC&U | 2002 |
| 13.430 | International Association for Continuation Education and Training - Standards | 2005 |
| 13.510 | Maryland Association of Community Colleges Databook | 2005 |
| 13.515 | Expenditures by Function Table VD-MACC Databook 04 | 2004 |
| 13.531 | Maryland – Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR): Faculty | 2005 |
| 13.551 | Maryland Code – Education Title 16: Community Colleges | 2005 |
| 13.557 | Maryland Code – State Government Title 15: Public Ethics | 2005 |
| 13.606 | Maryland Higher Education Commission Report Schedule | 2005 |
| 13.612 | MarylandOnline | 2005 |

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Part Five: Self-Study Steering Committee and Working Groups

2006 Self-Study Steering Committee

* replaced before completion of report

| Name | Title |
|---|--|
| Barbara Angleberger | Working Group IV Co-chair Acting Chair, Social Sciences; Assistant Professor, Psychology |
| Genevieve Cooke* Nathan Williams | Self-Study Support /Library Assistant; Self-Study Support /Library Assistant |
| Ann Commito | Self Study Chair Associate Professor, Mathematics |
| Gohar Farahani | Executive Director, Outcome Assessment, Planning and Research |
| Rich Fulton | Chair, Communications, Humanities and Arts |
| Bev Hendrix | Director, Diversity and Global Initiatives |
| Doug Holt* Rich Gottfried | Working Group V Co-chair/Chair , CEProgram Manager; Professor, Physics and Geology; Coordinator, Engineering |
| Dixie J. Miller* Stephen Burgoon | Board of Trustees; Board of Trustees |
| Debby McClellan | Working Group III Co-chair Director, Counseling |
| Mick O'Leary | Self Study Chair Executive Director, Library |
| Tracy Parker | Working Group II Co-chair Assistant Professor, Social Sciences; Program Manager / Legal Assistant |
| Mark Paugh | Working Group I Co-chair Chair, Allied Health & Wellness Program Director, Respiratory Therapy |
| Laurie Sexton* Brenda Ferko | Development Coordinator; Academic Office Manager |
| Chad Shoemaker | Student Government Association |
| Anne Slater | Working Group VI Co-chair Associate Professor, English Coordinator: EN101 |

2006 Self-Study Working Groups

| Working Group I: Institutional Planning and Resources | |
|--|---|
| Kim Johnson | Co-chair / Manager, Grant Development |
| Mark Paugh | Co-chair / Chair, Allied Health & Wellness / Prog. Dir., Resp. Therapy |
| Beth Holmberg | Professor, English |
| Gary Hull | Assistant Professor, Mathematics |
| Peg Mauzy | Assistant Professor, Center for Teaching and Learning |
| Ruth White | Manager, Science Laboratories |
| Rebecca Yankosky | Chair, Computing and Business Technology |
| Working Group II: Institutional Leadership and Integrity | |
| Brenda Ferko | Co-chair / Academic Office Manager, Social Sciences |
| Tracy Parker | Co-chair / Assist. Prof., Social Sciences / Prog. Man. Legal Assist. |
| Donna Mills | Assistant Professor, Mathematics |
| Sally Pearl | Executive Secretary |
| Michael Pritchard | Director, Marketing |
| Linda Seek | Senior Administrative Assistant |
| Lisa Sheirer | Associate Professor/Prog. Manager Computer Graphics and Photography |
| Robert Young | Associate Vice President, Learning / Dean, Workforce Dev. Prep. |
| Working Group III: Institutional and Learning Assessment | |
| Kenneth Kerr | Co-chair / Associate Professor, English |
| Debralee McClellan | Co-Chair / Associate Vice President, Student Development |
| Christopher Carlton | Counselor, Special Populations |
| Joan Disburg | Associate Professor, Communications |
| Kathryn Fenimore | Assistant Professor, Mathematics |
| Kate Scangarello | Research Assistant, Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research |
| Susan Trost | Associate Professor, Computing and Business Technology |
| Peggy Waxter | Research Associate, Outcomes Assessment, Planning, and Research |
| Working Group IV: Student Admissions and Support Services | |
| Barbara Angleberger | Co-chair / Acting Chair, Social Sciences / Assist. Prof., Psychology |
| Kathy Frawley | Co-chair / Associate Vice President, Operations |
| Marty Crabbs | Associate Professor, Accounting and Business |
| Lisa Freel | Coordinator, Recruitment and Outreach |
| Marion Furry-Hovde | Assistant, Library |
| Thomas Jandovitz | Director, Athletics |
| James Morrison | Project Director, PeopleSoft |
| Steve Prehoda | Professor, Mathematics |
| Pat Standifer | Accounting Manager |
| Ted Taft | Professor, English |

| Working Group V: Faculty and General Education | |
|---|--|
| Richard Gottfried | Co-chair / Professor, Physics and Geology / Coord., Faculty Eval. |
| Douglas Holt | Co-chair / Chair, Adult and Cont. Ed./ Prog. Man., Construction |
| Joseph Campbell | Associate Professor, Art |
| Daniel Fout | Library Specialist |
| Joanna Gannon | Assistant Professor, Mathematics |
| Katherine Helfrich | Professor, Human Service and Psychology |
| Felicia Monticelli | Manager, Writing Center |
| Dave Moreland | Associate Professor, Art History |
| Bill Quinn | Associate Professor, Mathematics |
| Alberto Ramirez | Director, Learning Technologies |
| Frank Seidel | Associate Professor, Computer and Info. Sci. |
| Working Group VI: Educational Offerings | |
| Christine Helfrich | Co-chair / Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning |
| Anne Slater | Co-chair / Associate Professor, English / Coordinator, EN101 |
| Rosemarie Alavanja | Associate Professor, Computing and Business Technology |
| Mary Garst | Testing Center Support |
| Jurgen Hilke | Director, Distance Learning / Professor, Philosophy |
| Elizabeth Holton | Assistant Professor, English |
| Bonnie Jones | Academic Office Manager, Science |
| Donna Lane | Program Manager, Business / Assoc. Professor, Accounting and Business |
| Nicole Martin | Reference Librarian |
| Wendell Poindexter | Program Manager, Art / Director, Art Center / Assist. Prof., Art |
| Michael Powell | Professor, History/Political Science |
| Sandy Smith | Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management |

[Back to Table of Contents](#)