Institutional Summary Reports
For
Midlands Technical College

Introduction

This summary report for Midlands Technical College (MTC) includes: Majors or Concentrations, and Procedures for Student Development.

The following components will be reported in the annotated year: General Education (2010), Academic Advising (2008), Library Resources and Services (2009) and Achievement of Students Transferring From Two-to-Four Year Institutions (2008).

The final section of the report contains MTC's statement concerning the institution's policies and procedures to provide a "technologically skilled workforce."

1. General Education

This component was last reported in 2006. Based on the report schedule, this component will be reported next in 2010.

2. Majors or Concentrations

Midlands Technical College (MTC) assesses specific majors on a three-to-five year cycle that is designed to coincide with the reaffirmation visit from external accreditation agencies. The assessment of majors determines the degree to which specific programs provide specialized knowledge, skills and attitudes leading to employment in the field or discipline and/or success in transfer to a senior-level program.

The program review process, which generates the assessment of majors, includes an analysis of the specific data elements identified to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the academic programs offered at MTC. The effectiveness component of the process focuses on the learning outcomes, clients' satisfaction, and the vitality of each program. The efficiency component focuses on quantitative data that indicates the programs' cost, space utilization rate, and average size of course section taught. In 2005-2006 the following programs were assessed: Architectural Engineering Technology (AET), Civil Engineering Technology (CET), Electrical Engineering Technology (EET), and Criminal Justice (CRJ).

In accordance with the Institutional Effectiveness process, the college annually reviews the progress each program makes on implementing the recommendations generated through the program review process. In 2006-2007, the programs made the following improvements:

The Criminal Justice (CRJ) program focused on improving advisement, strengthening relationships with the CRJ community and improving graduate technology competencies.

Criminal Justice (CRJ):

- Added emphasis was placed on the importance of and growing reliance on technology and computers within the criminal justice community. CRJ advisors encouraged CRJ students to choose additional computer courses as their required electives.

- CRJ Faculty Members strengthened its relationships with law enforcement agencies by: (1) attending the monthly Law Enforcement Chief's Breakfast; (2) securing student internships with local law enforcement agencies; (3) participating as volunteers to work at various law

enforcement agencies; (4) maintaining regular contact with members of CRJ Advisory Committee; and (5) using law enforcement agency personnel as adjunct faculty members and guest speakers in CRJ classes

- Advisor availability was increased through the use of unassigned advisors on the main campuses and the expanded availability of advisors by telephone at Ft. Jackson.

All three engineering programs, Architectural Engineering Technology, Civil Engineering Technology and Electrical Engineering Technology, focused on improving student recruitment and retention; increasing opportunities to complete degree requirements and expanding offerings to meet community needs.

To assist in improving student recruitment and retention the Engineering Technology Department has gained approval to hire an outreach/retention specialist specifically for the engineering technologies.

Architectural Engineering Technology (AET):

- Engineering faculty provided more on-site experience with design and construction by allowing AET 101 students to visit four construction sites and to build construction models of various building types.

- Engineering faculty developed new certificate programs focused on building design, building codes, AutoCAD, and construction materials to meet industry needs. Approval of the certificate programs is pending approval.

- To enhance recruitment efforts, the Engineering faculty has begun to develop an in-house video using students and their work.

- Course offering were expanded with three additional night courses and two hybrid courses and AET updated curricula material on their web site.

Civil Engineering Technology (CET):

- The Civil Engineering Technology program improved retention efforts through work with high school teachers, principals, and counselors by making presentations to middle school students, participating in the NSF/USC Civil Engineering awareness effort introducing middle school students to the scientific method; and participating in the 1st Robotics regional competition. The program also acquired and used the DVD and CD presentation developed by the American Society of Civil Engineer in their presentations.

- Increased the number of field trips to the SC Department of Transportation, local steel contractors, and manufacturers of building materials and assisted ten CET students in obtaining part-time or full-time employment opportunities in the field to provide more real world exposure.

- The Civil Engineering Technology program added additional evening courses to semester offerings, specifically Geomantic and Geographic Information Systems, to meet student and community needs.

- The Civil Engineering Technology program improved the CET webpage through the coordinated effort of CET faculty and the program's Advisory Committee members.

Electrical Engineering Technology (EET):

- Strengthened its recruiting efforts through meetings with local school counselors, participated at Fall kick-off, a face-to-face meeting with students and parents; and conducted six in-lab tours for students from the 7th, 8th, and 9th grade.

- Increased focus on written and oral communication skills by incorporating written requirements into all electronics labs with students being assessed on response content, quality, and basics such as spelling and grammar and presentations are required in some labs to evaluate student grasp of concepts. A formal report and presentation is required for the EET final project.

- Developed certificate programs addressing three-phase power, power generation and delivery, and advanced automation in response to community needs; also an additional elective has been incorporated into the program with a choice between power or automation. Three new laboratories were developed to support robotics, 3-phase power and industrial controls, and fuel cells and alternate energy.

- Added evening classes; open lab sessions were made available two nights per week.

- Incorporated EGR 109, *Engineering Project Management,* into the EET degree and all of the basic EET certificates to meet the need for more training on engineering project planning and basic business skills.

3. Academic Advising

This component was last reported in 2004. Based on the report schedule, this component will be reported next in 2008.

4. Achievement of Students Transferring From Two-to-Four Year Institutions

This component was last reported in 2004. Based on the report schedule, this component will be reported next in 2008.

5. Procedures for Student Development

Midlands Technical College (MTC) assesses the effectiveness of Student Development Services (SDS) every four years, conducts an in-depth review of each SDS department on a five-year cycle, and regularly assesses student personal development. There are three levels of assessment: (1) user satisfaction with services; (2) in-depth departmental reviews; and (3) student self-perceived growth and development.

User satisfaction is based on opinion surveys, with ratings compared against a standard of 85 percent, or a rating of 3.2 on a 4.0 scale (4.0 on a 5.0 scale). Departmental reviews consist of an in depth self-study by the department and assessment by an external review team comprised of students, faculty and staff outside the department, and a departmental director from a peer institution of similar size and mission. Ratings were based on a 5.0 scale through 2004, using guidelines adapted from the Council on the Advancement of Standards (CAS). Beginning in 2005, the CAS rating scale changed to 4.0. Student growth and development is determined from student self-perception surveys at points through and beyond the student's college experience. When appropriate, survey information and other data stimulate the use of more in-depth qualitative interviews and focus group assessments. No standard has been set for student personal growth, but survey ratings at or above the national norm for two-year colleges are desired, where applicable.

With few exceptions, students and alumni remain satisfied with services, with 2004-2007 ratings similar to those of 2000-2003. During 2004-2007, MTC-constructed student satisfaction surveys were used to gauge alumni perceptions and obtain specific departmental feedback. A nationally normed survey, the ACT *Faces of the Future Survey,* was used to assess MTC student perceptions, compared to national norms for two-year colleges. In the 2004 *Faces of the Future Survey* report, students yielded ratings above the national average on most personal development and student services items. Students rated financial assistance and registration processes slightly below the national average for two-year colleges. Similar findings were revealed on the 1999 and 2001 *Faces of the Future Survey*. However, ratings for "receiving all the help I needed with financial assistance" increased from 3.36 in 2001 to 3.52 in 2004, and the rating for a student-friendly registration process increased from 3.82 to 3.91 during this same period. The quality of academic advising was rated slightly below the national average in 1999 and 2001, but increased above the national average on the 2004 survey. Conversely, students showed a slight decline below the 4.0 standard and the national average in their sense of safety and security on campus. Student responses to personal development items fluctuated from 1999 to 2004; however, responses to most personal development items on the most recent 2004 survey were above the national average. MTC student responded above the national average for two-year college students on items such as "increasing my academic competence," "learning skills needed specifically for my current or future job," "identifying the training and skills required for career opportunities that fit my interests and abilities," enriching my intellectual life," "developing self-confidence," "learning effective leadership skills," "developing an openness to opinions other than my own," and "learning how to work effectively as a member of a team."

Eight program reviews of Student Development Services functions were conducted from 2004 to 2007. Reviews of Student Activities, Counseling Services, Advisement and Student Support Services were evaluated in 2004, on a 5.0 scale. Educational Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Center, Center for Adult Learners and Job Training, Disability Services and Upward Bound were assessed in 2005 and 2006, using the new 4.0 scale. For comparison purposes, the 5.0-scale ratings are converted and presented here on the 4.0 scale, which will be the scale used from 2005 forward. With the exception of Counseling Services, which received a 3.0, all Student Development Services functions received ratings well above the 3.2 standard on the 4.0 scale, with ratings ranging from 3.8 to 4.0. The Counseling Services evaluation team veered away from the standard CAS assessment and used a more open-ended, formative assessment, yielding an overall rating of 3.0 and a statement that the department had evidence of positive performance and student outcomes but needed better documentation of results. Lowest functional ratings were in the areas of adequate staffing, financial resources, and documentation of ethical standards. Several departments received suggestions to enhance evaluation data.

Students surveyed on the *Faces of the Future Survey* in 2004 expressed positive feelings about Midlands Technical College, with 79.2 percent responding that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the college. However, the students' satisfaction level was below the national average of 83.6 percent, and satisfaction levels slipped slightly from the 1999 rating of 82.4 percent. These same students rated the college 4.1 on a 5.0 scale for "having a good reputation in the community," and 4.2 on the item, "I would recommend this college to friends and relatives." Graduates assessed in 2005-06 on the college-constructed *Graduate Follow-up Survey* also expressed positive perceptions of the college, with 95.8 percent saying they would recommend MTC to friends and relatives and 73.8 percent stating that they had achieved their educational goals. Services not above the 85 percent standard included Student Life, Advisement, Financial Aid Services, Job Placement and Career Counseling. These services showed ratings similar to the 2002-03 assessment, with the exception of Financial Aid Services, which increased significantly, from 44.7 percent to 66.4 percent, and Student Life, which declined from 90.2 to 82.2.

The 2004 cohort of students assessed on the ACT *Faces of the Future Survey* rated the college's contribution to their personal growth and development above the national average on items such as "developing self-confidence," "developing an openness to ideas other than my own," "learning effective leadership skills," "learning how to work effectively as a member of the team," "enriching my intellectual life" and "increasing my academic competence." However, alumni assessed on the *Alumni Survey* in 2005 expressed ratings ranging from 14 to 33 percent regarding their involvement in "life-long learning and personal enrichment", "social/recreational organizations", "participation in the arts" and "volunteer, public or community service." These ratings fluctuated from 2001 to 2005 but remained in this same

range. Student focus group information also pointed to the need to better engage students in the college and community as the college plans student learning enhancements. The highest ranked "engagement" item was "voting in an election after graduation," with 69.0 percent of alumni responding affirmatively, with ratings slightly high than the 2003 and 2005 groups.

Findings from the 2004-2007 assessment studies resulted in the following actions: (1) Additional trend data was collected from college students and graduates regarding the college's contribution to student personal development. Student focus groups were conducted with student leaders to assess the campus environment and with African American male students to barriers to success and programs/services which contributed to their success. This qualitative information resulted in several changes to the campus environment and the formation of an African-American Male Leadership Institute. (2) Eight additional program reviews were conducted for Student Development Services programs, using revised CAS standards and the new 4.0 rating scale; (3) Changes were made in key enrollment-related services, which yielded increased student satisfaction with advisement above the national average, and improved student satisfaction with student financial services; (4) Evaluation of student online services continued, with the creation of new online resources and the formation of a Student Online Advisory Panel (SOAP) to provide feedback regarding the development of online services and resources; and (5) Quantitative and qualitative assessments of online services, advisement, student leadership development, and student financial services were conducted to improve student service satisfaction and positive student development outcomes.

Four objectives are identified for the 2008-2011 action plan: (1) Implement the *Community College Survey of Student Engagement* to obtain information about student involvement with college functions and personnel and to assist in developing strategies to better engage students in the campus community. (2) Further develop targeted initiatives such as the African-American Male Leadership Institute and interventions with academically under-prepared students, to increase the quality of student life, learning and personal development. (3) Continue to assess student use and satisfaction with online and electronic services, and implement strategies to further enhance these services to meet increasingly diverse student needs. (4) Complete qualitative focus groups with targeted student populations to enhance services and programs to specific groups. (5) Complete six additional Student Development Services program reviews, using the revised CAS standards

6. Library Resources and Services

This component was last reported in 2005. Based on the report schedule, this component will be reported next in 2009.