

# **Assurance Argument**

# Mid-Plains Community College

**Review date: 10/24/2022**

# 1 - Mission

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

## Argument

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### **Response to 1.A.1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.**

Mid-Plains Community College follows a strategic and inclusive process in developing its mission. MPCC is a two-year public institution with a local Board of Governors representing [the 18-county service area](#) of the college. The most recent thorough review was conducted by the Board of Governors in the fall of 2016; the board held a retreat specifically to focus on a review of the mission and values to see whether any adjustments were warranted. This was done in conjunction with the college cabinet and within the context of legislative roles that the college was established to provide.

The proposed changes to the mission and values were presented to the employees of the college at campus meetings in August 2016. [After the initial proposal of adjustments to the mission were initiated by the Board](#), they were presented to the employees of the college for consideration and feedback. There were 23 different comments received about the mission and [adjustments were considered and made by the Board of Governors](#) in light of the employee feedback before final approval of the mission at the October 2016 Board meeting.

MPCC's mission is:

*Transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*

An update to the college values statements also occurred in 2016 concurrent with the mission statement review. The updated values statement is as follows:

MPCC believes that certain values should guide each decision made in the operation of the college. We value excellence in education through:

- Integrity
- Programs that enhance the quality of life for people and our region
- Accessibility and affordability
- Respect for our college, communities, and the people we serve
- Open and honest communication
- Safe, quality, and engaging environments
- Continuous collaboration among all campuses

One value statement in particular added at that time, “continuous collaboration among all campuses,” has taken root since that time through greater collaboration of academic and student services in reaching students attending at these smaller campus sites. This is especially evident in the student registration days at community campuses, collaborative efforts by the newly formed Early Entry & Program Development department, and adjunct faculty orientations held at community campuses.

Building upon its mission and values, which was collaboratively constructed in 2016, Mid-Plains Community College's vision is to be the first choice for our region for education, partnerships, employers, and employees.

**Response to 1.A.2. The mission and related statements are current. They reference the institution’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.**

The mission and related statements are affirmed annually by the MPCC Board of Governors ([Last affirmation January 19, 2022](#)) and the mission and newly created vision were utilized during the 2018-19 academic year as the driving force for the collection and analysis of stakeholder input during the creation of the [2019-2022 Institutional Strategic Plan](#).

The Nebraska State Legislature determines the priorities/roles of all public community colleges in the state, including MPCC. These priorities include the instructional areas and services of a) applied technology and occupational education, b) transfer education, c) public service, and d) applied research.

Therefore, Mid-Plains Community College's mission, values, and vision are aligned with the Nebraska legislative priorities as well as its unique service region and student population. MPCC strategically plans to achieve its mission of "*Transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success.*"

**Response to 1.A.3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.**

The [mission and related statements](#) at MPCC are representative of being a two-year college located in

a rural region and providing higher education opportunities as well as business and community education. The scope and legislated priorities of the college are articulated in [Board policy 1000](#), which clearly delineates the types of educational offerings and services that are provided. The mission, role, and values of the college, along with a [map of the geographic service area](#) are also included in the college's Annual Report.

MPCC is a comprehensive, student-centered, open access institution, primarily devoted to providing quality instruction, public service, and student services intended to promote the success of a diverse student population, particularly those who have been traditionally underserved in other educational settings. MPCC consists of the McCook Community College in McCook, Nebraska; North Platte Community College in North Platte, Nebraska; and campuses located in Broken Bow, Ogallala, Valentine, and Imperial, Nebraska.

**Response to 1.A.4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.**

The state of Nebraska's expectations of community colleges, which includes transfer education, vocational education, and community education, are clearly addressed in the "Programs" section of the college website, as is the listing of appropriate resources available to students for achieving individual student success.

Programs and offerings of the college are under the purview of the Academic Affairs division, which has an [Instructional Services Team](#) (IST) that meets regularly to consider program or course offering changes. Members of the team include faculty, [division chairs](#), the vice president for academic affairs, director of advising, and the assessment coordinator. The mission, roles, and scope of the college are considered in decisions made by this team.

Consistent with a mission of "*Transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*," student support services available to students include admissions, advising, financial aid, tutoring, learning resources, disability services, career testing and services, as well as counseling services. Additionally, students have access to the information technology help desk and online tutoring.

Services provided are appropriate for a college where fall for-credit enrollment at the college generally is between 2,100 and 2,400 students and typically include approximately 50% degree seeking and 50% non-degree seeking, with over 80% of the non-degree seeking students being early entry, or students enrolled prior to receiving a high school diploma or equivalent.

Degree seeking students taking credit courses typically have a balance of 40% vocational/trades and 60% transfer education. The number of business and community education students runs approximately 10,000 per year, and the adult education program sees approximately 190 students per year. These enrollment figures represent the mission and the broad range of education and services provided related to the state legislated priorities.

**Response to 1.A.5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.**

The mission of Mid-Plains Community College is displayed in many prominent locations including the [institutional website](#), the [student portal website](#), and in documents ranging from [departmental assessment reports](#) to [employee performance appraisal forms](#). The mission appears in marketing and promotional materials. Furthermore, as part of the on-boarding process, the college's mission and values are communicated to new employees.

The role of MPCC is articulated in the [Annual Report](#) document, which clearly delineates the types of educational offerings and services that are provided. This listing of roles is also present on the "About MPCC" page of the college website, in the Student Handbook, and in various print publications. The hyperlinked document, "[MPCC Mission Role and Values](#)," on the "About MPCC" webpage contains the mission, role, and values of the college, along with a map of the geographic service area.

Mid-Plains Community College clearly articulates its mission, values, and vision through a variety of communication channels, to include the website, handbooks, and college reports.

## Sources

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- 1.A.1 Mission and Values Proposed Approved
- 1.A.1 Mission Values BOG Minutes
- 1.A.1 Service Area Map
- 1.A.2 Affirmation Policies 2022 BOG
- 1.A.2 Strategic Objectives 2019-22
- 1.A.3 18 County Map BOG
- 1.A.3 Board of Governors Policy 1000 Scope Mission Values
- 1.A.3 MPCC Mission and Related Statements
- 1.A.4 Division Chair Position Description
- 1.A.4 Instructional Services Team IST
- 1.A.5 Annual Report 2020-21
- 1.A.5 College Mission on Website
- 1.A.5 Employee Performance Appraisal.pdf
- 1.A.5 LC Assess Report Mission
- 1.A.5 MPCC Mission Role Values
- 1.A.5 MPCC Student Portal (Campus Web)

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

### Argument

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**Response to 1.B.1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.**

At Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), the value of accessibility to high quality learning opportunities is demonstrated by maintaining multiple physical locations throughout the 20,500 square mile service area and devoting resources to maintaining the required technological infrastructure. Delivering high quality instruction to locations through distance learning technology with dedicated rooms and job-specific mobile technology provides a local means to gain an education that provides job skills, preparation for success at four-year institutions, and training for business needs.

MPCC maintains a reputation for responding to community needs and bettering the communities served. A recent investment has been made in mobile technology focused on law enforcement training referred to as MILO (Multiple Interactive Learning Objectives). Law enforcement departments across the region were waiting more than a year to get scheduled for trainings because of the demand for units available in other parts of the state. The purchase of equipment and training of staff from the Business and Community Education (BCE) department in December 2018, has led to 25 [trainings](#) being held serving 206 students in various parts of the service area as of January 2022.

The BCE department delivers on business training needs and is also responsible for conducting [many enriching events for children and youth during the summer](#) to connect with and enrich the lives of constituents for the public good. Camp topics include theater, biology, art, science, nutrition, and safety. [The Imperial Campus](#) had a hiatus of these offerings in 2020 due to COVID-19 and in 2021 due to campus expansion construction and renewed the programming in 2022.

Continual efforts are made for the betterment of the public, including [partnerships with high schools to provide dual credit opportunities](#), vocational and trades training with high schools, as well as career exploration events with middle school students.

As a public, two-year institution that was established through local efforts and then legislatively acknowledged and charged to serve a designated 18-county region of the state of Nebraska, it is very clear that all MPCC actions and decisions are meant to serve the public.

**Response to 1.B.2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.**

Mid-Plains Community College, as described above, takes seriously its educational mission and responsibility. Accountability to this educational role is maintained through a locally elected Board of Governors who are regularly updated on the college budgeting process, and who approve spending through action at their monthly meetings. A number of procedures, policies, and reporting requirements assure that the use of public funds is appropriate. The organizational structure is reviewed regularly for evaluation of position needs and the institution is one of the most effective in the state.

The driving force of the college is to deliver on its mission of *transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*. Since the beginning of President Purdy's taking office, \$300,000 annually is budgeted for [instructional equipment needs](#). (3.D.4) An investment of \$3.2 million has been made in state-of-the-art equipment over the past ten years directly from the budget, not including grant-funded upgrades to equipment.

The college has partnered with all area high schools to provide access to concurrent enrollment opportunities. As these arrangements have been developed, the focus has been equitable access to college-level courses rather than financial returns to the college. The college has maintained a [relatively flat tax request](#) from local taxpayers from 2016-17 to 2021-22, while continuing to provide excellent quality education and services to students, as evidenced by sustained increases in [student success indicators](#).

Mid-Plains Community College's educational responsibility takes primacy over financial returns. Financial returns for investors (taxpayers) comes indirectly [through a more educated workforce, an enrichment to local culture, employment, and economic activity](#).

**Response to 1.B.3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.**

MPCC personnel engage with various external constituencies as appropriate, from extensive community outreach during institutional strategic planning to connecting with employers to determine training needs to helping meet the needs of rural high schools. The college's strategic planning process holds feedback from external constituencies in high regard. Community input sessions are held in the six communities with physical campuses during the stakeholder input portion of the strategic planning cycle. These sessions have representatives from education, business, and governmental organizations of local communities. Illustrative examples of the many ways in which MPCC engages with and is responsive to community needs include:

- The college's senior leadership regularly meet with their counterparts to seek collaborative efforts. Participation in the Project Health Education Laddering Program, aka Project HELP, grant was the result of collaboration of Chief Academic Officers (CAO's) to make a partnership of Central, Southeast, and Mid-Plains community colleges. Project HELP was launched to provide training and support to select individuals so they can complete a highly-skilled health-

- related program, improve their communication, and their job-seeking skills.
- The Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) work with the Governor's office for other programs such as [the Department of Administrative Services scholarship](#) that was created in 2022. Employees of the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services and their dependents now have access to a tuition discount resulting in 100% coverage of tuition at any Nebraska community college which is covered by a partnership of the community colleges and the state of Nebraska to provide the funding.
  - Faculty from Applied Technologies, Health Occupations, and Business & Technology divisions maintain close connections with businesses across the region in order to provide the education and training that those employers need from MPCC graduates. In response to industry demand, the [new program of Electrical Automation Control](#) was added. Specific curriculum design suggestions were taken from employers and a hybrid-based format was developed in order to meet employer needs. The hybrid format allows the students of the program, who are full-time employees of the businesses, to complete the curriculum while only needing to travel to the campus in North Platte one day per week. Other programs, such as the Auto Body program, [make changes based upon advisory feedback and industry standards](#) as appropriate.
  - The administrative staff of the college maintains regular travel across the service area to meet with constituents regarding education and training needs. Additionally, the Outreach department, including Business and Community Education, as well as operations at four community campuses maintain relationships in the communities served by the college and communicate those needs to departments that can facilitate meeting those needs.
  - The Early Entry & Program Development department, with two full-time staff, [makes physical visits to high schools](#) to engage the early entry students where they are taking classes. Many of the visits involve a collaboration with administrators at smaller campus locations with support from the enrollment management staff. These visits connect the college with the students and their guidance counselors. Students receive assistance in completing the early entry admissions information and help in getting registered for the right courses while engaging with the Early Entry staff. This staff meets with administration at the area high schools in order to make sure MPCC programming fits their needs.

In summary, MPCC engages with its external constituencies in multiple and varied ways, regularly reviews its services, and remains responsive to meeting the needs of the communities it serves.

## Sources

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- 1.B MILO Training Enrollment Numbers
- 1.B.1 Dual Credit Early Entry Advising Guides
- 1.B.1 Imperial Campus Youth Program Schedule
- 1.B.1 Ogallala Campus Youth Program Schedule.pdf
- 1.B.2 2021-22 Instructional Equipment Plan
- 1.B.2 MPCC Economic Value 2022.pdf
- 1.B.2 Property Tax Request 2016-2022.pdf
- 1.B.2 Student Success State Peer Comparisons
- 1.B.3 Early Entry Assess Report.pdf
- 1.B.3 Electrical Automation Control Program Proposal
- 1.B.3 Nebraska Teammates Tuition Assistance PR
- 1.B.3. Course Action Request AUTB 1120.pdf



## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

### Argument

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#### **Response to 1.C.1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.**

At Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), opportunities for connection with the globally connected world and civic engagement are made available in the classroom, on the field of play, in student organizations, at events on campus, and in communities throughout the college service area. Students often find themselves in classes with other students that represent the global, multicultural society due in large part to having athletic programs in McCook and North Platte that recruit students internationally, out-of-state, and from metropolitan areas. Student organizations and humanities courses provide opportunities for more in-depth engagement.

Faculty at the college are preparing students for informed citizenship and workplace success through regular, substantive classroom interactions and assignments. The general education outcomes directly impact students by increasing their written and oral communication skills, information literacy, cultural awareness, mathematics, scientific inquiry, and critical thinking skills.

[Social science course curriculum](#) includes service-learning opportunities to promote civic engagement and sensitivity to individuals from diverse backgrounds and abilities. In social science courses, students read novels, nonfiction pieces, and memoirs by people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, students utilize critical thinking skills in linking theoretical and course concepts to these works through written essays. Students analyze their cultural biases and values and how these may influence their relationships with those from backgrounds different than their own, considering theoretical evidence and findings. Active learning opportunities and course discussions allow students to examine diversity as represented through the intersectionality of social classifications such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, nationality, religion, class, sexual orientation, citizenship, and physical disability.

The career placement coordinator works to produce [a podcast, "Profession Confession,"](#) which introduces students and the public to different careers. It also includes helpful tips on topics such as successful transition to college and preparing to enter the workforce. Recently a focus has been made to create [more opportunities for students and employers to interact](#) with on-campus job fairs and inviting employers into classrooms to share employment expectations and make connections with faculty and students.

Another example of preparation for informed citizenship and workplace success is from the Applied Technology division. Students are presented opportunities to become MPCC ambassadors who work closely with recruiting and conduct campus tours, guiding groups or individuals around campus and into classrooms for personal interviews with faculty. The college is consistently [hosting area school districts' 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students](#) on campus for tours, shadowing our on-campus students, or participating in scholastic contests. Faculty members host classroom visits with businesses within and outside the MPCC service area who offer employment post-graduation, recruit students for employment opportunities, and provide student internships. Program faculty also provide students the opportunity to visit businesses and industries within their career fields to experience workplace expectations, conditions, and culture. Program syllabi require students to participate in customer service situations such as conducting estimates, and providing an explanation of detailed work related to the service industry. Interaction with suppliers, delivery drivers, and sales staff (face-to-face, email, websites, or telephone) provides opportunity for cultural interaction.

The Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) student organization regularly competes and wins at national competitions where students are competing not only against other two-year college students, but also against four-year college and university students. The purpose of PBL is to provide opportunities for postsecondary students to develop business-related career competencies. PBL is an integral part of the instructional program and promotes a sense of civic and personal responsibility. Members of PBL participate in regular chapter meetings, business tours, and help with any campus events leading citizenship activities such as blood drives, trash pickup, and March of Dimes events. As a part of their regular meetings, professional development can include career tips and a statewide “What’s in your briefcase” session with businesspeople from Nebraska.

The college maintains membership in the [Nebraska Community College Global Leadership](#) organization. This membership provides [connections with multicultural efforts across the state](#) for sharing best practices for global travel and education abroad. It also encourages sharing of curriculum resources and professional expertise with respect to global education. Through the organization MPCC students are afforded the opportunity to travel abroad while earning college credit with students from other community colleges in the state. In May 2022, a group of MPCC students [traveled to Ireland](#) for the organization's inaugural trip.

From general education courses and cocurricular programming to organizational memberships and honor societies, MPCC actively and intentionally prepares students for informed citizenship and workplace success, consistent with its mission, values, and institutional vision.

### **Response to 1.C.2. The institution’s processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.**

Equitable treatment of all constituents is consistent with the college's values of integrity; respect for our college, communities, and the people we serve; and safe, quality, and engaging environments. At MPCC, processes and activities that help achieve equitable treatment include, but are not limited to:

- Consistently [balanced spending](#) on women’s athletics as compared to men’s athletics.
- Recruitment of students of diverse backgrounds.
- Recent efforts to attain National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation to ensure equitable treatment of high school students taking college courses. Pursuing NACEP accreditation was the colleges first [Quality Initiative](#).

- Focusing on the needs of adult learners, [Sunday College](#) offers courses on an eight week schedule in a hybrid format via distance learning in McCook, North Platte and all four community campuses. The hybrid format allows students to take up to four courses in the fall and spring terms. Building on the Sunday College concept, in Spring 2022 student services staff scheduled adult learner focus groups in all six campus communities. [Information gathered from the focus groups](#) and an [additional survey](#) led to the creation of [adult learner orientations](#) in Fall 2022. These orientations will be held in the evenings and Saturdays with activities for children and grab-and-go meals provided.
- Provision of Title IX training as mandatory employee training through Safe Colleges online educational modules.
- When advertising job openings, the college uses the diversity package from Higher Ed Jobs to reach broader audiences.

Specific webpages are dedicated to informing [veterans](#), [students with disabilities](#), and [early entry/high school students](#) of the opportunities and support services available to them as they pursue their education with MPCC. Some student organizations specifically oriented to inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations include the International Club, Social Justice Group, Student Ambassadors, and others.

Consistent with institutional values, MPCC demonstrates inclusive and equitable treatment of its students. Examples include its initial HLC Quality Initiative (of NACEP accreditation), current recruitment of students, and its hybrid delivery of course content to adult students, veterans, and student athletes. In short, MPCC values and works to ensure all students feel respected and enjoy a safe and engaging learning environment.

**Response to 1.C.3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.**

The climate of respect for a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives is laid out as an expectation from the MPCC Board of Governors [policy 1000](#) and [policy 8200](#) Equal Opportunity. The stated scope of the college in the MPCC Board of Governors Policy manual is that MPCC is a comprehensive, student-centered, open access institution, primarily devoted to providing quality instruction, public service, and student services intended to promote the success of a diverse student population, particularly those who have been traditionally underserved in other educational settings. The most recent employee climate survey found [openness to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of others by supervisors](#) to be one of the ten top rated items (4.15 on a 5-point scale).

The [mission, values, and legislated priorities](#) of the college demonstrate the importance of having a climate of respect among students and employees of the college. The mission of the college addresses the success of “individual students,” meaning that the uniqueness of each individual student is to be taken into account when helping them reach their goals. All of the values of the college contribute in some way to fostering a climate of respect, and, in particular, the college values excellence in education through a) respect for our college, communities, and the people we serve, b) safe, quality, and engaging environments, and c) accessibility and affordability. The legislated priorities include foundations education (for students who need assistance preparing for college-level studies), as well as public service, including adult continuing education and personal development courses.

Human Resources provides [training opportunities](#) for staff, faculty, and administration each year by

providing access to professional development on various issues related to campus climate. Recent topics have included sexual harassment, personality assessments of employees, and how employees can capitalize on diverse communication styles, as well as leadership development. To further encourage a climate of respect, there are additional trainings that employees are required to attend. The extent to which campus climate [encourages differences of opinion to be aired openly is significantly higher at MPCC](#) than at other small community colleges (3.48 compared to 3.14 on a 5-point scale).

A number of faculty members sponsor student groups such as the [Social Justice Club](#), Phi Theta Kappa chapters, and International Club (3.B.3) that involve activities and community service projects that expose students to people with a range of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. To broaden MPCC students' opportunity to engage with diverse ideas and perspectives, staff members from various student services departments provide programming such as the VP leadership group, [topical speakers](#), and cultural experiences (3.B.3).

From legislated priorities, board policies, and institutional values, MPCC ensures training opportunities are offered fostering a climate of respect. Equally important, MPCC actively fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administration through a variety of campus activities and community services projects.

## Sources

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- 1.C.1 Career Services Assess Report
- 1.C.1 Diesel Technology Campus Tours
- 1.C.1 NE Global Leadership Ireland Trip SU 22
- 1.C.1 Nebraska CC Global Lead MOU.pdf
- 1.C.1 Nebraska CC Global Leadership
- 1.C.1 Profession Confession Podcast Analytics
- 1.C.1 Social Science Course Syllabi.pdf
- 1.C.2 Adult Learner Focus Group Results SP 2022
- 1.C.2 Adult Learner New Student Orientation PR
- 1.C.2 Adult Learner Survey Results
- 1.C.2 Athletic Equity Report
- 1.C.2 Disability Services Webpage
- 1.C.2 Early Entry Webpage
- 1.C.2 Quality Initiative Final Report Review
- 1.C.2 Sunday College PR
- 1.C.2 Veterans Resources Webpage
- 1.C.3 2019 PACE Survey Question 9
- 1.C.3 2019 PACE Survey Table 12
- 1.C.3 Board of Governors Policy 1000.pdf
- 1.C.3 Board of Governors Policy 8200 Equal Opportunity
- 1.C.3 HR Training Form and Schedule
- 1.C.3 Social Justice Club PR
- 1.C.3 Yoko Lawing PR

## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

### Summary

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Mid-Plains Community College clearly articulates its mission, values, and vision through a variety of communication channels including the college website, handbooks, and college reports. MPCC engages with its external constituencies in multiple and varied ways, regularly reviews its services, and remains responsive to meeting the needs of the communities it serves.

Highlights:

- Mid-Plains Community College's mission, values, and vision are aligned with the Nebraska legislative priorities as well as its unique service region and student population. MPCC strategically plans to ensure its mission of "*Transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*" is achieved.
- MPCC's educational responsibility takes primacy over financial returns. Financial returns for taxpayers comes indirectly through a more educated workforce, an enrichment to local culture, employment, and economic activity.
- Consistent with institutional values, MPCC demonstrates inclusive and equitable treatment of its students. Examples include its initial HLC Quality Initiative (of NACEP accreditation), current recruitment of students, and its hybrid delivery of course content to adult students, veterans, and student athletes. In short, MPCC values and works to ensure all students feel respected and enjoy a safe and engaging learning environment.
- From general education courses and cocurricular programming to organizational memberships and honor societies, MPCC actively and intentionally prepares students for informed citizenship and workplace success, consistent with its mission, values, and institutional vision.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

### Argument

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At Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), standards of integrity are developed through board policies, human resources procedures for all employees, as well as collective bargaining agreements. The board has an attorney on retainer for consulting when necessary. Standards of ethical and legal behavior and expectations are communicated through several key documents. For board expectations, the [policy manual](#) is posted on the college website and any changes or updates are documented and communicated through the minutes reported from board meetings.

Standards for ethical and legal behavior of employees are also communicated through the Employee Handbook and, where appropriate, the Instructional Handbook (available on the employee portal and college website).

The employee new-hire intake process goes over legal and ethical considerations required of anyone serving as an employee of the college. The intake process is conducted on or before the first day of work for newly hired employees. New employees review and sign the following forms related to ethical behavior:

- [Drug free workplace policy](#)
- [Conflict of interest policy](#)
- [Confidentiality agreement form](#)
- [Network account authorization](#) (includes the college internet use policy)

More specifically, MPCC develops and the governing board adopts the mission (2.A.1) and MPCC operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions (2.A.2).

#### **Response to 2.A.1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.**

The process for development of the college mission is detailed in Criterion 1.A.1. The MPCC Board of Governors [voted on final approval of the most recent revision to the mission](#) at the October 2016 board meeting. Additionally, the board considers the college mission, and time is allotted annually to

[review](#) and consider if any adjustments are warranted ([January Board affirmation of policies](#)).

When the board reviewed and revised the college mission, they also revised the values. Integrity is currently listed as the first of seven values and is reflected in the other values listed as well in the guiding MPCC practices.

### **Response to 2.A.2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.**

Responsibilities of the governing board are referenced under [policy 1200](#) of Board of Governors Policy Manual and clearly defined in Nebraska Revised State Statute Section 85-1511, whereby the board powers and duties that govern all community colleges in Nebraska are enumerated.

Policies are reviewed on an annual basis and updated or revised as necessary. The board holds meetings in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. Time is provided at the beginning of each meeting for comments from the public, employees, and students. Two student representatives serve as non-voting members of the board.

Reports by divisions and departments of the institution are presented to the board on an annual basis for their review, consideration, and dialogue. These reports provide the board members with summaries of achievements and outcomes related to functional areas.

#### ***Financial/Auxiliary***

Financial statements are presented to the board on a monthly basis and all bills are reviewed and approved by the board. Competitive bids and purchasing procedures are outlined in board policy ([Policy Manual 3310](#)). The board also reviews the annual financial and enrollment audits to maintain integrity.

The college undergoes annual external audits of finance (including financial aid) and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment. The financial aid team has added consistent quality control checks in order to identify and correct over award situations, under award situations, and the monitoring of outside scholarships which has resulted in clean audits. They have also focused on training new staff, documenting processes, and meeting regularly to ensure everyone on the team is informed and up-to-date. After two years of no financial aid audit findings in 2017-18 and 2018-19, there was one finding in 2019-20 and one finding in 2020-21, respectively. These findings were reported and addressed in Corrective Action Plans in the annual financial audits through the addition of quality control checks and continued training and development of new staff.

The auxiliary fund of the college is for business-type activities or funds that are supposed to pay for themselves. From the standpoint of purchasing and accounting, these functions follow the same processes and procedures as do other finance-related functions.

[Annual financial audits](#) regularly result in unmodified opinions attesting to the integrity of business processes. This is also the case for [FTE enrollment annual audits](#).

#### ***Academic***

Written departmental objectives have been developed for instructional programs, and there is a

program review process that allows for a comprehensive look at program objectives and outcomes. This process is overseen by the vice president for academic affairs. The results are presented to the college cabinet and Board of Governors. The program objectives relate to and align with the college-wide learning outcomes determined by the Instructional Services Team.

Non-instructional departments have goals and objectives that are used to guide operations. They review their progress on a regular basis and periodically present a [report to the college cabinet](#).

### ***Human Resources***

The Board of Governors works within current policies, which provide the needed clarity around ethical operating policies and processes. A majority of these are explained in the section of the Board Policy Manual section on personnel ([policies 4100 through 4500](#)). In addition to board policy, ethical standards are also explained in the Employee Handbook and Instructional Handbook.

In summary, MPCC has established and follows policies and procedures to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Board of Governor policies, handbooks, and regular reviews of practices ensure MPCC embodies the value of integrity in its academic operations.

## **Sources**

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- 2.A Board of Governors Policy Manual
- 2.A Drug Free Workplace Act and Form
- 2.A Employee BOG Conflict of Interest
- 2.A Employee Internet Use and Policy
- 2.A.1 Affirmation Policies 2022 BOG
- 2.A.1 Confidentiality Form
- 2.A.1 Mission Approval 2016 BOG
- 2.A.1 Mission Review 2022 BOG
- 2.A.2 2020-21 Financial Audit Report.pdf
- 2.A.2 2020-21 FTE Audit Report
- 2.A.2 Board of Governors Policy 4100-4500 Personnel (Ethical Operating)
- 2.A.2 Board of Governors Policy 1200 Board of Governors Operations
- 2.A.2 Board of Governors Policy 3310 Business Operations
- 2.A.2 Non-Instructional Assessment Reports.pdf



## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

### Argument

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**Response to 2.B.1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.**

The clear and accurate representation of facts regarding the educational offerings of Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), as well as costs, governance, and accreditation relationships is maintained through the collaboration of departments responsible for producing accurate information (such as the Institutional Effectiveness Team, Financial Aid Department, and the Academic Affairs Division) and those responsible for disseminating information to the public (such as the Marketing & Public Information Department, Recruiting & Admission Department, and others).

At MPCC, technology and marketing are leveraged to inform students and the public about the college. Technology hardware and software have been the backbone for sharing knowledge, data, and information regarding the educational programs and courses available, as well as costs associated, success rates, and employment outcomes.

The [college catalog](#) has been available on the website as a PDF document for many years and was moved to an interactive online format for the 2017-18 academic year to improve the student experience. The new platform made it possible to update at anytime during the year for accuracy. Each program has a webpage with degree requirements, accreditation relationships as appropriate, and additional information useful to current and prospective students. Faculty and administration qualifications are listed in the "[Personnel & Credential](#)" section of the college catalog.

Overall cost estimate information via the Net Price Calculator can be easily accessed from the "Cost & Aid" dropdown menu on the main page of the college website, [www.mpcc.edu](http://www.mpcc.edu). Prospective [students can also find tuition rates](#), scholarship information, loan and grant information, housing, and smart borrowing resources from this webpage.

[Brochures for programs](#) which contain career options, transfer information, course options, accreditation relationships, and faculty information are also available and utilized by recruiting and admissions staff to reach prospective students with accurate information.

**Response to 2.B.2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.**

The college has an active Institutional Effectiveness Team which includes four staff members (three full-time and one part-time), and encompasses the Office of Institutional Research & Planning (IR) and the Office of Institutional Assessment. The Marketing and Public Information Department and the Recruiting and Admissions Department both work in close relation with the Institutional Effectiveness Team to ensure the accuracy of claims made about contributions made to the educational experience.

The Academic Affairs Division maintains and publishes the college catalog which details educational experience expectations and standards. These standards are ensured through regular communication via handbooks, meetings, and providing opportunities for professional development. Standards of excellence are promoted through recognition of outstanding faculty performance. Regular assessments are made in both the instructional and non-instructional departments of the college that involve evaluation of outcomes and commitment to improvement (more detail can be found in 4.B).

The college surveys exiting students and their employers as one method of determining outcomes of graduating students. The IR Office also collects success information on program licensure rates in applicable programs. These, along with state department of labor wage and employment information, are published annually in the [Graduates at Work report](#).

Economic impact studies have been conducted three times in the last decade by an external entity, and these studies have shown the substantial positive contribution that the college has across the area. [The most recent report](#) was completed for the college in July, 2022. In this analysis, the average return on investment for MPCC students was 28.7%, compared to a 10.5% stock market 30-year average annual return. For every dollar invested in MPCC, people in Nebraska will receive a cumulative value of \$4.80 in benefits. These studies follow appropriate methodologies and conservative models in order to avoid overstating contributions of the college to socio-economic outcomes in the communities and state the college serves.

MPCC presents itself clearly and accurately in its representations to the public, with most of its information available on the website. Further, MPCC staff researches its educational and economic impact and continues its commitment to continuous improvement (as will be more fully described in Criterion 4.B).

## Sources

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- 2.B.1 2022-23 Tuition Fee and Refund Rates
- 2.B.1 Medical Laboratory Technology Program Information Webpage
- 2.B.2 EMSI Economic Study
- 2.B.2 Graduates at Work Report 2019-20

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

### Argument

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**Response to 2.C.1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.**

The Board of Governors for Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) is an elected board and maintains its autonomy to make decisions through adherence to board policy and participation in training regarding appropriate governance practices for public two-year higher education institutions.

The board supports college administration, staff, and faculty and works to assure that policies are in line with the college's mission, values, and vision. Regular monthly meetings and work sessions are held so the board is knowledgeable about the actions of college leadership, but entrust the day-to-day management of the college to professional staff, as noted in [policy 1001](#).

All board members are provided development opportunities through active participation in the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA), the American Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). [New board members receive an orientation](#) from senior administrative staff and other board members to provide them an understanding of the organizational structure of the institution and the role of board members.

Members of the Board of Governors attend trainings to assist them in understanding their oversight role and its relationship to the responsibilities for management that lie with college personnel. During the NCCA annual meeting in the fall of 2021, several board members attended sessions related to college governance, including sessions led by Dr. Tom Bordenkircher of the Higher Learning Commission. In the fall of 2022, board members will be able to attend the Nebraska Governance Leadership Institute held in Grand Island, Nebraska, which is put on by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). This training covers the fundamentals of being an effective trustee, role clarification and operating procedures, as well as the Board-President relationship.

Responsibilities of the governing board are referenced under [policy 1200](#) of Board of Governors

Policy Manual and clearly defined in Nebraska Revised State Statute Section 85-1511, whereby the board powers and duties are enumerated that govern all community colleges in Nebraska.

Policies are reviewed on an annual basis and updated or revised as necessary. The board meetings are held in compliance with the Nebraska open meetings act. Board [policy 1320](#) outlines the annual schedule of meetings. Time is provided at the beginning of each meeting for comments from the public, employees, and students. Two student representatives serve as non-voting members of the board.

Reports are presented to the board on an annual basis for their review and consideration. An audit committee of the board participates in the financial and enrollment audits that also occur annually. By participation, it is understood that individual board members provide information as requested by the independent auditor and are provided the results of the audit prior to presentation to the entire board.

As noted earlier in 2.A., standards of integrity are developed through board policies, human resources procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. For board expectations, the policy manual is posted on the college website and any changes or updates are documented and communicated through the minutes reported from board meetings.

**Response to 2.C.2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.**

MPCC's Board of Governors represents a large, rural section of the state of Nebraska, and understands the critical need for local opportunities to access higher education. The board's deliberations show consideration for these needs through approval of [funds budgeted for distance education equipment and expansion of distance education classrooms](#). This includes \$60,000 per year for grant match and upgrading of existing distance learning equipment.

The college has been successful in receiving the [United States Department of Agriculture - Distance Learning and Telemedicine \(USDA-DLT\) grant program funds to expand the college footprint and keep the technology current](#). Additionally, two dollars of the fees charged per credit hour are used for technology. If needed, distance learning technology can utilize funds received from these credit hour fees for equipment and software upgrades. The board has also supported investments in high quality educational spaces such as the Health and Science Center building on North Platte South Campus and the Events Center on McCook Campus, both completed in 2012. Construction for expansion to the Health and Science Center began in 2022 in order to provide necessary space and technology for the growing need for nurse training.

The three-year Instructional Equipment Plan shows a commitment of the college board to having up-to-date equipment in classrooms and labs that the students will see in the industry. [Established in 2013](#), the three-year Instructional Equipment Plan was established by the Board of Governors to ensure faculty have continued funding available to purchase equipment for their classes. The plan was funded at \$500,000 for the first year and \$300,000 in subsequent years. Approximately \$3.2 million has been invested in instructional equipment over the past ten years. (Also referenced 3.D.4.)

Investments to enhance the educational spaces in smaller communities that provide first choice facilities closer to constituents of the 18-county area have resulted in recent construction of a [five-](#)

[classroom building](#) in Valentine, Nebraska, a two-hour drive north of North Platte, and an [addition and remodel](#) of the existing building in Imperial, Nebraska, located a one-hour drive west of McCook. The expansion and improvement of educational spaces in these geographically remote areas shows a commitment to the institutional values of accessibility, as well as safe, quality, and engaging environments. These improvements help meet business and industry needs for training, and also community education opportunities, impacting those seeking postsecondary education locally.

After recent land acquisitions and development of lots surrounding the North Platte North Campus, the Board of Governors and college leaders began discussions about potential impacts on physical resources for the North Platte North and North Platte South campuses. In [May 2021](#), the board gave the directive to seek an architect's study which included an estimated cost to move North Platte North Campus operations to North Platte South Campus. The architect's study results were discussed at the [February 2022](#) board work session and the [April 2022](#) board retreat. After considering impacts on applied technology programs, length of time, and cost of construction for the potential move, the board decided not to move forward at the current time.

Board of Governors members are present at community input sessions held as a part of the stakeholder engagement phase of the strategic planning cycle. The board approved the 2017 Academic Master Plan and 2017 Facilities Master Plan, which were created in a collaborative environment that included an architectural firm member attending input sessions with faculty from each division and discipline of the college. Faculty were asked very directed questions related to the physical environment, program ideas, dual enrollment programming, and future vision for the program in this process.

Through recent efforts to innovate and create a desirable student life and activities experience for the prospective students, two new student clubs were [approved by the Board of Governors](#) in the spring of 2021. A shooting sports club was identified as a source for engagement and recreation that is present at many of the high schools in the area, and is consistent with the recreational habits in west-central Nebraska. Also approved was an [Esports club that is reflective of the growing recreational choice of competitive video games](#). The formation of these clubs was in response to input received in relation to the creation of the strategic plan and environmental scanning for what might best engage students in their educational experience at MPCC.

### **Response to 2.C.3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.**

The governing board members represent their constituents and also allow for public, student, faculty, and staff comments at the opening of each monthly board meeting. Board meeting notices are published in advance of the board meeting in accordance with Nebraska's [Open Meetings Act](#).

Since 2015-16, [two student representatives have served in an advisory role to the Board of Governors](#) by being in attendance at board meetings held during the fall and spring academic terms. Student representatives are asked by board members to weigh in on decisions likely to impact the student experience, and are encouraged to engage freely in the discussion of regular meeting items.

Reports are given by appropriate staff to inform the Board of Governors of the rationale for decisions involving personnel and decisions involving large resource expenditures. Staff of the college work hand-in-hand with local businesses and organizations, and community members, as new efforts to

meet the area's postsecondary needs are proposed.

One board member serves on each of the college foundation boards. Regular attendance at meetings helps establish lines of communication between the governing board and the affiliated non-profit foundations.

**Response to 2.C.4. The governing board preserve its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.**

Members of the Board of Governors complete a [Conflict of Interest form](#) on an annual basis. Board [policy 1700](#) clearly delineates ethical standards expected of those serving as members of the Board of Governors. These standards include, but are not limited to:

- To identify and disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and to act at all times for the general public good, regardless of personal friendships, relations, or interests.
- To refrain from any attempt to influence individual admissions, employment, or purchasing decisions, except when the decision is an agenda topic at an official Board of Governors meeting.

Board [policy 2116](#) outlines the procedures for requests for information by board members, and authorizes the president to respond as necessary. Board [policy 1610](#) outlines the procedure for the board to forward concerns received to the president for review and appropriate action as needed.

**Response to 2.C.5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.**

As noted in the Governance Philosophy, [Section 1001](#) of the Board Policy Manual, the Board of Governors shall govern in a style and philosophy that encourages diversity in viewpoints, strategic leadership more than administrative detail, the clear distinction of the Board of Governors and staff roles, and collective rather than individualistic decision making. While embracing a governance style that places day-to-day authority and responsibility for college operations in the hands of the professional staff, the Board of Governors shall discreetly reserve its overall authority and duty to oversee the college in the best interests of the students and residents of the eighteen-county area it serves.

The college has established [standing teams](#) that operate interdependently within the organization and are comprised of a cross representation of faculty and staff. The membership, purpose, and function of each of the teams is listed in the [College Teams](#) document on the employee portal.

Using the team structure aligns with a shared governance concept, where the teams actually decide on most operational matters and defer to the college cabinet in matters affecting personnel and major unanticipated budgetary items. The college cabinet reviews annual or semi-annual reports on team progress and provides the opportunity for teams to indicate what they need from the leadership to remove obstacles and accomplish the goals. Separately identified funds are set aside in the annual budget that teams may apply for and access to achieve goals that need additional resources outside of operationally budgeted funds. The funds are for new program development, instructional

enhancement, and non-instructional enhancement.

Academic decision-making is made by faculty who work together to determine program and discipline requirements and standards. Faculty are represented by five academic [division chairs](#) on the [Instructional Leadership Team](#), and by the vice president for academic affairs on the college cabinet. The [Instructional Services Team](#) reviews all curriculum and program-related change proposals for approval.

The Board of Governors for Mid-Plains Community College is an elected board that adheres to board policies in its governance of MPCC. Acting in the best interest of MPCC, the board engages internal and external constituencies in its decision-making processes, and independent of any undue influences, makes board-level decisions while delegating the day-to-day management to academic administrators.

## Sources

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- 2.C.5 MPCC Standing Teams Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)
- 2.C.1 Board of Governors Policy 1001 Philosophy
- 2.C.1 Board of Governors Policy 1200 Operations.pdf
- 2.C.1 Board of Governors Policy 1320 Board Meetings
- 2.C.1 New BOG Orientation Agenda
- 2.C.2 2020 Report USDA 2018 Grant
- 2.C.2 3 Year Instructional Equipment BOG
- 2.C.2 Imperial Campus Addition
- 2.C.2 IT Budget Expenditures (Distance Learning)
- 2.C.2 NJCAA Esports PR
- 2.C.2 North to South Campus April 2022 BOG
- 2.C.2 North to South Campus Feb 2022 BOG
- 2.C.2 North to South Campus May 2021 BOG
- 2.C.2 Student Club Approval 2021 BOG
- 2.C.2 Valentine Campus Building
- 2.C.3 Nebraska Open Meetings Act
- 2.C.3 Student Trustee 2015 BOG
- 2.C.4 Board of Governors Policy 1610 Board of Governors Concerns
- 2.C.4 Board of Governors Policy 1700 Code of Ethics
- 2.C.4 Board of Governors Policy 2116 Board Request for Information
- 2.C.4 Conflict of Interest Form BOG
- 2.C.5 Board of Governors Policy 1001 Board of Governors Governance Phil
- 2.C.5 Division Chair Position Description
- 2.C.5 Instructional Services Team IST
- 2.C.5 MPCC Standing Teams.pdf

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

### Argument

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**Response to 2.D. The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.**

Mid-Plains Community College promotes academic freedom and expression to faculty, staff, and students through its [institutional values of open and honest communication, integrity, and respect for the college and community](#). MPCC encourages the college and community to inquire about college operations, provide input on needed improvements, and participate in strategic plan brainstorming sessions.

In and out of the classroom, all faculty, regardless of status, are protected by Board Policy [4201 Academic Freedom and Responsibility](#), which is also included in the [Instructional Handbook](#). Knowing that promoting academic freedom also comes with responsibility, [Board of Governors policy 7110 Public Activities Involving Personnel, Students, or MPCC College Facilities](#) recognizes the rights of individuals as "free citizens" with the "obligation to balance the rights of individuals with the role of and mission of the college which is primarily to provide educational opportunities."

For students, the college educates students about the responsibilities associated with academic freedom through its revised [Academic Integrity Policy](#), which is included in all [course syllabi](#) and the [college catalog](#). Additionally, [Board of Governors Policy 7110](#) ensures that the rights and "privileges do not interfere with the educational opportunities of employees and students of the college." The policy establishes suggested Designated Public Form spaces on MPCC's campuses.

### Sources

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- 2.D 2021-22 Academic Freedom Instructional Handbook.pdf
- 2.D 2021-22 Syllabus Template.pdf
- 2.D Academic Integrity Policy.pdf
- 2.D Board of Governors Policy Academic Freedom.pdf
- 2.D Board of Governors Public Activities Involving Personnel.pdf
- 2.D MPCC Mission Role and Values.pdf



## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

### Argument

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**Response to 2.E.1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.**

All faculty, staff, and students who wish to conduct research involving human subjects comply with the college Approval to Conduct Research procedures and gain approval from the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#). The IRB is responsible for reviewing and approving any research involving human subjects and is compliant with federal regulations, Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46), and the Common Federal Rule (Federal Register, June 18, 1991).

**Response to 2.E.2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.**

Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) is not a research institution; however, all students, faculty, and staff may seek research support and assistance from [Learning Commons: Library](#). The assistant director of the Learning Commons and the resource specialist both have master's degrees in library science and work with individuals and groups on how to conduct ethical, responsible research.

Recent improvements in library services have strengthened access to research and research support services. In December 2021, MPCC went live with Alma (research management) and Primo (front end library discovery service) software which provide library patrons, regardless of their physical location, access to a [broad range of academic resources that are relevant and content neutral](#).

In researched-focused classes, such as [BIOS 2500 Scientific Research Experience](#), students learn the basics of experiential design, data collection and analysis, and hypothesis testing and are [supported by qualified faculty](#) while they conduct their research.

**Response to 2.E.3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.**

In the classroom, faculty provide course- and discipline-specific instruction related to ethical research and information literacy (use of information sources). Additionally, the revised general education

and degree program objectives reflect a college-wide emphasis on [information literacy](#).

Learning Commons: Libraries and Learning Commons: Student Success staff collaborate with faculty to provide information literacy and research instruction to students. Resource staff are available to lead in-person research and resource instruction sessions. In addition, resources are available in Canvas, the college's learning management system, course shells. Student Success writing lab and tutors work one-on-one with students needing assistance with research and citing sources.

### **Response to 2.E.4 The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.**

In response to faculty concerns about plagiarism and academic integrity, a faculty led workgroup [revised MPCC's academic integrity policy](#) in 2019-20. Revisions included:

- Clarifying and expanding academic integrity definitions to include complicity in academic dishonesty, impermissible collaboration, and misrepresentation to avoid academic work.
- Adding course- and college-level sanctions requiring students with multiple violations to complete an academic integrity training module in Canvas.
- Establishing standards for academic integrity probation and suspension.
- Adding an appeal process for students who are suspected of violating the academic integrity policy.
- Creating an Academic Integrity Clearinghouse that is responsible for monitoring violations and communicating with faculty, students, and appropriate staff about academic integrity violations and reporting.

In the 2021-22 academic year, the Academic Integrity Clearinghouse [monitored 13 level 1 violations and 2 level 2 violations.](#)

## **Sources**

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- 2.E.1 Institutional Review Board Guidelines.pdf
- 2.E.2 BIOS 2500 Scientific Research Experience Syllabus
- 2.E.2 Learning Commons Library Research.pdf
- 2.E.2 Learning Commons Resources Library
- 2.E.2 Student Scientific Research Symposium PR.pdf
- 2.E.3 Information Literacy Assessment Report
- 2.E.4 Academic Integrity Policy.pdf
- 2.E.4 Academic Integrity Violations 2021-22.pdf

## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### Summary

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MPCC has established and follows policies and procedures to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Board of Governors review policies, program reviews and receive monthly updates and presentations from administration to ensure MPCC embodies the value of integrity in its academic operations.

#### Highlights:

- When the board reviewed and revised the college mission, they also revised the values. Integrity is currently listed as the first of seven values and is reflected in the other values listed as well in the guiding MPCC practices.
- MPCC presents itself clearly and accurately in its representations to the public, with most of its information available on the website. Further, MPCC staff researches its educational and economic impact and continues its commitment to continuous improvement.
- The Board of Governors for Mid-Plains Community College is an elected board that adheres to board policies in its governance of MPCC. Acting in the best interest of MPCC, the board engages internal and external constituencies in its decision-making processes, and independent of any undue influences, makes board-level decisions while delegating the day-to-day management to academic administrators.
- MPCC's Board of Governors represents a large, rural section of the state of Nebraska, and understands the critical need for local opportunities to access higher education. The board's deliberations show consideration for these needs through approval of funds budgeted to deliver high quality postsecondary education for constituents.
- MPCC shows commitment to academic freedom beginning with board policies and with statements included in the employee handbook, instructional handbook, and all course syllabi.
- To help guide students, Learning Commons: Library staff assist students with information literacy instruction and research assistance.
- Faculty provide additional, discipline-specific instruction related to ethical research.
- In response to faculty concerns about academic integrity, MPCC's revised academic integrity policy and creation of the Academic Integrity Clearinghouse has reinforced the college's commitment to academic honesty/integrity.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

### Argument

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#### **Response to 3.A.1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.**

Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) consistently follows established processes which ensure courses and programs are current and appropriate for associate degrees, certificates, and diplomas awarded.

Required coursework accepted for the [six associate degrees](#) (Associate of Arts, Associate of Fine Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate Degree Nursing, Associate of General Studies) is current and requires appropriate levels of performance. [Coursework for certificates and diplomas](#) are the same as the requirements for the Associate of Applied Science Degree except that general education courses are not required.

MPCC's standing curriculum team, the [Instructional Services Team \(IST\)](#), is a cross-functional team responsible for approving college programs, curriculum, academic/technical standards, graduation/completion requirements, cooperative programs with other institutions, and other instructional policies and procedures that have college-wide implications.

An example of IST's scope occurred in Spring 2021. Mathematics and science faculty realized the math and science credit hour requirement for the Associate of Science (AS) degree was five hours less than the other Nebraska community colleges. As a division, mathematics and science faculty created [a proposal increasing the AS math/science credit hour requirement from 10-15 to 15-17 hours](#). The proposal was presented to IST, discussed, and approved.

More recently, in December 2021, IST approved revising credit hour requirements for courses in the accelerated paramedic program. When the program was developed, some course credit hours were based on lecture hours with no lab/practicum hours included, which was not an accurate

representation of what was being taught. To make the revision, the accelerated paramedic program director proposed the [changes and worked with the vice president for academic affairs throughout the approval process](#). The [changes were approved by IST at the December 2021 meeting](#).

The college adheres to current federal credit hour definition guidelines, [Nebraska Transfer Initiative](#) common course outcomes, and outside accrediting agencies for professional programs (see 4.A.5).

**Response to 3.A.2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.**

For each [certificate, diploma](#), and [associates degree](#), the [college catalog](#) is the primary source for articulating information. [Program outcomes, objectives](#), and [general education objectives](#) are also included in the college catalog. Additionally, course level outcomes and general education outcomes are articulated in [course syllabi](#).

**Response to 3.A.3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).**

Throughout the college's 20,500-square-mile service area, consistency related to program quality and learning goals is established and communicated through [course syllabi, instructional policies](#), instructor qualifications, and monitoring of student performance across all modes of delivery, including traditional on-site, distance learning, online, and dual credit.

Full-time, dual credit, and adjunct faculty, regardless of course location, are required to distribute [course syllabi to all students in their courses](#) and submit copies to the vice president for academic affairs within ten days after the start of class. Faculty have access to a [syllabus template](#) with basic course information including course name, number, catalog description, and general academic policies. In addition, faculty who teach [Nebraska Transfer Initiative \(NTI\)](#) courses, such as [ENGL 1010 English Composition I](#), are responsible for including [NTI and MPCC required content into course syllabi](#). Faculty, regardless of classification, participate in the [student assessment of instruction process](#) using Smart Evals software. [Student evaluations](#) are anonymous and confidential. Results are released to faculty after classes are complete and final grades are turned in.

Full-time and adjunct/dual-credit faculty have multiple communication pathways regarding curriculum changes, class/program quality, and professional development opportunities. Like full-time faculty, adjunct faculty participate in professional processes that include a multi-step hiring process, [consistent faculty qualifications](#), syllabus review, [classroom evaluations of the adjunct instructor by full-time faculty and the division chair](#), and [annual orientation activities](#). Faculty who teach distance learning via interactive television use state-of-the-art equipment with high-quality video and audio capabilities. In addition, faculty take steps to build relationships with and among students through common online spaces (Canvas), traveling to distance sites, or inviting students to visit their site when possible.

## Sources

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- 3.A.1 Accelerated Paramedic IST Forms

- 3.A.1 Accelerated Paramedic IST Minutes
- 3.A.1 Assoc Degree Requirements
- 3.A.1 Certificate Diploma Requirements
- 3.A.1 Instructional Services Team IST.pdf
- 3.A.1 IST Assoc of Science Minutes
- 3.A.1 Nebraska Transfer Initiative
- 3.A.2 Gen Ed Degree Objectives Summary.pdf
- 3.A.2 Associate Degree Requirements
- 3.A.2 Certificate Diploma Requirements
- 3.A.2 GenEdCatalog.pdf
- 3.A.2 NTI ENGL 1010 Syllabus
- 3.A.2 Syllabus Template.pdf
- 3.A.3 ADJ Faculty Evaluation Process and Form
- 3.A.3 ADJ Orientation Agenda
- 3.A.3 Dual Credit Faculty Hiring Guidelines
- 3.A.3 ENGL 1010 English Comp I Syllabus
- 3.A.3 ENGL 1010 Syllabi Comparison
- 3.A.3 Faculty Minimum Hire FT and ADJ
- 3.A.3 FT Faculty Evaluation Process and Form
- 3.A.3 Student Assessment Instruction
- 3.A.3 Student Assessment of Instruction Question Sets
- 3.A.3 Syllabus Information.pdf
- 3.A.3 Syllabus Template.pdf

## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

### Argument

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**Response to 3.B.1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.**

As a two-year institution providing technical and academic transfer education, Mid-Plains Community College's (MPCC) general education program is appropriate as it relates to the college mission and ensures graduates leave the college with a well-rounded education.

The [current general education core](#) is composed of courses that fall within the categories of Written Communication, Oral Communication, Humanities, Social Science, Science, Business and Computers, and Mathematics. To qualify or to be considered as a general education course, the course must meet the requirements established by the [General Education Charter](#) faculty workgroup and be approved by the [division chair](#) and the [Instructional Services Team \(IST\)](#).

Currently, the minimum general education requirements for each degree are:

- Associate of Arts: 37 semester credit hours
- Associate of Science: 33-38 semester credit hours
- Associate of Fine Arts: 31-34 semester credit hours
- Associate of General Studies: 15 semester credit hours
- Associate of Applied Science: 15 semester credit hours
- Associate Degree Nursing: 22 semester credit hours

MPCC's [General Education and Degree Program Objectives](#) represent broad-based outcomes that align with HLC's assumed practices B.1.h. The purpose of MPCC's general education program is communicated in the [college catalog](#) and the outcomes are listed in the [syllabus template](#).

**Response to 3.B.2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.**

The college's general education and degree program outcomes are rooted in a framework presented at [HLC's Assessing General Education Workshop](#) held in February 2018. A cross-functional team of three faculty, one student services staff member, and the area assessment coordinator attended the two-day workshop, which built the foundation for the [current revised outcomes, performance indicators, and assessment rotation](#). Prior to the 2018 workshop, the general education outcomes had not been revised since the 1990's.

With the revision of the general education outcomes and assessment process, MPCC renewed its commitment to ensuring students have the necessary communication, math, and critical thinking skills to become informed citizens who are successful in their chosen field of study and leaders in their communities.

**Response to 3.B.3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.**

MPCC's 20,500-mile-service area and student body represent a surprisingly diverse demographic and geographic heritage. This diversity is reflected in college and instructional policies and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. However, capturing the diversity that exists among MPCC's campuses is an ongoing challenge. Faculty and staff have long championed various classroom and cocurricular activities focusing on diversity and multi-culturalism, but the efforts were individual and lacked coordination.

Realizing the college could do better, in Fall 2019 student services hired an Associate Director of Diversity who coordinated diversity efforts college-wide and supported and encouraged faculty, staff, and students to lead and participate in classroom and co-curricular diversity focused programming. Due to staff turnover, in Fall 2022 similar duties will be carried out by the [Assistant Director of Multicultural Leadership and Engagement](#).

Additionally, in 2019-20 MPCC partnered with four Nebraska Community Colleges and created the [Nebraska Community College Global Leadership](#) initiative whose mission is "to provide opportunities for students and faculty from all the participating community colleges to engage in joint global activities." Through the partnership, MPCC students traveled to [Ireland in May 2022](#) with future trips being planned.

### **In the classroom**

At the state level, the Nebraska Transfer Initiative (NTI) recognizes the importance of diversity through identification of diversity focused courses and course outcomes. NTI courses offered at MPCC include [Introduction to Sociology](#), [Social Problems](#), and [Exploring Unity and Diversity \(previous title Issues of Unity and Diversity\)](#).

Faculty are encouraged to incorporate diversity focused content into their classes. Selected examples include:



- In Introduction to Business, faculty [introduce students to international business](#), the concepts of globalization, and the importance of studying and respecting other cultures to prevent the formation of ethnocentrism. In some sections of Intro to Business, faculty use the book, "Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands," written by Terri Morrison and Wayne A. Conaway as a resource for communicating with people with different cultural backgrounds.
- In addition to [diversity focused course outcomes](#), nursing faculty require students to [research and present information](#) on different cultures and family structures as part of their clinical rotations.

## Cocurricular and Extracurricular

Although cocurricular and extracurricular activities have been limited due to pandemic-related restrictions, college staff and faculty have collaborated on diversity-focused activities throughout the 2021-22 academic year. In Spring 2022, MPCC student life sponsored a series of speakers on different aspects of diversity. Speakers included:

- [Dr. Robert Byrd](#), chairman of Wyoming's U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, spoke to students and community members about the motives and dreams of people of color who migrated across the US during the westward expansion.
- [Charles Clark](#), a world class athlete and mental wellness expert.
- [Yoko Lawing](#), a local business owner and culture advocate.
- [Matthew Ruitta](#), a San Francisco filmmaker best known for his work on movies such as "Milk" and "Moneyball." Ruitta addressed students about Harvey Milk's life, what he stood for, and his contributions to politics and the LGBTQIA movement.
- Speakers planned for the Fall 2022 semester include [Dr. Temple Grandin](#), an advocate for autism rights and neurodiversity movements and [Neil Halford](#), a motivational speaker who advocates for people with disabilities.

In April 2022 in response to the war in the Ukraine, college staff and faculty collaborated with Ukrainian students on a [night of Ukrainian culture that also acted as fundraiser](#). Over \$11,000 dollars was raised to support humanitarian efforts.

Student clubs and organizations play a critical role in exposing students to cultures other than their own. Student clubs and organizations who have championed diversity focused programming include:

- [Social Justice Club \(McCook and North Platte\)](#) and the Prism Club (North Platte): Both clubs are focused on educating and bringing attention to the importance of diversity and inclusion.
- The college's two-year academic honor society, Phi Theta Kappa, (PTK) has chapters in McCook and North Platte. The McCook PTK chapter regularly sponsors [events to raise awareness](#) for people with disabilities, epilepsy, and cancer. Recently, the North Platte PTK chapter worked with Wreaths Across America to [purchase, sell, and place wreaths](#) on veterans graves. Both PTK chapters have and will continue to volunteer with [Habitat for Humanity to build homes](#).
- International Club: The International Student Club is a place for students from the United States as well as around the world to get to know each other and share cultures through club meetings, activities, and community events.

In addition to student clubs, Mid-Plains Community College athletics has a regional ambassador serving on the National Junior College Athletics Association's (NJCAA) 2021-22 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) council. The EDI council has developed an [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#)

[Implementation Plan](#) that will help build a culture of inclusion which supports and celebrates diversity in athletics.

**Response to 3.B.4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.**

Reflective of MPCC's cultural tenet, "we are a family," MPCC faculty and students collaborate on activities in and out of the classroom which align with the college mission of providing unique and enriching educational opportunities that contribute to individual student success.

**Applied Technology**

- [Auction House](#): Building Construction, Electrical, and Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVAC-R) faculty and students collaborate to build a house from the ground up. The house is sold through a silent auction with proceeds going toward scholarships for students in building trades.
- [Raffle Vehicle](#): Since 2003, auto body and automotive technology faculty and students collaborate to restore a classic car or truck. The vehicle tours throughout Nebraska making appearances at car shows, parades, cruise nights, and the Nebraska state fair, where the public can purchase raffle tickets wherever the vehicle is on display. Proceeds go to scholarships for students in the transportation programs and to help offset the cost of the raffle car program.

**Business**

- Phi Beta Lambda's (PBL) mission is to develop, "the next generation of leaders by preparing members for careers in business and business related fields." Both PBL chapters in McCook and North Platte focus on bringing business and education together and work with students on leadership skills and career development. In July 2021, four McCook Community College students [placed in the top ten in the nation in academic competitions](#) as part of the 2021 PBL National Leadership Conference.

**Health Occupations**

- Nursing students and faculty collaborate on community service projects benefiting communities throughout the college service area. In response to wildfires in April 2022, the Mid-Plains Community College chapters of the Nebraska State Student Nurses Association and the Licensed Practical Nurse Association of Nebraska conducted a [Hydrate Our Heroes](#) Campaign. With the support of faculty, MPCC nursing students collected water and Gatorade for area fire departments.
- In Fall 2021, [a craniofacial clinic](#) was hosted in North Platte. As part of hosting the clinic, dental assisting students were allowed to observe procedures and gained experience working in a telemedicine environment.

**Humanities and Social Sciences**

- Art: McCook Community College's (MCC) Wrightstone Art Gallery hosts numerous traveling art exhibits, college and high school art shows, and [an annual high school "paint-in."](#) Led by MCC art faculty and students, the paint-in is a collaborative effort where area high school students enter their art work, which is judged by a professional artist. Throughout the day, high school students also participate in art workshops led by professional artists, students, and

faculty. In April 2022, North Platte Community College art students [collaborated with North Platte's Prairie Arts Center](#) on a student art show.

- [Best of the West Music Festival](#): Held in the fall semester, the Best in the West Music Festival at North Platte Community College showcases the top area high school musicians who are nominated by their high school music teachers. The festival is coordinated by music faculty who also serve as directors for the event.
- Theatre: McCook Community College theatre faculty and students collaborated with area high schools on a [production of The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee](#). North Platte Community College theatre students have the opportunity to perform with community members at the historic North Platte Community Playhouse. In November 2021, this partnership led to a production of [Bus Stop](#).

## Mathematics and Science

- Students interested in scientific research have the opportunity to enroll in [BIOS 2500 Scientific Research Experience](#) to conduct their own, original undergraduate research and create their own experiences in the field of biology (also see 2.E.2). Faculty collaborate and guide students through the process of selecting a topic, [but the final proposal is entirely student driven](#).

Held annually in McCook and North Platte, [Inter-High Day](#) is an annual scholastic contest where over 100 high schools are invited to compete in a wide-range of academic and technical tests created by Mid-Plains faculty. In 2022, 900 students from 33 area high schools attended [Inter-High day contests in McCook and North Platte](#),

## Sources

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- 3.B.1 Gen Ed Catalog.pdf
- 3.B.1 Gen Ed Charter.pdf
- 3.B.1 Gen Ed Course List by Degree
- 3.B.1 Gen Ed Objectives.pdf
- 3.B.1 Instructional Services Team IST
- 3.B.1 Syllabus Template.pdf
- 3.B.2 Gen Ed Objectives with Rotation.pdf
- 3.B.2 HLC Gen Ed Workshop Agenda 2018.pdf
- 3.B.3 Assist Dir of Multicultural Leadership Engagement JAQ
- 3.B.3 Charles Clark PR
- 3.B.3 Dental Assisting Craniofacial Clinic PR
- 3.B.3 Dr. Robert Byrd PR
- 3.B.3 Intro to Business International Business Presentation
- 3.B.3 Matthew Riutta PR
- 3.B.3 NE Global Leadership Ireland Trip SU 22
- 3.B.3 Nebraska CC Global Leadership.pdf
- 3.B.3 Neil Halford Profile
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- 3.B.3 Nursing Diversity Clinical Activities
- 3.B.3 Nursing Syllabi Diversity Focused Outcomes
- 3.B.3 SOCI 1010 Intro to Sociology Syllabus SP22
- 3.B.3 SOCI 2010 Social Problems Syllabus SP22.pdf
- 3.B.3 SOCI 2150 Issues of Unity and Diversity Syllabus SP22.pdf
- 3.B.3 Social Justice Club PR.pdf
- 3.B.3 Temple Grandin Profile
- 3.B.3 Ukrainian Student Fundraiser SP22
- 3.B.3 Yoko Lawing PR
- 3.B.4 Auction House
- 3.B.4 Best in the West Music
- 3.B.4 BIOS 2500 Scientific Research Experience Syllabus
- 3.B.4 Inter-High Day Instructional Handbook
- 3.B.4 Inter-High McCook North Platte PR
- 3.B.4 MCC Blue Out PR
- 3.B.4 MCC PBL PR
- 3.B.4 McCook CC Theatre Nov 21 PR
- 3.B.4 NPCC Art Show SP22 PR
- 3.B.4 NPCC PTK Wreaths Across America PR
- 3.B.4 NPCC Theatre Bus Stop Nov 21 PR
- 3.B.4 Nursing Students Hydrate Our Heros PR.pdf
- 3.B.4 Paint In MCC
- 3.B.4 PTK Habitat for Humanity PR
- 3.B.4 Raffle Car PR.pdf
- 3.B.4 Student Scientific Research Symposium PR.pdf

## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

### Argument

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**Response to 3.C.1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.**

As an [Equal Opportunity Employer \(EEO\)](#), Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) is focused on growing a diverse faculty and staff that mirrors the student population. Based on 2021 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS data), 94.5% of college employees are white and 5.5% are persons of color. This does not reflect a student population where 84.13% are white and 15.87% are persons of color. To encourage a more diverse faculty and staff, new full-time faculty and staff positions are advertised regionally and nationally in the publications such as [HigherEdJobs.com](#) and [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

**Response to 3.C.2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.**

As documented in the most recent IPEDS reporting, MPCC's 11 to 1 student/faculty ratio provides students opportunities to interact and develop relationships with their instructors in and out of the classroom.

**Curriculum oversight and expectations for student performance:** Full-time faculty are involved in curriculum oversight and setting expectations for student performance. Specifically, Associate of

Applied Science faculty maintain contact with industry professionals, work with advisory committees, and curate relationships with professional organizations, and external accreditors. Academic transfer faculty attend annual [Nebraska Transfer Initiative \(NTI\)](#) meetings to discuss common course outcomes and recommended textbooks lists.

All academic divisions have faculty representation on the [Instructional Services Team \(IST\)](#), the college's curriculum committee. In addition, any faculty member who is not a member of IST can bring curriculum changes to the team through the appropriate academic division for discussion and approval.

**Assessment of student learning:** As referenced in the Instructional Handbook, faculty are responsible for collecting, reporting, and reviewing assessment information. While reviewing assessment information is ongoing, faculty and staff have dedicated time on [Fall Enrichment Day](#), the college's annual professional development day, to review assessment data. Recognizing the need for a coordinated assessment effort, an assessment coordinator was hired in 2013 to assist and support faculty in their assessment efforts. Since 2013, the assessment coordinator has worked with faculty in reviewing assessment data, coordinated a faculty led effort to revise the general education and degree program outcomes, and assisted with college-wide assessment data reporting.

**Establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff:** Instructional staff credentials are established by the academic affairs office and adhere to HLC's assumed practice B.2.a and a [minimum faculty credentials document](#) developed by the Nebraska community college chief academic officers.

**Response to 3.C.3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.**

All new full-time, adjunct, and dual credit faculty hired must meet [minimum faculty qualifications](#) based on HLC's assumed practices B.2.a and a [statewide minimum faculty credentials document](#). The minimum faculty credentials document is a collaborative statewide effort initiated by the six community college chief academic officers in 2016 and is utilized when hiring new faculty and reviewing current faculty credential files.

**Response to 3.C.4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.**

Faculty evaluations and classroom observations are a cornerstone of fulfilling the college mission of providing exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success.

Full-time probationary faculty under two years of service are [evaluated](#) annually by the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA). Full-time non-probationary faculty with over two years of service are evaluated every three years by the VPAA.

Adjunct and dual credit faculty are [evaluated](#) by a division chair or their designee within a year of initial hire and every third year after the initial evaluation if possible. Tracking and scheduling are coordinated through the vice-president of academic affairs office. Once a semester, the vice president for academic affairs, the vice president for academic affairs' administrative assistant, and division chairs review the tracking document and discuss faculty who will be observed in the upcoming semester. It is important to note that all adjuncts are not evaluated every three years because some don't teach every year.

**Response to 3.C.5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.**

To establish standards of excellence, motivate employees to improve themselves, and build succession planning for the college, multiple professional development opportunities exist for faculty.

**For all faculty**

At the beginning of their employment, faculty participate in new employee and new faculty orientation, although the length and breadth of the orientations are different for full-time and adjunct/dual credit faculty. In addition, faculty have access to the Center for Teaching Excellence resources and trainings, and the opportunity to travel to attend professional conferences, workshops, and professional meetings.

A mainstay of faculty professional development, the purpose of [The Center for Teaching Excellence](#) is to promote and enhance teaching effectiveness and student learning while building community among full-time and adjunct/dual credit faculty members and making student learning visible. The college also pays for full-time faculty and some adjuncts to obtain a [Nebraska Department of Education Dual Credit Teaching Certificate](#).

Specific professional development opportunities for full-time and adjunct/dual credit faculty are:

**For full-time faculty**

- **[New Faculty Orientation](#):** New full-time faculty participate in an orientation developed by the vice president for academic affairs and respective division chair.
- **[Fall Enrichment Day](#):** Held annually on the first Friday in October, Fall Enrichment Day provides full-time faculty from McCook and North Platte the opportunity to gather in person and participate in professional development opportunities with their colleagues from other campuses and spend time reviewing assessment data.
- **[Tuition reimbursement](#):** All full-time faculty (and staff) are eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement for college courses taken at accredited institutions of those courses apply to their program of study. Each year, \$25,000 is budgeted for this purpose and priority is given to faculty on an approved credentialing plan.
- **[Three Year Instructional Equipment Plan](#):** Each year, \$300,000 is budgeted for instruction-related equipment and technology.
- **[Full-time faculty travel](#):** Full-time faculty have the opportunity to travel to professional conferences. Travel funds for regional conferences are included as part of departmental budgets. National and international travel is part of the vice president for academic affairs budget. Requests are made each spring for the following academic year.
- **[Professional memberships](#):** For full-time faculty, the college will pay \$300 per year for professional memberships.
- **[Sabbatical leave](#):** To provide faculty with the opportunity for advanced study, full-time faculty are eligible for sabbatical leave after completion of four consecutive years of full-time employment.
- **[Vector/Safe Colleges Training](#):** Full-time faculty are required to complete annual online trainings related to FERPA and Title IX through the Vector/Safe Colleges online platform.

**For adjunct/dual credit faculty**

- **Annual Adjunct Orientation:** Adjunct faculty orientations are held each fall semester in McCook, North Platte, Broken Bow, Imperial, Ogallala, and Valentine.
- **Adjunct/dual credit faculty travel:** Adjunct/dual credit faculty have the opportunity to travel and attend conferences, workshops, and professional meetings. In addition, adjunct faculty have access to Center for Teaching Excellence services and training provided at annual adjunct faculty orientations.

### **Response to 3.C.6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.**

For full-time faculty, the Instructional Handbook and full-time faculty negotiated agreement outline [minimum time requirements related to faculty office hours](#) and general work schedule. Full-time faculty are expected to work the equivalent of 40 hours a week, be on campus a minimum of 30 hours a week, and provide a minimum of five office hours a week for student advising, mentoring, or course assistance. Full-time faculty are required to post their office hours outside of their office for the convenience of staff and students needing their assistance while on campus.

Adjunct and dual credit faculty are available for student inquiry as outlined in the course syllabus. Faculty accessibility is also a component of the [Adjunct Faculty Instructional Performance Observation form](#) used to evaluate adjunct faculty.

In addition to in-person office hours, all faculty may use electronic means such as Canvas, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams to ensure they are available to distance and online students.

### **Response to 3.C.7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.**

With the exception of custodial and maintenance positions, most full-and part-time positions require a [minimum of an associates degree](#).

A cornerstone staff professional development for student and administrative services is ongoing Jenzabar/J1 Web (the college's student information system and web interface) training and consulting. In the first two quarters of the 2021-22 academic year, staff college wide participated in 1,259.50 hours of training related to J1 Web registration, advising academic planning, communications, and human resources (J1 Web employee). In addition, five-six employees attend Jenzabar's Annual Meeting (JAM), which gives meeting attendees the opportunity to engage with Jenzabar product experts and connect with peers at other Jenzabar institutions. In June 2022, MPCC staff led a session highlighting [the college's J1 Web implementation](#).

Like full-time faculty (see 3.C.5), full-time student and administrative services staff are eligible to apply for [tuition reimbursement](#) for college courses at accredited institutions and participate in [ongoing training opportunities](#) through human resources including an annual [Fall Enrichment Day](#) in-service. In addition, staff have the opportunity to belong to professional organizations and attend regional and national conferences. Full- and part-time staff also complete annual online trainings related to FERPA and Title IX through Vector/Safe Colleges. New full- and part-time staff complete a series of trainings provided by Safe Colleges/Vector related to discrimination in the workplace, managing difficult behaviors, and a drug-free workplace.

Department specific professional development opportunities include:



- **Advising:** Advisors and enrollment coaches annually participate in the regional National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conference as well as the Academic Advising Association conference through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- **Admissions, Recruitment, and Registration/Records:** In addition to Jenzabar related training, staff regularly participate in the Nebraska Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (NACRAO) conferences. NACRAO's aim is, "specifically to advance professionally the office or offices of admissions, registration, records, and institutional research and closely related functions in institutions of higher education in the state of Nebraska."
- **Financial Aid:** Financial aid staff participate in National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) courses yearly. Collectively, [current financial aid staff have completed 21 NASFAA courses.](#)
- **Learning Commons:** Learning Commons staff are cross trained and participate in on-going training related to administering Accuplacer tests, Alma/Primo updates, and J1 Web Communications training related to the college-wide early alert process.
- **Student Life:** Full-time student life staff participate in Title IX training, psychological first aid, and suicide awareness and prevention training. Student life staff are responsible for leading annual training for Residence Life Assistants (RLA's), part-time employees who supervise resident students who live in campus housing.

## Sources

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- 3.C.1 Job Opening Advertisement Information
- 3.C.2 Faculty Minimum Hire FT and ADJ
- 3.C.2 Fall Enrichment Day Agenda
- 3.C.2 Instructional Services Team IST.pdf
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- 3.C.3 FT and ADJ Faculty Job Description
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- 3.C.5 Dual Credit Certification NDE
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- 3.C.5 Fall Enrichment Day Agenda.pdf
- 3.C.5 FT Faculty Professional Memberships
- 3.C.5 FT Faculty Sabbatical Leave
- 3.C.5 FT Faculty Travel Guidelines
- 3.C.5 New Faculty Orientation
- 3.C.5 Vector Safe Colleges Training.pdf
- 3.C.6 ADJ Faculty Observation Form
- 3.C.6 FT Faculty Accessibility

- 3.C.7 Employee Training Calendar Notification.pdf
- 3.C.7 Fall Enrichment Day Agenda
- 3.C.7 Financial Aid Certifications.pdf
- 3.C.7 FT PT Staff Job Descriptions.pdf
- 3.C.7 FT Staff Tuition Reimbursement
- 3.C.7 MPCC Presentation at JAM 2022

## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

### Argument

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#### **Response to 3.D.1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.**

Mid-Plains Community College's (MPCC) [comprehensive student services offerings](#) focus on establishing personal connections and meeting [students](#) where they are at throughout their time at MPCC.

Admissions and advising services are structured based on student need related to the type of associate degree, diploma, or certificate students are seeking.

- **Recruiters** are the "road warriors" of the admissions process and focus on traveling to area high schools, career fairs, and recruiting events both in-person and virtual to identify and follow up with all prospective students.
- **Enrollment coaches** are focused on recruitment and preliminary advising for prospective and new students. The enrollment coach position was created to provide a more cohesive student experience transitioning from prospective to new student. Depending on student's academic needs, an enrollment coach may be a student's advisor throughout their time at MPCC.
- **Academic advisors** primarily work with current students. Prior to Fall 2021, most students were not assigned a specific advisor. Even though students generally chose to stay with the same advisor, this practice created a lack of continuity for both students and advisors. Recognizing the need for improvement beginning with the Fall 2021 semester, students were assigned an advisor based on the type of associates degree they were seeking. This change paralleled an adjustment to CampusWeb (college online student registration system) that allows advisors to spend more time on goal setting, future planning, and problem solving rather on building schedules. See 3.D.3 for more information.

Dual credit students are provided the same access to advising services as on-campus and online students. To make advising services immediately accessible, the Early Entry department provides high school counselors with [course information, degree plan guides, and online enrollment tutorials](#). While high school counselors assist with advising dual credit students, the Early Entry department collaborates with community campus administrators to invite dual credit students who do not live a

commutable distance from the McCook or North Platte campuses to the community campuses to meet with advising staff in person or virtually.

### **Additional Key Student Services**

- **Career Services:** With goals of providing and promoting secondary school services, career placement services, and student and stakeholder services, [Career Services](#) works with faculty and staff to introduce middle and high school students to MPCC's career-focused programs. Events such as [Expanding Your Horizons](#), an event focused on introducing middle school girls to diverse career opportunities and the high school focused [Career Search and Investigate \(CSI\) Day](#), help engage potential students at an early age. For current students, Career Services works with students on job placement assistance and maintains a current job posting list on the [Career Services Facebook page](#).
- **Adult Education (AE) and GED (General Equivalency Diploma) Services:** AE and GED services are often the first step for students wanting to continue their education. Through collaboration with area social service agencies, business, and internal partners including advising, career services, and financial aid, Adult Education and GED focus on providing English Language Learner basic literacy instruction, and GED testing and diploma opportunities.
- **Disability Services:** With representatives on the North Platte and McCook campuses and outreach services provided to MPCC's community campuses, disability services works one-on-one with students who request accommodations. Additionally, disability services staff collaborates with faculty and staff to ensure student materials including textbooks and Canvas course content meet compliance and accessibility requirements.
- **Financial Aid:** Financial aid staff focus on providing financial support for students and becoming financially literate while complying with state and federal financial aid regulations. For new and returning students, financial aid staff focus on encouraging students to complete the FAFSA along with the online scholarship application to ensure students receive all eligible aide. For MPCC graduates, financial aid exit counseling is done in person at commencement practice.
- **Learning Commons:** The Learning Commons is home to resources (library) and student success services. [Library services](#) include individual and classroom instruction in research and information literacy. [Student success services](#) include in-person and online tutoring services, writing and math labs, and testing services. The Learning Commons physical spaces on the McCook and North Platte campuses are a unified environment where students can research, study, take tests in a secure, quiet environment, and access tutoring services.
- **Mental Health Counseling:** Since 2015, the college provides [mental health counseling](#) to students at no cost. Contracted counselors maintain physical offices on the McCook and North Platte campuses with telehealth options available to community campuses. Counselors also sit on the McCook and North Platte Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation Team (CARE Team).
- **Student Activities:** Student activities staff strive to provide a vibrant campus experience for students to create and participate in quality student activities and organizations. Extra-curricular and cocurricular activities are offered focusing on the student life programming pillars of social engagement, community building, MPCC traditions, health and wellness, leadership, citizenship, and understanding cultural differences. Cocurricular activities and events are offered that support the college-wide student learning and degree program outcomes.
- **Child Development Center (McCook campus only):** McCook Community College's [recently](#)

[renovated Child Development Center](#) provides childcare for McCook Community College students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities. Early childhood education students have the opportunity to complete their practicums and internships at the center.

All student services departments work individually to ensure student needs are met. Systematic collaboration between student services and other college departments, such as academic affairs and the business office, helps ensure a unified, consistent message for students. This focus on collaboration is supported by [the current strategic plan which includes four objectives](#) focused on collaboration between several student services and academic affairs.

- Objective 1: Enhance recruitment methods
- Objective 2: Expand our programming, including repackaging course offerings:
- Objective 4: Strengthen partnerships with area high schools
- Objective 10: Improve collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs

### **Collaboration in Action:**

- [The Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation Team \(CARE Team\)](#) exists to assist with any situation that could potentially disrupt a student's academic or social wellbeing within the MPCC community. The team connects identified students with resources and support. Through early identification of academic difficulties, social concerns, behavioral disruptions, or health issues, the CARE Team can partner with students to create individualized plans to help mitigate crises and promote success.
- The [Kiewit Scholars](#) program allows qualified non-traditional and applied technology students, low-income individuals and GED recipients to receive financial assistance with tuition, fees, and books. Kiewit students have access to tutoring, outlined career expectations, job shadowing and guidance with resumes, cover letters and mock job interviews.
- In March 2020, as the college transitioned to a remote work/instruction environment, the Learning Commons staff coordinated an effort to contact current students, including dual credit students, to make sure students had access to needed resources to complete their semester. From March-May 2020, students were contacted every two-four weeks through various texting platforms, including TextNow. Initial messages focused on access to Canvas and library/tutoring resources. Later in the semester, messages focused on registering for summer and fall 2020 classes and the availability of Higher Education Emergency Funds (HEERF).

**Response to 3.D.2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.**

Learner support services are primarily offered through the Learning Commons which is home to library and student success services. [Learning Commons: Libraries](#) supports learners by offering individualized and classroom research and information literacy instruction sessions. [The Learning Commons: Student Success](#) provides in-person and online tutoring services, writing and math labs, and testing services including the ACCUPLACER test to assist advisors in [placing students](#) in math and English courses.

Foundations (preparatory) courses are designed to help students master basic skills necessary to meet minimum entry standards for college level courses. [Foundations courses](#) below 1000 level do not count toward graduation.

## Recent Improvements:

- In 2016, student services staff collaborated with faculty and created [Bridge to Success](#), to help entering students who need foundations courses get a jump start on their college education. Offered in McCook and North Platte, Bridge to Success allows students to arrive on campus early, complete a foundations course, build relationships, learn how to navigate the college environment, and get a head start on the academic year. [Student feedback](#) suggests Bridge students feel more prepared and are more knowledgeable about college services.
- In Fall 2019, a multiple measures workgroup composed of faculty and advisors was formed to study alternate methods of assessing student's academic preparedness for college-level coursework. In Spring 2020, the workgroup recommended the [multiple measures entrance](#) options for [English](#) and [math](#) and courses. The workgroup is continuing to research and review multiple measures data and adjusting methods as necessary. However, initial data shows 72% of students who utilized multiple measures were successful after their first college-level course.
- Developmental Math: Community and tribal college math faculty created a [statewide common curriculum for developmental mathematics](#). At Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), this common curriculum has created a smooth transition for students as they move between courses and teachers.

## Process for directing students into courses and programs

Two key departments involved in directing students into courses and programs are admissions and advising. For prospective students, admissions staff including recruiters, enrollment coaches, and advising staff use a holistic advising model (see 3.D.3) to work with students to better understand student's educational goals, identify related academic needs, review general and program-specific entrance requirements, and ensure students complete the admissions and enrollment process.

While admissions staff are student's first official point of contact, admissions and advising staff work as a team to understand where a student is at and where they want to be. To help understand where students are academically, admissions and advising staff [gather placement scores and high school/college transcripts](#). After the necessary information is on file, new students meet with an enrollment coach or academic advisor to discuss educational goals and enroll in classes.

Throughout the admissions and enrollment process, other departments play a critical role in student preparation. Key support services for prospective students include:

- **Learning Commons:** The Learning Commons arranges Accuplacer testing services to prospective students
- **Disability Services:** For prospective and incoming students, Disability Services collaborates with students, advisors, faculty, and Learning Commons staff to ensure student accommodations are met.
- **Financial Aid:** Financial aid works individually with students and their specific situations to help students fund their college education.
- **Student Life and Student Activities:** Student life and student activities focuses on extra and cocurricular programming that promotes engagement and supports student's educational goals.

**Response to 3.D.3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.**

Admission and advising staff, including enrollment coaches, are embracing a holistic advising module focused on the whole student with the understanding that all aspects of students' lives, including school, work, and home, are connected. From an academic planning perspective, advisors collaborate with students to create individualized [academic plans](#) while considering student's lives outside of the classroom. To assist students, advising staff rely on resources such as [Transfer Nebraska](#) for students transferring within the state of Nebraska and [Transferology](#) for students transferring to colleges outside of Nebraska.

Faculty contribute to the advising process by collaborating with advisors and enrollment coaches to recommend course sequences, assist with students transferring to other institutions, and assist with evaluating course descriptions and syllabi for courses students want to transfer back to MPCC.

As mentioned in 3.D.1, dual credit students have the same access to advising services as on-campus and online students. The Early Entry department collaborates with high school counselors and college advising staff to [disperse personalized guides for each high school](#) with recommended course lists, associate degree plans, and transfer guides.

Advising staff include career goals as part of their discussions, but will refer students to [Career Services](#) for additional assistance when necessary. For example, Career Services staff typically meet one-on-one with students who have yet to declare a major. In addition, Career Services staff meet with technical program students to work on resumes and job searches as part of their program of study.

To increase the college's online presence and make admissions and advising services more accessible to students, the directors of admissions and advising collaborated and adjusted an area recruiter's responsibilities to focus on web-based recruitment and advising. This realigned [online enrollment coach position](#) focuses on recruiting and advising online students, overseeing Jenzabar tools, and tracking and collecting information related to online recruitment and student needs.

**Response to 3.D.4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).**

Three key components of classroom infrastructure and supporting faculty are the Three-Year Instructional Equipment Plan, the Academic Master Plan (AMP), and Facilities Master Plan (FMP).

**Three-Year Instructional Equipment Plan:** [Established in by the Board of Governors in 2012](#), the Three-Year Instructional Equipment Plan's purpose is to ensure faculty have continued funding available to purchase industry standard equipment for their classroom. The plan was initially funded at \$500,000 for the first year and \$300,000 in subsequent years. Proposals are submitted by faculty to their respective [division chair](#) and are then [discussed and prioritized](#) at [Instructional Leadership Team \(ILT\) meetings](#). Before any purchases are made, physical resources and information technology staff are consulted.

**Academic Master Plan and Facilities Master Plan:** In the fall of 2016 under the leadership of the vice president for academic affairs, an Academic Master Plan was initiated. During the fall 2016 semester, faculty participated in departmental discussions focused on [six questions](#) related to strategic planning for both academics and facilities. The faculty input sessions also included an architectural firm who assisted the vice president for administrative services in designing a Facilities Master Plan.

These departmental discussions generated a framework for academic and facility planning based on [five themes](#).

1. Academic Programs and Curriculum
2. Learning Environments
3. Meaningful Partnerships
4. Students
5. Faculty Support

Additionally, the Academic Master Plan focused on new program development and identified four possible new programs to research including agriculture, health care, applied technology, and protective services.

Concurrently with the Academic Master Plan, the [Facilities Master Plan \(FMP\)](#) identified five initiatives as being vital to the continued success and growth of all academic programs and the college as a whole.

1. Relevance – Each program must continue to offer programs that are relevant to their particular profession and/or trade.
2. Competitive Facilities and Technology – The college must continue to invest in facilities, technology and equipment that will keep the college, at a minimum competitive, if not superior, to those facilities offered at peer institutions.
3. Partnerships – Partnerships across a variety of platforms must be encouraged and promoted. Those partnerships include high schools, businesses, communities and four-year institutions. The goals of these partnerships is to get high school students involved with the college to a greater degree (dual credit), offering meaningful internships and facilitating an easy to transition to four-year institutions for those students choosing that path.
4. Recruiting – Each program must work actively and hand-in-hand with Enrollment Management to pursue highly motivated and better prepared students. Better students are attracted to rigorous and challenging academic and trade programs.
5. Faculty Recruitment and Continuing Education – The continued success and growth of the College is contingent upon the recruitment of highly skilled and gifted faculty along with promoting and facilitating continuing education opportunities for all faculty so they can remain current and relevant in their particular fields.

The [2017-2019 Academic Master Plan Final Report](#) identified overall accomplishments in addition to specific accomplishments for each academic division. In 2021, a new Academic Master Planning cycle began utilizing the same process as the 2017-2019 plan. In the 2021-22 academic year, departmental discussions were held with faculty. Initial themes and findings will be reviewed by faculty and cabinet in the summer and fall of 2022.

In addition to the Three-Year Instructional Equipment Plan and Academic and Facilities Master Plans, the [Capital Improvement Plan, which is also referred to as Facilities Improvement Plan](#) includes instruction related infrastructure projects. For example in 2020, the Center for Applied Science and Technology (CAST) in McCook used Capital Improvement Plan funds to update the center, which is used for welding classes. [Updates included](#) new welding booths with built in ventilation, new downdraft tables in the grinding room which improved ventilation, and new LED lighting which made the center safer to navigate for students and faculty.



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- 3.D.4 Instructional Leadership Team Description (ILT)

## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

### Summary

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Regardless of when, where, or how a class is offered throughout the college's 20,500 square mile service area, the foundation of a quality education is supported by consistent faculty qualifications, consistent availability of funds for classroom-based technology, curriculum support, a variety of accessible student support services, and comprehensive strategic, academic, and facilities planning processes.

### Highlights

- The integrated nature of academic and facilities master planning processes along with board commitment to funding of instructional equipment provide a foundation for delivery of quality education wherever and however offerings are delivered.
- The college's three-year instructional equipment plan sets aside \$300,000 yearly for instructional related equipment and technology.
- Active, college-wide participation in the Nebraska Transfer Initiative, industry-based professional organizations, and faculty-led curriculum oversight by the Instructional Services Team (IST) helps ensure that course and program content is current and relevant.
- Student support services, including academic and career advising, mental health counseling, library, tutoring, and financial aid focus on establishing personal connections, meeting students where they are at, and help students get where they want to be.

Opportunities for improvement include documenting and supporting diversity-focused classroom and cocurricular activities and improving cocurricular assessment efforts.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

### Argument

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#### **Response to 4.A.1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.**

In 2013, a faculty-led [comprehensive program review process](#) was implemented. The revised process is composed of three key elements: a yearly program trend data sheet, a three-year cycle internal review, and a seven-year cycle external Nebraska Coordinating Commission on Post-Secondary Education (CCPE) review.

- **Program Trend Data:** Every year, full-time faculty receive a program trend data sheet prepared by Institutional Research with basic enrollment trend data including student credit hours, student headcount, full-time equivalency, and awards conferred. In years where a program is up for program review, the data is a required part of the review.
- **Internal program review:** Based on a [three-year rotation](#), academic programs participate in an internal program review process in preparation for the CCPE review. Internal program reviews are written by department faculty with support from the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA). A key component of the internal

review is comprehensive feedback provided by ILT. The team reviews each internal program review and provides feedback to faculty on changes and any missing information.

- **External program review:** Based on a [seven-year rotation](#), the CCPE review's purpose is to help ensure continued quality of programs and monitor an appropriate level of interest and successful completion. Program faculty collaborate with student services, administrative services, institutional research, and the VPAA to complete the review. Then, the document is reviewed by the appropriate division chair, the Instructional Leadership Team, and the VPAA before it is presented to the Board of Governors. [The Board of Governors discusses and approves](#) the review before it is submitted to the Coordinating Commission for final approval.

Both the internal and external program reviews are used as part of the overall budgeting process, in purchasing new technology and instructional equipment, and help document beneficial improvements. With the added data from the [program scorecard](#), program reviews are also used to monitor data that helps determine program viability.

**Process in Action:** Based on [program trend data](#), a [program review](#), and the [program scorecard](#), in 2019-20, it was determined the Fire Science program was no longer viable. The program was removed from the college's offerings and is no longer longer accepting students.

**Response to 4.A.2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.**

Under the supervision of the registrar, the Office of Registration and Records is responsible for maintaining, updating, and safeguarding student data including transcripts.

The [college catalog](#) outlines detailed rules regarding transcribed credit. In [2020-21, the Office of Registration and Records](#) received 357 college transcripts. Within one week of receipt, 77.03% of the 357 transcripts received were evaluated and posted to a student's record. Most of the remaining 22.97% of transcripts were evaluated and posted within one month of receipt unless the transcripts were not evaluated due to a student's non-degree seeking status, the credits being non-transferable, or coursework not being applicable to degree. The transcript evaluation process is outlined in [Registration and Records Transfer Evaluation and Individual Transcript Notes Processes](#).

Other than credit-based internships for students in Applied Technology and Business programs, the college does not offer credit for experiential learning with the exception of evaluation of military credit as defined by federal law.

**Response to 4.A.3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.**

As stated in the [college catalog](#), courses from accredited institutions in which grades of "A", "B", or "C" (or their equivalent) have been earned will be considered for transfer credit to Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC). College courses in which grades of "D" or "F" (or their equivalent) have been earned will not be considered for transfer credit. For courses that don't have a direct equivalent, the registrar collaborates with the appropriate division chair or their designee to determine course equivalency.

At the state level, MPCC is a part of [Transfer Nebraska](#), a website that allows students to confirm how courses completed at most colleges within the state of Nebraska will transfer to MPCC.

**Response to 4.A.4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.**

Regardless of course type (traditional, online, dual credit) or location, prerequisites, rigor, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications are the same college-wide.

Course pre-requisites are determined within the academic division and sent to the [Instructional Services Team](#) (see 3.A.1) for approval. Additionally, course prerequisites are systematically reviewed, with the most recent review occurring in 2019. For specific programs and courses, academic rigor and expectations for student learning are developed within the academic divisions with consideration and input from professional organizations.

Learning resources, including library services and tutoring, at all campuses and dual credit locations are offered under the umbrella of the Learning Commons with oversight of the vice president of student affairs.

**The Learning Commons: Libraries** offer collections containing both print and electronic resources designed to support the college's curriculum and facilitate student and faculty research. All users, regardless of physical location, can access a [combined electronic catalog](#) that features 175,000+ books, eBooks, journals, DVDs, CDs, newspapers, and other items included in the library collections. See 2.E.2 and 2.E.3 for more information about recent improvements in Learning Commons: Libraries.

**The Learning Commons: Student Success** is a learning community where professional staff is available to support students by providing a variety of services.

- **Tutoring:** Tutoring is provided at no cost to all distance, dual credit, and online students. On-site peer-to-peer tutoring is available in McCook, North Platte, and at all four community campuses. Online tutoring is offered through Brainfuse, an online 24/7 tutoring service which is accessible through the students' Canvas account. For distance students, tutoring is also available by Zoom and over the phone. Writing and mathematics labs and specific course based study groups are available based on student need.
- **Technology Services:** McCook, North Platte, and all four community campus locations have student access to computers, printers, and basic technology services.

## **Faculty Qualifications**

For faculty, qualification guidelines follow HLC's assumed practices B.2.a The office of academic affairs reviews and monitors faculty qualifications while the actual files are stored in human resources. Dual credit faculty must meet all credentialing guidelines as identified in [Mid-Plains Community College \(MPCC\) Minimum Criteria for Initial Hiring](#) and [Dual Credit Hiring Guidelines](#).

## **Dual Credit**

For dual credit students, course and program outcomes are the same college-wide regardless of where

or how the course or program is offered. Dual credit faculty also participate in the assessment process to document [how outcomes are measured and if outcomes are being met](#). Additionally, dual credit faculty attend an [annual orientation](#) where they have the opportunity meet with other faculty in their discipline.

**Response to 4.A.5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.**

Following is a list of programs with specialized accreditations.

- Dental Assisting: Commission on American Dental Accreditation
  - Status: Fully Accredited
- Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic: Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs with oversight from Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions
  - Status: Fully Accredited
- Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT): National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS)
  - Status: Fully Accredited
- Nursing (Licensed Practical and Associate Degree/RN): Nebraska State Board of Nursing - Credentialing Division - Department of Regulations and Licensure and Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
  - Status: Continuing Accreditation with conditions for two years

In addition to the programs listed above, automotive technology, diesel technology, electrical technology, and welding incorporate professional organization standards and competencies into their curriculum.

**Response to 4.A.6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.**

College faculty and staff use the [Graduate Exit Survey](#), the [Graduate Employer Survey](#), program advisory feedback from employers, and university transfer information to evaluate graduate success.

Designed by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the Graduate Exit Survey is completed by students upon successful completion of their program of study. The survey asks students about their plans after Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), in addition to questions about their overall academic experience. Graduate Exit Survey data is shared in the [Graduate Exit Survey Report](#) and the [Student Experience Report](#).

Also designed and administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the [Graduate Employer Survey](#) is sent with student permission to employers who have hired MPCC graduates. Graduate Employer Survey data is presented along with Nebraska Department of Labor data in the annual [Graduates at Work](#) report. Employer feedback is included in this report in order to ascertain the impact of students' education on their careers. Employers are not asked any questions pertaining to wage, length of employment, or hire date.

For technical programs, consistent contact with area employers for [program advisory feedback](#) assists

faculty in making informed recommendations regarding curriculum, facility, and equipment needs; and assists with placing students into internships, clinicals, and cooperative education experiences. Due to pandemic directives limiting the size of groups and gatherings meeting together in close proximity, program faculty are now making visits to advisory member's businesses and potential employers instead of having them come to campus for group meetings. This shift has created stronger partnerships between faculty members and employers. Faculty often take students on these visits, which gives students additional exposure to potential career opportunities.

For academic transfer programs, transfer data is an additional indicator of graduate success. [Transfer data from the University of Nebraska at Kearney \(UNK\)](#), which is part of the University of Nebraska system, shows that MPCC students transferred in more credit hours, had a higher grade point average, and had the highest UNK graduation out of all six community colleges in Nebraska. The data reaffirms how [academically prepared](#) MPCC graduates are and how easy it is to transfer credits from Mid-Plains.

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

### Argument

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**Response to 4.B.1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.**

The [Assessment Procedure Manual](#) outlines instructional, non-instructional, and cocurricular assessment processes and procedures.

#### Instructional Assessment

Instructional assessment processes and procedures are built around current instructional policies using course and program information developed by faculty. For ease of use and understanding, instructional assessment processes are focused on [general education assessment](#), [program assessment](#), and [course assessment](#).

- **General Education Assessment:** As mentioned in 3.B.1, new general education and degree [program objectives and a three-year assessment rotation was implemented in 2018](#). Primary assessment data collection for transfer degrees (Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies) occurs through general education assessment processes.
- **Program Assessment:** As part of the college's program review process, all Associate of Applied Science programs submit a completed [program assessment matrix](#) and [updated program map](#) every three years. In "off" years, program faculty contribute to the [general education process](#), focus on curriculum updates, and, in some cases, prepare for program-specific accreditation.
- **Course Assessment:** Course assessment data is collected and reported [individually](#) and as part of the general education assessment process. At the faculty/classroom level, faculty collect course assessment data and document changes and adjustments made.

While the assessment coordinator facilitates and organizes instructional assessment data collection and reporting, faculty are the drivers and decision makers related to outcome/objective content, defining measurements, setting expectations, and analyzing assessment data with the ultimate goal of improving student learning.

#### Non-Instructional Assessment

All [non-instructional departments](#) are required to complete an [annual cabinet assessment report](#) analyzing goals from the prior year, setting goals for the upcoming year, specifying how goals align with the [current strategic plan](#), explaining how goals are measured, and identifying special needs or requests based on information and data included in the report. Report content is generated within individual departments and presented to cabinet as part of cabinet's regularly scheduled meetings. Reports are mentioned in [cabinet meeting notes](#), which are emailed out to employees and are accessible to college employees through the [employee portal](#).

### **Cocurricular Assessment**

In the Spring of 2019, student life staff with the support of the assessment coordinator piloted a [cocurricular assessment process](#). The process was repeated in Fall 2019 with plans to fully implement the process in Spring 2020. Then in March 2020, all campuses shifted to remote work and instruction, and all student activities were cancelled. Throughout 2020-21 and 2021-22, student activities were limited due to the ongoing pandemic and limits on group gatherings. However, some [cocurricular assessment data](#) was collected in the spring 2022 semester. In 2022-23, the newly hired assistant director of multicultural leadership and engagement will coordinate a cocurricular assessment effort focused on diversity and public service. Cocurricular activities and events will establish a connection to [general education and degree program objectives](#) and student life programming pillars of social engagement, community building, and Mid-Plains Community College traditions, health, wellness, and intramural activities, leadership, citizenship, and development of multicultural awareness.

### **Assessment Leadership Team**

Leadership and guidance for assessment comes from the [Assessment Leadership Team \(ALT\)](#). Originally established in 2006, the team did not meet from 2010-2013 due to turnover in administration and personnel directly responsible for assessment. In the Fall of 2013, the ALT was re-established as a result of an accreditation action project. The ALT's initial purpose is to recommend, facilitate, and support policies, processes, and practices used by MPCC for assessing and improving student learning in instructional areas and student satisfaction in non-instructional areas. An example of the ALT's scope occurred in 2018 when the general education and degree program objectives were revised. Several ALT members assisted in revising the general education objectives and the entire team acted in an advisory capacity throughout the process. Since the Spring 2020 semester, the assessment coordinator has met individually with faculty and the Instructional Leadership Team regarding assessment data and processes. Review of [non-instructional assessment](#) data has shifted from the ALT to the college cabinet and is also incorporated into the strategic planning process.

### **Response to 4.B.2 The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning**

As assessment procedures were re-established in 2013, annual assessment reports have evolved from [large documents](#) to [departmental and program reports](#) that are more user friendly for faculty and staff. Completed assessment reports and data are shared and discussed in one-on-one faculty meetings, general faculty meetings, division meetings, and with the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). Annually, faculty have the opportunity to review assessment data as part of MPCC's annual [Fall Enrichment Day](#) held on the first Friday in October. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, instructional assessment reporting was affected by the shift to remote instruction. When the college shifted to remote learning in Spring 2020, formal assessment data collection was suspended. However, faculty

still collected informal assessment information while focusing on being responsive and innovative during an extortionary semester. In just the second full semester of using Canvas faculty and students uploaded 11,217 assignments, initiated 4,314 discussion topics, uploaded 38,323 files, and created 528 media recordings

Spring 2020 assessment data was collected throughout the 2020-21 academic year and was reported in the [2019-20 Instructional Assessment Report](#). The delay in collecting assessment data affected the reporting, review, and documented use of assessment data.

**General Education Assessment and Summary of Changes Made**

With information learned at an HLC sponsored [Assessing General Education Workshop](#), the college revised its general education outcomes effective with the 2018-19 academic year. Prior to 2018-19, the objectives had not been revised since the 1990's. Along with the revised [General Education and Degree Program Objectives](#), a three-year rotation was implemented with two-three objectives assessed each academic year. Assessment data collection was paused in the Spring 2020 semester as MPCC transitioned to remote work and instruction, but Spring 2020 data was collected throughout the following 2020-21 academic year.

Following is summary table of assessment data collected during the first three-year (2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21) rotation.

<b>General Education and Degree Program Objectives</b>	<b>Results Summary</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>
<p><a href="#">Written Communication (2018-19)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Information Literacy Skills (2018-19)</a></p>	<p>Overall, students met faculty established targets for written communication except for demonstrating and applying information literacy skills by selecting and incorporating outside sources.</p> <p>2018-19 was the first time information literacy was formally assessed. Results indicated that library instruction sessions improved student understanding of library services, including how to search databases and find sources. However, students still struggled with citing sources and formatting in-text citations and work cited pages.</p>	<p>Based on this information and feedback from library instruction sessions, Learning Commons: Library staff formed a team to select a new integrated library system. The search process started in Spring 2021 and Alma/Primo was fully implemented in December 2021.</p>

<p><a href="#">Mathematics Skills (2018-19)</a></p>	<p>Students met faculty established target of 75% for each course outcome except analyze polynomial functions (67%).</p>	<p>Prior to 2018-19 academic year, math faculty used a MATH 1150 College Algebra common exam as the primary method of assessment for mathematics skills.</p> <p>Beginning with the new general education assessment cycle, faculty transitioned to a course outcome based method of assessment using the Nebraska Transfer Initiative (NTI outcomes). Since 2018-19, this method has proven to be a more authentic way to assess student learning in traditional, online, and dual credit courses.</p>
<p><a href="#">Critical Thinking Skills (2019-20)</a></p>	<p>Students met faculty established targets for critical thinking.</p>	<p>While students are meeting faculty expectations, direct assessment data from across academic divisions was not included in the 2019-20 report. Additional direct assessment sources will be identified and included in the 2022-23 general education assessment report.</p>
<p><a href="#">Scientific Inquiry Skills (2019-20)</a></p>	<p>Students met faculty established targets for scientific inquiry skills.</p>	<p>As with critical thinking skills, direct assessment data from across academic divisions for scientific inquiry skills was not included in the 2019-20 report. Additional direct assessment sources will be identified and included in the 2022-23 general education assessment report.</p>

<p><a href="#">Oral Communication Skills (2020-21)</a></p>	<p>Students met faculty established targets for oral communications skills.</p>	<p>Utilizing a modified American Association of College and Universities Rubric, full time faculty teaching SPCH 1110 Public Speaking collected assessment data within Canvas. Students met expectations, but more behind the scenes work needs to be done before using Canvas to gather assessment data.</p>
<p>Cultural Awareness (2020-21)</p>	<p>Direct assessment data for cultural awareness was not formally reported. However, some cocurricular assessment data was collected in <a href="#">Spring 2022</a>, instructional assessment sources have been identified, and data will be collected in 2022-23. In addition, data from the Spring 2023 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) administration will be reviewed along with curricular and instructional assessment data to determine a path forward.</p>	

In the next three-year (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24) general education assessment cycle, identified areas for improvement include:

- Incorporating direct assessment data from across the academic divisions for each general education and degree program objective.
- Ensuring that assessment data from dual credit students in courses taught by credentialed high school faculty is consistently represented.
- Using Canvas, the college's learning management system, to collect assessment data.

### Use of Program and Course Assessment Data

Documentation of how program level assessment data is used is included in individual program matrices and is also represented in the [program review process](#). Recent, specific examples of how program-level assessment data has impacted student learning include:

- [Business \(2020-21\)](#): Overall, students were struggling to meet the program outcome, "Use effective communication skills appropriate to the business field." Faculty realized that the curriculum should include formal and informal methods of communication.
- Automotive Technology: Currently, the [automotive technology program](#) has one instructor for first year students and one instructor for second year students. Both instructors noticed first year students struggling with electrical concepts. Based on student feedback, both faculty are revising the curriculum so students are introduced to electricity and electronic diagnostic concepts in year one and concepts are reinforced and expanded on in year two.
- [Dental Assisting \(2021-22\)](#): The dental assisting program director/instructor changed the way chairside skills and advanced procedures were assessed by incorporating both instructor and dentist/dental assistant feedback in the assigned clinical setting. Prior to this change, a general employer survey was used. The specific feedback gave students a more in-depth assessment of their skills as they prepared to enter the workforce.

Course-level assessment data gives faculty the opportunity to compare data from different course types (face-to-face, online, and dual credit) and examine the unique opportunities each method of delivery presents. For example, in transfer courses such as [MATH 1150 College Algebra](#), [ENGL 1010 English Composition I](#), and [ACCT 1200 Principles of Accounting I](#), dual credit students performed at or better than students in a traditional face-to-face course. However, traditional college students [WELD 1115 Arc and Gas Welding](#) outperformed their dual credit counterparts.

**Response to 4.B.3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.**

Since 2013, assessment participation rates for faculty and staff have increased from 80% to 88% for full-time faculty and 75% to 100% for staff. In a 2021 post fall enrichment day survey, [82% of faculty and staff strongly agreed, agreed, or were neutral](#) that time spent on assessment during the college's annual fall enrichment day is beneficial.

As mentioned in 3.A.2, the revised general education and degree program objectives and assessment processes are based on information presented at a [February 2018](#) Assessing General Education workshop sponsored by HLC. For academic transfer courses, course outcomes are agreed on by faculty from Nebraska's six community colleges as part of the Nebraska Transfer Initiative. For applied technology and health occupations programs, program and course outcomes are often based on or come directly from professional organizations or external accreditors.

[Cocurricular assessment process and definitions](#) are based on information from a virtual [HLC cocurricular assessment workshop](#) held in October-November 2021. The workshop was the foundation for the college's current cocurricular assessment processes and information learned will continue to be a key building block as the program grows.

## Sources

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- 4.B.1 Assessment Leadership Team.pdf
- 4.B.1 Assessment Procedure Manual.pdf
- 4.B.1 Cabinet Assessment Report Forms
- 4.B.1 Cabinet Notes Assessment Report
- 4.B.1 Cocurricular Assessment Procedures
- 4.B.1 Course Assessment Matrix Sample
- 4.B.1 Course Assessment Procedures
- 4.B.1 Employee Portal NI Reports
- 4.B.1 Gen Ed Objectives with Rotation
- 4.B.1 General Education Assessment Procedures
- 4.B.1 General Education Business Communications
- 4.B.1 Non-Instructional Assessment Procedures
- 4.B.1 Program Assessment Procedures
- 4.B.1 Program Map
- 4.B.1 Program Matrix
- 4.B.1 SP 2022 Cocurricular Assessment

- 4.B.1 Strategic Objectives
- 4.B.2 Program Review (Assessment Information)
- 4.B.2 2019-20 Instructional Assessment Report
- 4.B.2 2020-21 Business Program Assessment Matrix.pdf
- 4.B.2 2021-22 Dental Assisting Program Matrix
- 4.B.2 Automotive Technology Suggested Sequence of Study
- 4.B.2 Course Assessment Accounting 2020-21
- 4.B.2 Course Assessment College Algebra 2020-21
- 4.B.2 Course Assessment English Comp I 2020-21
- 4.B.2 Course Assessment Welding 2019-20
- 4.B.2 Critical Thinking Skills Assessment Report 2019-20
- 4.B.2 Departmental Assessment Report
- 4.B.2 Fall Enrichment Day Schedules
- 4.B.2 Gen Ed Objectives with Rotation
- 4.B.2 HLC Gen Ed Workshop Agenda 2018
- 4.B.2 Information Literacy Assessment Report 2018-19
- 4.B.2 Instructional Assessment Report 2015-16
- 4.B.2 Mathematics Skills Assessment Report 2018-19
- 4.B.2 Oral Communications Skills Assessment Report 2020-21
- 4.B.2 Scientific Inquiry Skills Assessment Report 2019-20
- 4.B.2 SP 2022 Cocurricular Assessment
- 4.B.2 Written Communication Assessment Report 2018-19
- 4.B.3 Cocurricular Assessment Definitions Process Procedure
- 4.B.3 Fall Enrichment Day Survey Results
- 4.B.3 HLC Cocurricular Assessment Workshop
- 4.B.3 HLC Gen Ed Workshop Agenda 2018

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

### Argument

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**Response to 4.C.1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.**

College cabinet reviews student success indicators as new data becomes available, and defined targets are established and reviewed regularly. College-wide [key performance indicators](#) include the community college success rate (the sum of graduation and transfer rates), [retention rates](#), and general education outcome performance. There are also indicators defined for enrollment and employee engagement. These indicators were chosen through dialogue of the college cabinet and utilizing the information provided in the book, "Core Indicators of Effectiveness for Community Colleges" by Alfred, Shults, and Seybert.

[Discussion of ambitious and attainable targets occurs](#) on an annual basis. These college-wide key performance indicators (KPI's) are high-level selected measures, which include or are connected to key indicators within functional areas of the college. Primary among the indicators are measures of general education and degree program objectives. These objectives are measured by metrics collected from direct and indirect sources.

Direct measures are collected on a regular basis. These assessments were described earlier (3.B, 4.B) and include a prescribed [cycle of assessing the general education objectives](#), as well as systematic collection and evaluation of program objective measures.

On an operational level, [goals are set and revisited on an annual basis by non-instructional departments](#) who work to affect change by looking at leading indicators for student success. The results of these efforts have been rewarded by [rising overall success rate trends over the past ten years](#).



The ambitious long-term goals related to overall success for degree seeking students are as follows:

To achieve or exceed:

- 90% persistence rate from first fall to following spring term,
- 70% retention rate from first fall to second fall, and
- 65% community college success rate (The sum of graduation rate within 150% of normal time to completion and the transfer-out rate.)

Recent efforts have been made to increase awareness of resources available for veteran and active-duty students. The new website update in 2021 includes a centralized location for veteran-related aid and services.

Veterans entering MPCC are connected with the registrar to evaluate their military experience for college credit via the Joint Service Transcript website and a VA School Certifying Official to ensure they are maximizing their VA educational benefits. Once enrolled, veterans have access to a host of educational and social support services including: mental health counseling, testing and tutoring services, disability services, career services, Stars and Stripes student organization and more. MPCC is also committed to minimizing the impact on the educational goals of veterans, reservists, and members of the national guard called to active duty while enrolled at MPCC.

Sustained investment in distance learning equipment and software, including a change in Learning Management Systems (LMS) from Blackboard to Canvas, allows students to access instructors at different times and from different locations. These priorities regularly support students in following their academic path to completion. The enhanced environment and video recording and viewing capabilities in Canvas benefited students and faculty when the pandemic required adapting by both instructors and students from March 2020 forward.

**Response to 4.C.2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.**

Student persistence and retention data is collected and reported systematically across several platforms, including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the [Voluntary Framework of Accountability \(VFA\)](#), as well as in the college's [Retention Report to the Board of Governors](#) and the [Student Success section of the college's trends and statistics publication](#). Completion of programs is captured in annual [academic planning data reports](#), which are shared with faculty by the vice president for academic affairs, and additionally reported in the annual graduate reports.

While the IPEDS system isn't ideal for measuring the success of the variety of goals and skills that community college students enroll for, it does provide one of the few standard metrics by which Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) can compare itself to other institutions. [Retention rates](#) have remained above 60% since the Fall 2014 cohort (reported in the 2015-16 IPEDS survey year), and more recently had full-time, first-time, degree-seeking cohorts with retention rates of 67% and 69% for the Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 cohorts. This is quite remarkable considering that the Fall 2019 cohort experienced the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic in the middle of their second full term. Some interventions that may have influenced the outcome could be individualized phone calls made by Learning Commons staff during remote work at the end of spring term 2020, and the fact that MPCC had in-person classroom learning opportunities in the Fall 2020 term, when many other institutions in the state and nation had only remote learning options.

The VFA is building capacity to assist in the calculation of “Early Momentum Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)” which include credit momentum, mathematics and English completion, persistence from fall to next term, and college course completion rates in students’ first academic year. [These indicators were first introduced to VFA general membership in the 2020 data collection.](#) The VFA has just recently, March 2022, opened up after a delay in 2021 data collection due to a technology upgrade, and these updated early momentum KPI’s will help inform student progress and evaluation of student support strategies.

Each February, the dean of student life presents the [MPCC Retention Report to the Board of Governors](#), which contains trends and peer comparisons for fall-to-fall persistence rates, fall-to-fall retention rates, and a community college success rate consisting of the sum of the graduation and transfer-out rates. Performance in recent years has been very positive and is attributed to factors including committed faculty, quality instruction, well-maintained facilities, safe living/learning environments, dedicated staff, and intentional student interaction.

The student progress and outcomes are also distributed to different audiences in different formats, such as an annual retention summit, the academic planning reports for faculty, and the trends and statistics student success document for staff and administrators. The graduate reports bring together [graduate exit survey data](#), [employer survey data](#), and [state department of labor data](#) for reports to the college cabinet and Board of Governors and shared on the employee portal. These reports also bring in results of externally licensed programs and external testing results in programs such as welding, auto technology, and others. A program-level retention report was developed in 2021-22 which is being used for division chair and enrolment management discussions and decision-making.

**Response to 4.C.3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.**

Considerable changes have been made to organizational structure, resource allocation, and intervention efforts to reach populations at risk. Some of these include:

- Continued [resources to provide online tutoring](#)
- [Adjustments made to early alert process](#) to engage more faculty/staff communication with student success staff
- Creation of a summer Bridge to Success program to help students become college-ready in English and mathematics (3.D.2)
- Merging of space and staff from Learning Resource Centers and Student Success Centers into a "Learning Commons" model
- Renewed focus on part-time and adult learner students, based upon sporadic retention performance of these subgroups

Due to the geographic challenges of serving students across the 20,500-square-mile service area, student services determined that there was an unmet student need for academic tutoring. The initial funding for this additional support was provided through planning and improvement funds beginning in the 2015-16 academic year. After the initial bank of online tutoring hours was used, the college continues to invest in this resource to continue equitable access to academic support services throughout the service area.

The early alert process involves creating and maintaining an open communication line between the faculty who are in the classroom regularly with the students and the Learning Commons staff who provide and schedule academic tutoring sessions. This process was not working equally among all

faculty members, and it was determined that the ease of reporting the status of their students (behavioral concerns or academic performance concerns) to Learning Commons staff was too cumbersome. Through an accreditation action project, exploration of the barriers to communicating were explored, and the result was the design of a roster/concern-based feedback form that made the process more efficient for faculty to complete. During the timeframe of this implementation, more faculty have been participating in early alerts than in the past and persistence and retention rates have been elevated from cohorts prior to the efforts.

A summer Bridge to Success initiative has been in place since the summer of 2017. Of the 48 students who have participated to date, a nearly 70% [fall-to-fall retention rate](#) has been achieved. These students persist at generally higher rates than their college-ready peers. Through the early on-campus experience and familiarity with the physical campus as well as student support services, these students consistently become leaders and advocates for other students throughout their time with MPCC.

The historical separation between library resources and student success centers was evaluated, and leaders of those areas determined that their departments could best serve the needs of the students by moving to a combined structure, now referred to as the Learning Commons. This made it possible to utilize the college's resources more effectively by staffing one space in North Platte. Through cross-training and remodeling of space in McCook and North Platte, coverage was enhanced to meet student needs and reduce potential stigma that students may have felt going to the location designated specifically for tutoring.

By creating a [student experience report](#) which is updated annually, the institutional effectiveness team has made data more accessible for staff in functional areas. This report brings together trend data from several different sources and organizes the results by functional area. The result of this work is that performance and satisfaction data are given to department leaders on a systematic basis. This leads to evaluation and use of the results to inform efforts that improve student success lagging indicators of retention, completion, and transfer rates. For example, the part-time retention data guided action steps for efforts to increase retention.

**Response to 4.C.4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice.**

The college utilizes a community college success rate as one measure of overall effectiveness, which sums the graduation rate and the transfer-out rate of degree-seeking students. This reflects the legislative priorities of applied technology and occupational education, transfer education for the college discussed earlier. (1.A)

Retention rates of first-time, degree seeking students (fall-to-fall) are tracked by enrollment status and reported according to IPEDS definitions. Additionally, the college has recently established a methodology that allows for a program-level retention rate to be calculated that is not tied to first-time student status. As an open-access public institution, students begin a degree or certificate program at different stages of life, with different postsecondary enrollment history, and enter programs at times other than the traditional fall term start.

The methodology used to establish this "[Program-level Retention Rate by Program Entry Cohort](#)" is as follows:

1. During the fall term, every program record with an entry date between September 1st of two

- years prior (Ex: 2019) and September 1st of one year prior (Ex: 2020), where the student enrolled during that time, is counted in the denominator; this includes academic transfer associate degree programs. The cohort is referred to as the year prior (Ex: 2020) cohort.
2. All awards earned prior to September 1st of the current year (Ex: 2021) are listed in the "Graduated" column.
  3. If the student pursuing the awards not earned within that timeframe was enrolled in the current fall term (Ex: 2021), each award they are still pursuing is counted in the "Still Enrolled" column.
  4. "Program-level Retention Rate" is calculated as the number of awards earned plus those pursued by students still enrolled second fall, divided by total awards pursued by a student enrolled having a program entry date during the cohort timeframe.

This methodology was presented to academic division chairs and met with their approval. The ability to see retention data at the program-level is seen to have the potential for more particular action to positively affect the overall retention rate of the college as reported through IPEDS methodology. This report was developed at the request of the division chairs and may develop more maturity through use over time.

The term "persistence" is sometimes used in higher education to refer to continuing enrollment in higher education regardless of the enrolling institution. Included in the mission of community colleges in Nebraska is transfer education and the measure of continuing enrollment at another institution of higher education is generally referred to as a "transfer rate." With this being the case, MPCC sees value in measuring earlier progress than fall-to-fall retention and so the persistence rate looks at re-enrollment rates after the fall term.

**Persistence rates** are calculated as the number of first-time degree seeking students who earned an award after the fall semester plus those first-time degree seeking students still enrolled during the following spring semester, divided by the total number of first-time degree seeking enrolled in the fall semester.

**Completion rates** are calculated according to IPEDS methodology, as it is a required metric to report to the federal government and is a metric comparable to all higher education institutions receiving Title IV funding. Due to the particular nature and mission of community colleges, there have been efforts to design metrics that better reflect the type of institutional mission. Therefore the college has participated in the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) project of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

The [VFA Outcomes Report](#) displays six-year outcomes for three different cohort types, the main cohort, credential seeking cohort, and first time in college cohort. The methodology for inclusion in the cohort differs from IPEDS in several ways. Principally, the VFA includes anyone who is at the institution for the first time, rather than first time in any postsecondary institution. Credential-seeking status is identified based upon enrollment behavior, rather than declaration of a student prior to enrollment at the college. Other advantages that this report has over IPEDS are the multiple levels of outcomes recognized, progress metrics for students with developmental needs, and also a more recent cohort (two-year) with progress measures that help identify effectiveness of recent initiatives or interventions the college is undertaking.

## Sources

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- 4.C.1 Fulltime Retention Rate 2010-2019
- 4.C.1 Gen Ed Objectives with Rotation
- 4.C.1 IPEDS 2021 Retention Data
- 4.C.1 Key Performance Indicators June 2022
- 4.C.1 KPI Cabinet Notes
- 4.C.1 Non-Instructional Assessment Reports
- 4.C.2 2021 VFA Full SPO Report
- 4.C.2 2022 Early Momentum VFA Report
- 4.C.2 BOG Annual Retention Presentation
- 4.C.2 Graduate Exit Survey Report 2020-21
- 4.C.2 Graduates at Work Report 2019-20
- 4.C.2 IPEDS 2021 Retention Data
- 4.C.2 Trends and Stats Student Success
- 4.C.3 Brainfuse Funding Request
- 4.C.3 Bridge to Success Fall to Fall Retention
- 4.C.3 Early Alert AQIP Action Project Close Out
- 4.C.3 Student Experience Report 2022
- 4.C.4 2020 Cohort Program Retention
- 4.C.4 2021 VFA Full SPO Report
- 4.C.4 Academic Planning Data

## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### Summary

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The quality of Mid-Plains Community College's educational programs is demonstrated through regular program reviews and faculty oversight of curriculum, along with faculty hiring processes that ensure faculty meet credentialing guidelines. Programs, learning environments, and support services are evaluated for effectiveness through setting targets and reviewing student achievement data to help the college achieve its mission of *transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*.

### Highlights

- The college's consistent, systematic program review process that includes an internal review, external review by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education, program scorecard, and program trend data ensures programs are meeting internal and external thresholds.
- The Instructional Services Team (college curriculum committee) reviews and recommends any curriculum changes, new programs, and other instructional policies that have college-wide implications.
- The college's Minimum Criteria for Initial Hire document helps ensure faculty meet credentialing guidelines established by the Higher Learning Commission.
- The college has defined goals for student achievement which reflect the mission, student populations and educational offerings of a two-year, public community college serving a sparsely populated rural service area.
- Student achievement data is used to identify and compare performance to small, rural community colleges and larger colleges throughout the state of Nebraska. This data is regularly reviewed by college leaders and the Board of Governors. Additional efforts have been made to utilize the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) to capture data more reflective of the college mission than the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
- Utilizing the information on student achievement levels, the college has taken steps to create more opportunities for student success. Some of these include expanding access to tutoring, improving the early alert process for students at risk, designing a summer bridge to success program allowing for early success in core courses, and creating a one-stop approach to learning resources and student success services.

Opportunities for improvement include strengthening assessment reporting consistency and firmly establishing a consistent cocurricular assessment process.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*



## 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

### 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

### Argument

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**Response to 5.A.1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.**

Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) demonstrates effectiveness in fulfilling its mission through the Board of Governors' policies and the structure and nature of institutional decision making, including faculty-led academic decision making. The college has processes for collecting and using data for reaching informed decisions, with collaborative structures to ensure appropriate representation of faculty, staff, and students when addressing academic requirements.

MPCC board meetings are subject to the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#) and include an open opportunity at the beginning of each monthly meeting for input from the general public, board members, students, faculty, or staff. Student trustees represent the student government at board meetings. Faculty have the opportunity to have representatives present at board meetings.

The college cabinet serves as the senior leadership team. The college has established standing teams that operate interdependently within the organization and are comprised of a cross representation of faculty and staff. The membership, purpose, and function of each of the teams is listed in the [College Teams document](#) on the employee portal. Using the team structure aligns with a shared governance concept, where the teams actually decide on most operational matters and confer with the college cabinet in matters affecting personnel and major unanticipated budgetary items.

Academic decision-making is made by faculty who work together to determine program and discipline requirements and standards. Faculty are represented by five academic division chairs on



the [Instructional Leadership Team \(ILT\)](#) which meets monthly, and by the vice president of academic affairs on the college cabinet which meets weekly. The academic division chairs are full-time faculty, who are provided release time to take care of administrative responsibilities including curriculum and scheduling within their respective divisions. Another standing committee of the college, the [Instructional Services Team \(IST\)](#) includes faculty and student services members who are responsible for recommending and approving college programs, curriculum, academic/technical standards, graduation/completion requirements, cooperative programs with other institutions, and other instructional policies and procedures that have college-wide implications/concerns. The cross-functional nature of this group allows for multiple perspectives in order to make decisions that best meet student needs and promote positive student learning outcomes.

The vice president for academic affairs holds monthly open faculty meetings in both McCook and North Platte to provide the opportunity for input regarding college planning, policies, and procedures during the fall and spring academic terms.

The college cabinet reviews annual or semi-annual reports on team progress and provides the opportunity for teams to indicate what they need from the leadership in order to remove obstacles and accomplish their goals. Separately-identified funds are set aside in the annual budget that teams may apply for and access to achieve goals that need additional resources outside of operationally budgeted funds. The funds are for new program development, instructional enhancement, and non-instructional enhancement.

College planning processes are collective and collaborative in nature. The institutional strategic planning cycle [includes input sessions](#) from community members, students, faculty, and staff. Recent planning processes for academics, facilities, and strategic enrollment master plans have all conducted engagement and input opportunities for internal constituents.

A change in food service providers resulted in an [upward swing in student satisfaction](#) after a process of vendor selection that included students, staff, and administration.

MPCC engages its internal constituencies through the governance structures such as open board meetings and standing functional teams including the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and Instructional Services Team (IST) that are specifically focused on academic programs and curriculum oversight. Regular engagement occurs through its planning, policies, and procedures including regular open faculty meetings for sharing of information and for input, as well as systematic reporting and dialogue of functional areas with the administrative leadership.

### **Response to 5.A.2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.**

College administrators regularly monitor and utilize data, much of which is presented in annual [assessment reports](#) to the college cabinet, to reach good decisions. In these reports, leaders and teams conduct a SWOT analysis alongside the presentation of prior year goals and outcomes, which is then [shared with the college cabinet](#) for dialogue and consideration. The data and analysis related to decision-making is contained within these systematic reports. Several department examples are as follows:

- In Physical Resources, one source of systematic data collection is through campus

walkthroughs with multiple department stakeholders including the area vice presidents, cabinet members, facilities director, and the president. As a group, tours are made of campuses and requests for direct feedback from faculty and staff regarding needs, wants, and the usage of their associated spaces is collected. That information is then vetted and prioritized where it's placed onto the three-year facilities improvement plan. Recently the department has requested surveys to gather input from staff, faculty and students. That information has been used as both a needs assessment and for filling in details regarding capital projects.

- The Financial Aid department recently used data from [financial audits](#) in order to change processes for improvement. The office implemented routine quality control checks to identify students who may have an improper mix of subsidized and unsubsidized loans and resolve potential issues. A report was created to identify potential first-time borrowers and ensure their loans do not disburse too early. Quality control checks were also implemented to provide a secondary review of a portion of files that went through the verification process to ensure accuracy.
- The Registration and Records department utilized information about registration methods to work towards improvements in serving students by leveraging software technology. In 2005, the department embraced the technology allowing students to self-serve by enrolling for courses online (during advising appointments, registration days, etc.), and enrollment staff began instructing students on the use of the online interface. However, over the years, paper registrations were increasing even after opening online registration to the early entry student population in 2020-21. Using a report that pulls the number of course sections enrolled by registration method staff could see that web registrations were declining over the years. The registrar reported this to the college cabinet and requested their support to prioritize online registration.
- In summer 2021, members of the enrollment team took part in Jenzabar consulting that included a demonstration of the Student Registration portlet within the student web interface, Jenzabar Internet Campus Solution (JICS). This method for student registration had a course scheduling option that was more robust than the previous interface. The enrollment team saw the new calendar view as a major improvement, which made scheduling courses for advisors and students much easier, and has encouraged online registration even further. Compared to 2020-21 where 24.6% course sections registered via the web, 44.6% course sections have been enrolled via the web in 2021-22 (mid-Spring 2022). In 2021-22 alone, course sections enrolled via the web went from 31.2% in Fall 2021 to 61.0% via the web in the Spring 2022!

Mid-Plains Community College developed a culture of using data to inform decisions through its participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) accreditation pathway from 2008 until it was no longer an option in 2018. Using that foundation, the college has continued its path of continuous improvement. The planning processes of the college regularly incorporate employee and student survey data in addition to environmental scans and face-to-face meetings with constituents.

**Response to 5.A.3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.**

The vice president for academic affairs monitors and facilitates the setting of academic requirements, policy, and processes. Through regular meetings referenced earlier including the [Instructional](#)

[Leadership Team \(ILT\)](#), the [Instructional Services Team \(IST\)](#), faculty meetings, and many regular interactions with personnel from faculty and staff, the vice president stays connected to academic needs and works to assist in addressing changes when necessary.

Methods used to determine student readiness for college-level course work consistently involved faculty evaluating placement tests and whether cut scores being utilized are resulting in accurate placement of students. Cut scores have been adjusted after testing organizations change their products which includes a recent move from Accuplacer to Accuplacer NextGen. In addition, a [faculty workgroup developed multiple measures guidelines](#) which allow students to be placed in math and English courses based on measures other than placement test scores (3.D.2)

The academic integrity process described in 2.D. was developed by a faculty workgroup in 2019, and faculty regularly contribute to academic decisions through division and department curriculum choices. Faculty of the college worked to revise the general education outcomes as described in core component 3.B in 2018.

Faculty serve on Nebraska Transfer Initiative committees to work together on appropriate content for shared syllabi. Recent statewide efforts regarding innovative ways to address math readiness for entering students involved sustained efforts and collaboration of mathematics faculty across the state.

## Sources

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- 5.A.1 Instructional Leadership Team ILT
- 5.A.1 Instructional Services Team IST
- 5.A.1 MPCC Standing Teams.pdf
- 5.A.1 Nebraska Legislature Open Meetings Act
- 5.A.1 Residence Life Food Service Vendor Selection
- 5.A.1 Strategic Plan Stakeholder Engagement Summary
- 5.A.2 2020-21 Financial Audit
- 5.A.2 Cabinet Assessment Report Forms
- 5.A.2 Cabinet Notes August 3 2022
- 5.A.3 Instructional Leadership Team ILT
- 5.A.3 Instructional Services Team IST
- 5.A.3 Multiple Measures Summary Information

## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

### Argument

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**Response to 5.B.1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.**

From development of a job description to an offer of employment, Mid-Plains Community College's (MPCC) [processes for recruiting and hiring](#) are designed to establish a thorough, efficient, and nondiscriminatory practice for the recruiting and hiring of the most qualified candidates for open positions.

Each full-time staff and administrative position in the college has a [Job Analysis Questionnaire \(JAQ\) that defines the title and duties of the job](#). Hiring qualified staff and administrators begins with creation of a fully developed JAQ which is reviewed and approved by the college cabinet. The JAQ also specifies the educational background and/or vocational experience required or preferred and is reviewed by the employee and supervisor annually. Significant changes (such as reporting structure, title, job classification) to JAQ are reviewed by college cabinet.

As noted earlier (3.C.7), ongoing training opportunities are provided through the college with an annual fall enrichment day and on- and off-campus [professional development opportunities](#). Full-time employees are eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement for college courses taken at accredited institutions and tuition waivers for courses taken at MPCC. [This benefit](#) has been offered to establish standards of excellence, to motivate employees to improve themselves, and to help build talent for future openings in leadership positions of the college.

To ensure students are receiving support in and out of the classroom, college cabinet, deans, directors, and division chairs with input from faculty and staff, review [enrollment](#) and [survey data](#), such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and MPCC's graduate survey, to determine if student needs are being met. If the data review indicates areas where student needs are not being met and staffing changes would better serve MPCC students, a new position description is developed. Then, the position is added to [the position matrix which college cabinet uses to identify and prioritize personnel needs](#). Any new position is approved by the Board of Governors prior to being advertised.

The position matrix is also reviewed when an existing position becomes vacant because of retirement

or resignation. The college cabinet regularly reviews the organizational structure and reworks positions to best utilize the talents of employees and college resources. The college's strategic planning process, [reduction-in-force procedures](#), succession planning, and the use of interim and acting assignments also ensure student support services are appropriately staffed.

MPCC has processes for recruiting, hiring, and training that ensure qualified operational staff are supporting the programs it delivers. The review of Job Analysis Questionnaires, provision of professional development opportunities, and collection of student input and reporting data support the upholding of quality education and support services provided.

**Response to 5.B.2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.**

MPCC builds goals around its mission, *transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success* and its current vision, to be first choice for the region for education, for partnerships, for employers, and for employees. The resource base for the college includes property tax, state appropriations, tuition, fees, room, board, and other income. Resources are allocated accordingly to address the mission and legislated priorities of the institution, including applied technology and occupational education, transfer education, public service, and applied research.

As the college cabinet and the Planning & Improvement Core (PIC) Team developed a systematic planning process, the Board of Governors approved funds for a separate budget line to be used solely for strategic planning initiatives to allow teams to pilot, develop, and implement solutions. One of the stipulations attached to this budget is that department-focused projects must first evaluate other funding options. All purchases made are subject to board policy on purchasing.

Before funds can be accessed, strategic goal work groups complete a [charter](#) and evaluate multiple potential solutions. Teams apply for funds using the [PIC Team Funds Request Form](#). Each form submission is evaluated by the PIC Team to ensure the funds meet the needs of not only the work group project, but also the institutional vision as well. The PIC Team includes representation from academic, student, and administrative divisions helping provide multiple perspectives when evaluating the fund requests.

Budget managers are made aware of the college mission and values and are expected to prepare budgets based on estimated revenue forecasts to achieve institutional goals. Some instruments used during the planning and execution process include the [academic program review](#) and [departmental assessment matrices](#).

[The college has established planning processes](#) to ensure that goals identified are within the scope and resources available to the institution, such as the monitoring of resources, budget lines specifically for improvements, and the expectations that work supports the mission and values of the college.

**Response to 5.B.3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.**

The process for fiscal budgeting and monitoring at the college is established and routine. The steps related to developing the institutional budget are described below. Rates are set in November for tuition, room and board, and the budgeting process runs until approval in September of the following year.

Steps to managing fiscal allocations of the institution:

1. Vice president of administrative services monitors tax revenues, state funding projections, and enrollment trends in order to inform the cabinet and board during the budgeting process.
2. Vice president of administrative services presents proposed tuition/fees/room/board rates to cabinet.
3. Board approves tuition/fees/room/board rates.
4. College president monitors legislative issues related to possible adjustments in state aid. Board reviews revenue projections, assumptions, and budget process.
5. First draft of preliminary budget forecast for board work session capital improvement plan for board work session.
6. Vice presidents and president meet with respective budget managers to prioritize requests and make adjustments.
7. Board approves any pay increases and salary increases calculated and added to cost center budgets.
8. Review current year budget status. Vice president of administrative services provides anticipated revenues and budget drafts to cabinet. Cabinet discusses changes and verifies priorities are funded.
9. Update board of changes to budget since prior meeting.
10. Property tax valuations set and state funding finalized. Board adopts preliminary budget for publication.
11. Public hearing to set property tax request. Final adoption of the budget.

Throughout steps 5-9 in the procedure, communication about the expected level of increase or decline in projected funds is shared with budget managers. Discussions about prioritization based upon mission occur in step 8.

Monitoring of fiscal resources is a shared responsibility of the budget managers and the business office. The business office has established [purchasing procedures](#) that are to be followed by all employees making purchasing decisions. Budget managers and cabinet members have the ability to monitor the status of their budget and expenditures using the online Jenzabar platform referred to as CampusWeb.

The Board of Governors receives [quarterly financial reports](#) at regular meetings, which it has advance access to in an online meeting agenda platform. Additionally, during the entire process for budgeting described above, the board receives updates and has discussions regarding the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Over time, maximum purchase limits have been increased according to reasonable expectations related to expected purchase amounts by level of responsibility. Annual [financial audits](#) are conducted by an external agency to provide an external check on the following of financial procedures. These audits have resulted in unmodified opinions free of material findings.

MPCC has a well-defined and systematic process of fiscal budgeting and monitoring which includes regular updates to the Board of Governors, monitoring of potential fluctuations in revenues, and

business procedures allowing effective oversight of expenditures.

**Response to 5.B.4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.**

The college maintains a target of at least 50% of the budget going towards instructional services and academic support. As described in 3.D.4, the institution has allotted \$300,000 per year specifically to instructional equipment each year since 2012-13 in order to enhance student learning and provide modern occupational experience for students. Students in sciences and health occupations work with up-to-date technology in the newest educational building located on the North Platte South Campus, the Health & Science Center (HASC), which opened in 2012.

As the [demand rises for qualified nurses](#) across the nation, MPCC has an expansion underway for the HASC which will add room for more nursing students to be trained. The expanded instructional space has been designed through a collaboration among nursing program faculty, architects, and the physical resources department to provide improvements to the environment and upgraded technology for current industry-standard training.

MPCC provides many educational services beyond the serving degree-seeking students [while maintaining stable tax requests](#). This is consistent with the mission of college and helps to meet the educational needs of constituents. Examples of these include the provision of [career exploration opportunities](#) for middle and high school students, [entrepreneurship classes and competitions](#), business administration classes, and [trainings built to meet area business needs](#). Most recently, MPCC partnered with the Calibraska Arts Initiative to provide educationally enriching activities for youth.

Mid-Plains Community College demonstrates consistent efforts to set targets and prioritize institutional spending to achieve educational purposes through on-going dedicated funds, capital improvements in support of educational purposes, as well as investments in programming that meets business and community needs.

## Sources

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- 5.B.1 2022-23 Enrollment Reports.pdf
- 5.B.1 2022-23 Position Matrix
- 5.B.1 HR Training Schedule Spring 22
- 5.B.1 Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) Template
- 5.B.1 Processes for Recruiting and Hiring
- 5.B.1 Reduction in Force Process
- 5.B.1 Student Experience Report 2022
- 5.B.1 Tuition Reimbursement and Waivers
- 5.B.2 Cabinet Assessment Report Forms
- 5.B.2 CCPE Program Review
- 5.B.2 MPCC Strategic Planning Process 2019-2022
- 5.B.2 PICT Funds Request
- 5.B.2 Strategic Plan Workgroup Charter
- 5.B.3 2020-21 Financial Audit

- 5.B.3 Purchasing Procedures
- 5.B.3 Quarterly Financial Report
- 5.B.4 BCE Business Based Offerings
- 5.B.4 Career Services Information
- 5.B.4 Hormel Entrepreneurship Competition.pdf
- 5.B.4 Nursing Occupation Overview Lightcast
- 5.B.4 Property Tax Request 2016-2022



## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

### Argument

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**Response to 5.C.1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.**

The mission and vision of Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) are the drivers of the institutional strategic planning process. Work being done within the college is then prioritized if it is linked to any of the strategic objectives identified during the process. Most recently, the college identified [ten strategic objectives](#) to move the institution towards its vision of being first choice for the region for education, for partnerships, for employers, and for employees. Workgroups that are addressing specific projects or initiatives to achieve strategic objectives have access to a pool of dollars overseen by the Planning and Improvement Core (PIC) Team, with [membership](#) representing faculty, classified staff, and administrative positions.

The college budgeting process is initiated by the vice president of administrative services and is then carried out by budget managers (typically department leaders). Budget requests are evaluated by the appropriate cabinet member for consideration, discussion, and adjustment. When considering budget limitations, budget managers and cabinet members look to department goals aligning with the mission and priorities of the college when determining potential areas of funding.

MPCC serves a geographically large, [eighteen-county service area](#) and prioritizes the allotment of sufficient human resources, academic instruction and support, technology and broadband services, fleet vehicles for employee transportation, and infrastructure support to all seven campuses. Staff travel regularly to area high schools to support high school students in learning about careers and choosing educational pathways.

In person adjunct faculty orientation is provided at the six campus communities annually, where the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) travels to conduct the orientation, provide updates, and answer questions that faculty might have. Early Entry staff travel to high school locations supporting high

school students earning college credit from MPCC.

Alignment of resource allocation with MPCC's mission and priorities is made apparent through the linking of departmental goals with institutional objectives and dedicated budget lines for improvements aligned with priorities. Departmental and functional teams allocate resources for equitable access to educational opportunities across locations.

**Response to 5.C.2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.**

Each year, academic divisions are expected to gather and review assessment data to evaluate the status of goals. Faculty prepare assessment outcome reports for discussion annually, and report on efforts related to the Academic Master Plan. Data from the [assessment reports, including learning outcomes assessment](#), is utilized to identify improvement opportunities and can lead to instructional equipment, professional development, or other requests to the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA). These requests are evaluated by the VPAA and impact the allotment of funds in departmental budgets.

Non-instructional (operational) departments are required to present an [annual assessment report](#) to the college cabinet. During these presentations, performance metrics are shared by the department leader and discussed with the cabinet members. The reports contain goals, and for those that are linked to institutional strategic objectives, those are noted. These reports also contain major accomplishments, challenges, opportunities, and requests to be considered by the college cabinet as seen by the department members. These documents become a primary source for consideration of planning and budgeting (5.B.3) for the following year.

**Response to 5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.**

College planning processes are integrated and are based on gathering perspectives of constituents to identify the best path toward achieving the mission and vision of the college. The [Academic Master Plan](#) and [Facilities Master Plan](#) that were developed in 2017 included 18 different academic departments. The meetings involved departmental faculty, the vice president for academic affairs and an architect. During the one-hour conversations faculty were first given some guiding principles for participation in the meeting (such as being creative, honest, respectful, open minded, and participatory), and then asked [guiding questions](#) about the strengths and weaknesses of their programs, future vision for the program, and facility needs for the program.

As the feedback from faculty was analyzed, five themes were identified that included 1) academic programs and curriculum, 2) learning environments, 3) meaningful partnerships, 4) students, and 5) faculty support. These themes were utilized as a structure for which each academic department was to choose specific goals. The preliminary plans were then shared with all employees through regular all-campus meetings and with community members and leaders at rotary club meetings, advisory committees, and community input sessions. The resulting finalized Academic Master Plan was published and presented to the college in the fall of 2017. A similar process took place during the 2021-22 academic year with a particular focus placed on recruitment and marketing.

The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) was developed alongside the Academic Master Plan from the

feedback received at the faculty sessions along with other constituent meetings. The FMP was developed to provide more flexible, convenient and accessible classes to more of the college area and afford existing programs the space to grow, freeing up vital spaces in the buildings that were vacated by programs, and enhancing the student experience for all students.

The institutional strategic plan [engaged external constituents](#) at community input sessions in six locations where physical campuses are located. MPCC Board members were represented at these meetings in a listening capacity. In addition, employee and student input sessions representative of McCook, North Platte, and community campuses were also held in order to best identify what factors might lead to the accomplishment of the college vision to be first choice for our region for education, for partnerships, for employers, and for employees. There were over 300 total participants and more than 400 ideas contributed for moving the college towards its vision. From these ideas, ten strategic objectives were identified across the four sectors of education, partnerships, employers, and employees.

Planning processes of the college consider internal and external constituent groups through meetings with stakeholders including faculty, employees, and students, as well as business and community members across academics, facilities, and overall institutional plans.

**Response to 5.C.4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.**

Nearly all revenue for MPCC comes from three sources, including local taxes, state aid, and tuition. The budget process and revenue forecast updates to the Board of Governors provide the basis for consideration of current and future capacity for providing exceptional educational opportunities.

The vice president of administrative services monitors local tax valuations, FTE information, and expected state aid allocation adjustments. FTE and student credit hour information provided by the annual FTE audit provide a basis for making tuition and fee recommendations to the board. State aid allocations are set by the legislature during the spring session for the next fiscal year. Once expected tuition revenue and state aid allocations are determined the necessary tax request is calculated to ensure budget priorities are funded.

The college president closely monitors each state legislative session and works closely with the chief executive officers of the other community colleges that are a part of the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA). The president is also called upon regularly by the executive director of the NCCA when community college-related discussions are happening at the state level. This has recently been the case with federal aid that has been made available during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The vice president of student affairs maintains regular meetings and communication with the directors of recruiting, advising, and financial aid, as well as the dean of student life, to be aware of factors that may be influencing credit student enrollments, helping predict fluctuations in tuition revenue. The [college cabinet reviews an Enrollment Key Performance Indicators \(KPI\) report](#) on a nearly weekly basis throughout the open registration periods. These reports provide for-credit enrollment information by location, mode, and academic division allowing for an understanding of potential rationale for fluctuations. This data can be used to inform decision making regarding resource alignments.

Sources of revenue and enrollment are monitored by appropriate executives of the college leadership and discussed in weekly meetings of the college cabinet as often as appropriate. This planning considers external factors impacting available resources for accomplishing the mission of the college.

**Response to 5.C.5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.**

The [college planning processes and structures](#) are maintained to stay current on external factors affecting the ability to achieve the mission of *transforming lives through exceptional learning opportunities for individual student success*.

The executives on the college cabinet team are in regular communication with colleagues in the field and they also stay abreast of developments nationally, as well as at the state and local levels when it comes to higher education and workforce policies and needs. Team members [serve on boards and maintain membership in organizations](#) that share news with potential impacts on these topics as well. The president and vice presidents make visits to school district superintendents when turnover occurs, which is frequent in a rural-serving area. [Participation in the Nebraska Community College Association \(NCCA\)](#) affords the building of many relationships that assist in anticipating external factors that may impact the planning of the college.

An example of local community and workforce planning is a [proposed beef processing facility in the city of North Platte](#) which the owners have indicated will add over 800 jobs serving the business directly, along with auxiliary job growth related to the new business. The college president and executives have been involved in chamber, city, and county planning [meetings to be informed of potential educational needs of the new business and the college's ability to meet those education and training needs](#). The college [has started a Commercial Drivers License \(CDL\) program](#) that is one part of helping provide training for the increased workforce, a high demand sector in the state even before the completion of the new business.

The director of information technology services regularly evaluates the technology environment and works with the vice president of administrative services to assure that the college has appropriate technology for fulfilling the mission. Recent efforts have been to increase broadband capacity between campus locations, add and upgrade classroom distance learning technology, and provide employee training regarding malware and phishing schemes. In anticipation of technological advancements, the annual budget allotment of \$300,000 towards instructional equipment is prioritized and the commitment maintained since 2012-13. (3.D.4)

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Integration Team has been working with software vendors, including Jenzabar, for many years as they strive to advance the technology used to meet the needs of students and employees. MPCC staff [work alongside Jenzabar](#) as it develops its software for a user interface that works well on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. The role of systems analyst was developed and the college filled two full-time positions beginning in 2018 after examining the institutional challenges in keeping up with software upgrades, implementations, and integrations. The addition of the two positions has led to much-needed project management and staff support for implementing upgrades and new software implementations that placed MPCC in a strong position with robust use of software tools for delivery of instruction and services for students.

As technology has evolved in the financial sector, research was conducted to see if the use of Pcards

could lead to more efficient use of staff resources by moving away from multi-step purchase requisition procedures put in place prior to the technology shifts. The movement toward Pcard usage, initiated March 2016, has reduced the number of physical check processing and mailing. This adjustment in procedure created the Business Office staff time and resources towards other efficiencies including the improvement of daily operations and processes in other aspects of their department, daily work flows, and implementation of new timecard software. Utilization of Amazon Prime Business across the college was a direct result of time saved from the purchase requisition processing decrease.

Demographic shifts affecting the college service area include the gradual decline of population in rural areas. The MPCC service area experienced a 4% decline in population from the 2010 to the 2020 United States Census. The college invests in an employment monitoring tool called Analyst, provided by Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) which provides jobs outlook by occupation and industry, along with forecasting of job openings and wages. This information informs program reviews and research into potential new program offerings.

Leaders at the college maintain memberships and collegial relations with sources that can identify factors with potential impact on the ability to successfully carry out MPCC's mission. Regular communication with new high school leaders helps maintain critical relationships and recent adjustments have been made including the addition of a CDL program, addition of software capabilities for mobile accessibility, and provision of industry standard equipment for instructional use.

#### **Response to 5.C.6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.**

MPCC was active in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) pathway of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) from 2008 through the decision of HLC to sunset the pathway in 2018. During this time, a culture shift occurred where the improvement of student outcomes and effective operations became the lens by which leaders at all levels approached their work. This culture was strengthened by tying the institutional strategic planning process to the accreditation process where action project teams worked to make improvements. As the AQIP pathway was removed, the college had already built systems and structures that preserve the focus on continuous improvement.

Some of the structures that have been maintained or established include the continued investment in the assessment coordinator position, created in 2013, that serves as a member of the [institutional effectiveness team](#), the establishment of standard [assessment reporting procedures](#) and documentation, and the use of cross-functional employee work groups to take on specific institutional goals. The regular cycles of assessment that occur in departments and across the institution allow for institutional planning that is engaging and productive. These institutional plans include the [institutional strategic plan](#), [academic master plan](#), [facilities master plan](#), and [strategic enrollment plan](#).

Results of focusing on improvement include positive movement across many metrics. Retention rates for full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students moved to a new high of 69% in the most recent year putting MPCC in the group of leading colleges of peer institutions.

Some of the initiatives affecting cohorts from Fall 2015 forward include an activities programming

model, focus on student organization engagement, summer bridge to success program, and early alert improvement processes. The Fall 2015 cohort graduation rate jumped to 48% after the Fall 2014 cohort had a 35% graduation rate. Graduation rates have remained above 40% the last four cohorts after remaining in the mid- to low-30's the prior eight cohorts. Two of these cohorts were near a 50% graduation rate.

Mid-Plains Community College has built integrated structures and a culture of continuous improvement through its participation in the AQIP accreditation pathway from 2008 to 2018. Through regular setting of departmental goals in alignment with major master plans, the college has improved outcomes in student achievement and in the provision of high-quality academic programs and facilities with safe and engaging environments and instructional equipment.

## Sources

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- 5.C.1 PIC Team Members
- 5.C.1 Service Area Map
- 5.C.1 Strategic Objectives.pdf
- 5.C.2 Non-Instructional Assessment Report Examples
- 5.C.2 Written Communication Assessment Report 2018-19
- 5.C.3 AMP Faculty Questions
- 5.C.3 AMP Final Report
- 5.C.3 FMP Final Report.pdf
- 5.C.3 Strategic Plan Stakeholder Engagement Summary 2019-2022
- 5.C.4 KPI Cabinet Notes.pdf
- 5.C.5 Assessment Procedure Manual
- 5.C.5 CDL Cabinet Approval
- 5.C.5 Memberships Higher Education and Workforce
- 5.C.5 MPCC Presentation at JAM 2022
- 5.C.5 MPCC Strategic Planning Process 2019-2022
- 5.C.5 NCCA 2021 Meeting Agenda
- 5.C.5 Potential Business Educational Need
- 5.C.5 Strategic Enrollment Plan Summary
- 5.C.5 Sustainable Beef Commencement Event
- 5.C.6 AMP Final Report
- 5.C.6 FMP Final Report
- 5.C.6 Institutional Effectiveness Team
- 5.C.6 Strategic Objectives

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

### Summary

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Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) demonstrates effectiveness in fulfilling its mission through the Board of Governors' policies and the structure and nature of institutional decision making, including faculty-led academic decision making. The college has processes for collecting and using data for reaching informed decisions, with collaborative structures to ensure appropriate representation of faculty, staff, and students when addressing academic requirements.

#### Highlights:

- MPCC engages its internal constituencies through the governance structures such as open board meetings and standing functional teams including the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and Instructional Services Team (IST) that are specifically focused on academic programs and curriculum oversight. Regular engagement occurs through its planning, policies, and procedures including regular open faculty meetings for sharing of information and for input, as well as systematic reporting and dialogue of functional areas with the administrative leadership.
- The college has established planning processes to ensure that goals identified are within the scope and resources available to the institution, such as the monitoring of resources, budget lines specifically for improvements, and the expectations that work supports the mission and values of the college.
- MPCC has a well-defined and systematic process of fiscal budgeting and monitoring which includes regular updates to the Board of Governors, monitoring of potential fluctuations in revenues, and business procedures allowing effective oversight of expenditures.
- Alignment of resource allocation with MPCC's mission and priorities is made apparent through the linking of departmental goals with institutional objectives and dedicated budget lines for improvements aligned with priorities. Departmental and functional teams allocate resources for equitable access to educational opportunities across locations.
- Leaders at the college maintain memberships and collegial relations with sources that can identify factors with potential impact on the ability to successfully carry out MPCC's mission. Regular communication with new high school leaders helps maintain critical relationships and recent adjustments have been made including the addition of a CDL program, addition of software capabilities for mobile accessibility, and provision of industry standard equipment for instructional use.
- Mid-Plains Community College has built integrated structures and a culture of continuous improvement through its participation in the AQIP accreditation pathway from 2008 to 2018. Through regular setting of departmental goals in alignment with major master plans, the college has improved outcomes in student achievement and in the provision of high-quality academic programs and facilities with safe and engaging environments and instructional equipment.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*