2013-2014 (FY14)
INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES
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(Approved by Board of Trustees, 09/18/12)

This document outlines the major institutional planning priorities for 2013-14. These items have been identified to guide the development of HCC's Plan and Budget for FY 14. The annual planning priorities give greater focus to the annual plans and objectives and follow closely the goals outlined in the new HCC strategic plan, "2016." Where applicable, as part of unit planning meetings, these priorities will be discussed in relationship to the work of particular divisions and departments. All 11 priorities are aligned with HCC budgets and plans and represent those institutional areas targeted for special attention during 2013-14. The priorities also correspond with the preliminary areas of inquiry likely to be included in the 2014 Middle States Self-Study which will begin in FY 13 and be completed in FY 14. The Middle States team visit is scheduled to occur in the fall of FY 14. The 11 areas of emphasis require collaboration among many units of the College, since each priority crosses multiple divisions and / or departments. A number of the items represent the continuation of initiatives that began in FY 13 or earlier, since large and / or complicated projects typically require more than one year to complete. Included in the presentation of each initiative are the names or titles of the lead persons assigned to move the projects ahead.

Funding to support these strategically important initiatives will be found in cost center base budgets, supplemented with FY 14 designated funds, as may be needed. *Faculty and staff discussions pertaining to these initiatives are expected to occur during division and department meetings as well as during Fall 2012 unit planning sessions*. Modifications, especially in adding clarifications and examples, will be made during the unit planning meetings. The priorities are not listed in any particular order of importance because all are essential for the College's ongoing success.

(1) Using the 2016 Strategic Plan to Inform and Enrich the 2014 Middle States Self-Study   (G. Altieri, trustees, D. Warner, B. Macht, A. Barker, President's Cabinet, division and department heads, faculty and all staff)

The College's new strategic plan (2016), being finalized in fall of 2012, provides direction for the College's continued growth, emphasizing what must happen for HCC to adjust to the changing times as well as those mission based initiatives the College has chosen to address to better serve the needs of local students and communities. During FY 13, HCC will begin to organize for a successful Middle States Self-Study leading to the extension of this most important accreditation status for the maximum allowable ten year period of time. In 2011 the College completed a comprehensive and valuable community study on its future through the work of the *Commission on the Future of HCC*. That group, composed largely of community members, did a superb job of summarizing in 17 recommendations what the local community expects of HCC in the future.   In fall of FY13 the College will finalize the

2016 Strategic Plan and in the spring of 2013 formal Middle States self-study work will begin.

(2)   Shifting the Emphasis from Measuring Student Success to Enhancing Student Success By Applying More Best Practices in Academic Support Services, Student Retention and Program Completion (D. Warner, D. Rudy, D. Schoenenberger, M. Martin, H. Barnhart, J. Haines, J. Adams, division chairs and directors, student services department heads, program coordinators, and academic advisors and counselors)

HCC is very committed to continue to make substantial increases in the number of students who complete credit programs at all levels of achievement (letters, certificates, and degrees). Currently, graduation rates are about in the middle of the range, from high to low, among the 16 MACC institutions. It is felt that the College can do much better by continuing to identify this as a major area for improvement through forging strong partnership between faculty and students services and faculty and the new Student Support Initiative, which is planned to be both a comprehensive set of academic student support services and a building (the Student Support Center which was previously the Science Building) where many of these services can be availed by all students, regardless of their program of study or level of academic development. Strengthening student services, developmental education offerings and related academic support services, such as expanding testing and tutorial services, developing student study cohorts, and expanding supplemental instruction, are among the key strategies. Curriculum requirements and instructional designs will be concurrently studied and modified as warranted, since these factors also have a large bearing on student attrition and graduation rates.   Other improvements include studying the reduction of degree completion credits to 60 in most program areas and expanding student opportunities to be awarded credits for documented prior learning. In addition, there is the need to further develop academic advising to be even more focused upon employing best practices which generate more student program completers. This priority will still take several years to generate substantially positive results. Part of the priority planning will include a study of student achievement gaps by student type and planning improvement strategies for those student groups who are the least successful in meeting their educational goals. Continuous reinforcement will be a core strategy since the vast majority of at risk students become discouraged easily if their learning does not occur quickly. Overall, the work done in support of this priority goal is targeted to *reduce program attrition by at least 30% and to increase program completion levels by minimally 25%* from Fall 2011 to Summer 2014. This would provide very impressive data to demonstrate HCC's central commitment to make ongoing improvements that produce even greater student success.

A thorough orientation to college life is imperative for student success. As a planning priority for FY 14, student services will be challenged to develop plans for enhancing student orientations, both to college in general, and HCC, in particular. Many cohorts intensive acculturation to college programs have proven to be very success in helping to retain students and shorten their time to graduation.

(3) Expansion of Technology Based Instruction and Student Services to Meet Student Needs and Preferences (D. Warner, B, Stull, A. Barker, Associate Dean of Online Education, T. Shank, J. Haines, C. Fentress, D. Rudy, department and division chairs / directors and faculty and staff)

As higher education is now experiencing an accelerating pace of technological changes that are impacting instructional design and how the essentials of teaching and learning can be better addressed using new century tools., HCC needs to do a more proficient job of analyzing choices, implementing timely enhancement decisions, and broadly communicating and helping employees and students get the most out of technology investments. Many authorities in various IT fields are predicting a decrease in emphasis on desktop computing, with the subsequent increased growth of mobile computing and related smart devices and software apps, especially enterprise application software, office suites, and multimedia options. In addition, cloud computing decisions / solutions are rapidly spreading among higher education entities. Consequently, the College must update its technology plan and more directly analyze and make decisions on necessary changes and the related timelines, as well as the financial plans, which will assure these vital improvements.

Academic officers and faculty, both in the credit and credit-free curricular areas, are asked to further expand online course and program options to meet increased student demand for distance education. The scheduling of online credit and credit-free courses and sections has not kept pace with student demand. Currently, a significant number of students who seek to register for online programs and courses are being denied these opportunities, especially in a number of credit-free continuing education areas. In addition, student services and academic support personnel are also challenged to provide students with sufficient online supplemental support services needed for them to succeed. Although good progress in this area has been made, much more is needed. This institutional priority has been resourced in a number of ways. Recent capital improvement projects have greatly elevated the quality of instructional spaces with state-of-the art technology. The College's IT infrastructure has more than enough capacity to meet current and short term needs and professional development opportunities have been increased to promote more faculty educational opportunities to learn new best practices associated with the more promising new instructional technologies, both in support of both web-based and traditional instructional designs.

(4) Enhanced Private Fund Raising and Maintenance of a High Level of Success Securing Needed Grant Dollars (G. Altieri, trustees, S. Lowman, L. Stewart, foundation board members, B. Macht, D. Warner, A. Barker, A. Shepard, J. Felice, W. Mann, T. Shank, D. Rudy, division chairs and directors, program coordinators, and faculty and staff)

The College is preparing to make substantial improvements in its use of technology to secure larger amounts of private funds from its friends and supporters. Web-based tools are being introduced in all areas of college advancement and in both FY 13 and FY 14 the results of these investments are expected to bear substantial results. To reach this expectation, college advancement will need the assistance of faculty and staff to help identify alumni, friends, and supporters of HCC who are in a position to help the College financially. Most important will

be the need to seek expanded donations from alumni and to prepare a *HCC Fund Raising Guidebook* which will describe how HCC approaches fund raising from private donors and the role all groups of employees can play in helping college advancement meet its goals and thereby increase student access opportunities through scholarships and maintenance of a high level of instruction by securing dollars for quality instructional spaces, materials, and professional development programming.

The College will continue to pursue grant opportunities to secure the funding needed to support equipment intensive programs as well as curricula that are designed to provide short-term training for job readiness or advancement. Five areas of emphasis will be targeted for securing grants and private funds in FY 14: (1) Adult education and job training integrated curricula, especially in the trades and business areas, (2) STEM projects, including instructional programs and business incubation and development services (in the TIC and online) and other economic development support initiatives, (3) visual and performing arts and other humanities partnerships, (4) student services initiatives to provide more student cohort programs such as Trio SSS and Upward Bound, and (5) outcomes assessment enhancements and implementing program completion best practices. In addition, College personnel will be challenged to participate in initiatives to seek private funds to help support those areas where substantial curricular and / or student growth is anticipated, such as business and computer studies related programs.

Plans for FY 14 will emphasize strategies to secure increased private sector dollars and reworking selected staff job descriptions, performance reviews, and operational models to be more focused upon the grant and fund raising responsibilities of a number of HCC positions.

(5) Continue to Emphasize Professional Training in Shared Governance and Sharing Best Practices to Improve Campus Communications (B. Macht, D. Marriott, B. Stull, D. Warner, M. Harsh, D. Rudy, A. Barker, B. Spong, T. Shank, C. Fentress, G. Haines, department heads, and faculty and staff leaders)

Although always a work in progress, HCC has done well in growing its model for shared governance. Since the College created its current shared governance model in 2004 there have been many retirements as well as a major increase in new positions such that less than 45% of the current employees were part of the College when the model was created. Consequently, many employees have not benefited from the extensive campus discussions which were held to review effective practices employed at other colleges. The 2004-05 discussions help shape a governance model that was designed to be responsive, relevant, productive, and comprehensive in addressing policy development recommendations and routine collaborative governance decisions; for example, new course approvals being made by the curriculum committee. Special orientations and training, in the form of workshops and particular shared governance case study reviews, were planned for in FY 13 and will continue to be planned and implemented in FY 14, with the goal to strengthen shared governance skills for all interested employees. These training opportunities will be designed to further develop a participatory and collaborative culture where employees are well informed and feel involved in decisions that match their areas of expertise.

Based on strong sentiments from both the Faculty Assembly leadership and the executive officers and President, an ad hoc committee will be created, composed of faculty, administrators and support staff, to study ways that campus communications can be further improved. As HCC grows larger and more complex, like similar institutions that have outgrown small organization communication models, the need to grow a more elaborate and effective internal communication system is becoming an emerging priority so central to the College's ongoing success. The new model will be an effective mix of traditional communication vehicles, such as email, electronic newsletters, open forums, town hall information sessions, and cross department meetings. In addition, social media approaches made possible by powerful new technologies that are quickly becoming commonplace in facilitating communication and basic information sharing must also be part of the new system. This work will begin in FY 13 and extend into FY 14.

(6)   Further Expand Environmental Sustainability Initiatives as well as Improve Campus Safety and Security Systems, and Begin Constructing the Student Center Expansion (G. Altieri, A. Barker, D. Warner, D. Rudy, B. Macht, D. Baker, R. Spong, G. Rath, other cabinet members and selected departments heads, faculty and staff)

HCC is strongly committed to the principles of environmental sustainability. Initiatives continue to move forward both in developing an enhanced environmental studies curriculum as well creating a "greener' campus through the design and retrofitting of buildings, taking a more aggressive approach to recycling, and making a commitment to alternative energy generation and use. For FY 14, all these areas of responsible environmental stewardship and education will continue as planning priorities. Through unfolding curriculum and campus development projects, the College will specify in the FY 14 plan and budget initiatives that reflect the College's work to both teach and practice environmental sustainability.

HCC has, over the past five or six years, increased budgets to support many campus safety and security improvements. To further support the College's traditional status as a very safe campus many improvements have been made. They include: increasing the number of campus police and security personnel, providing more security vehicles, funding building and lighting improvements, implementing a state-of-the art electronic campus warning system, drafting enhanced emergency procedures, and developing student and employee behavioral intervention protocols..   Although all these enhancements have added much to campus security, more still needs to be done in the area of employee training to match the other improvements. In particular, employee scenario training and more frequent campus emergency drills will give members of the campus community increased experience in how to best deal with a variety of emergency situations. The detailed planning of drills will align with HCC's formal emergency plans and written procedures, such that all of this will become a more routine part of the College's ongoing annual staff training agenda. In FY 14 a major campus training exercise will be planned, conducted, and assessed so that any major improvements can be identified and placed into action in the future.

Important facility priorities for both FY 13 and FY 14 are to complete important campus facility projects, including the Student Center expansion, construction of the dental program lab and clinic, design of the alumni center, and the design and construct of the energy house. The College will also consider as planning priorities in FY 14 partnership opportunities as they might develop with CHIEF's Mt Atnea Farms project, including the extension of Yale Drive which will provide HCC a second entrance. In addition, the conversion of the campus entry from being controlled by a traffic light to be a continuous traffic roundabout in partnership with Washington County government will remain a priority. Also, the College will refine and update, as needed, its facilities master plan to better reflect actual and anticipated student and program growth.

(7) Further Implement the Components of the Multi-Year Curriculum Excellence Project, with a Special Emphasis on the Fletcher Faculty Development Center (D. Warner, T. Fawcett, J. Haines, academic officers, faculty, academic staff, selected student services units, and LT staff)

This faculty and academic officer lead multi-year curriculum excellence project, started in FY 10, is continuing in FY 14. The central purpose of this project has been to systematically conduct a comprehensive review of all aspects of curriculum quality including: various instructional designs (e.g. lecture, lab, clinical, work place learning, and distance education), course and program guidelines, assessment of student learning outcomes, master course schedules, and faculty professional development. During FY 14 the emphasis will continue to be placed on outcomes assessment (SLOA), especially at the general education level, as well as distance education and student centered class scheduling, with a special focus on expanding the faculty development opportunities promoted and facilitated by the new Fletcher Faculty Development Center and its variety of offerings. Early work will also be done to construct a model for a *student honors program* that would be available to students pursuing many different academic majors. The honors program is projected to start in Fall of 2014.

Also, as part of the curriculum excellence project, the College will work to further develop and strengthen partnerships with area high schools to enhance articulation, faculty to faculty collaboration (The Learning Communities initiative will continue.), as well as early college opportunities for academically ready high school students (ESSENCE program). The College will also continue to work with WCPS on developing a STEMM Middle College and will collaborate with universities, especially the USM-H entities, to increase and further improve articulation options for associate degree graduates so they smoothly transfer into and complete bachelors' degree programs.

(8) Make Enhancements to Enrollment Management, including the Weekend and Evening Class Scheduling, the potential STEMM Middle College, and an Honors Curriculum (G. Altieri, D. Warner, Director of ARR, T. Shank, K. Crawford, M. Martin, C. Fentress, D. Rudy, C. Cox, academic department and division chairs / directors, and student services program heads)

Improvements in the College's approach to enrollment growth and management needs to be addressed in FY 14. In particular, computer based enrollment projection models need to be enhanced such that a clearer picture is developed annually on which programs will likely grow and which are likely to remain stable or lose students. More detailed monitoring and analyzing recruitment activities, student inquires, and applications in advance of a semester's registration period is needed to discern likely enrollment trends by student and course type and program area. These operational tasks need to be designed in such a way that they occur annually and are employed in both the credit and credit-free areas.

The alignment of course and section offerings to meet student demand, although improved in recent years, still need further development, so that course cancellation and course add rates are reduced. Early exploration of multiple semester scheduling (annual model covering Fall, Spring and Summer) is also an important study topic for FY 14. In both the credit and credit-free areas it is important to continue to create improved evening and weekend scheduling models. For credit curricula, the goal is to make possible the taking of 12 credits (full-time student status) in the majority of program areas each semester, which will naturally lead to more completers in shorter periods of time.

(9) Sustainability Budgeting for all Programs and Services, Cost Effective Professional Development, Financial Efficiencies, and Revenue Enhancements
(G. Altieri, S. Lowman, A. Barker, B. Macht, D. Warner, D. Rudy, A. Shepard, J. Felice, D. Bittorf, trustees, foundation board members, alumni association and others)

Funding constraints will certainly make it more difficult for the College to maintain low cost / high quality in all its mission based program and service areas. Therefore, for the next two to four years the College will be significantly challenged in constructing sustainable budgets for all its programs and services. However, with sound procedures being employed to study and make, where justified, funding reallocation decisions as well as campus operating cost reductions, HCC should be able to continue to grow with only modest annual increases in student tuition and fees.

Further increasing dollars secured through private fund raising and maintaining high success levels in securing valuable grants will remain an important planning priority. Also, the development of potential partnership arrangements that could result in significant operational savings will be studied and implemented where possible. In addition, the administration and finance division will be challenged to suggest revenue enhancement strategies as well as ways operational costs can be lessened. They will be asked to suggest specific revenue enhancements, including, but not limited to, traditional revenue sources. Similarly, the grants office, the alumni association and the foundation will also be asked to expand their efforts to secure more funds to help students and strengthen educational programs and services. The executive officers will continue to lead cost-benefit studies in their areas of responsibility, following established protocols. This task is intended to make certain the College is using its resources wisely and producing quality outcomes in a cost

effective manner. Selected areas of the College, based on internal data screenings, spanning both academic and administrative units, will be subject to cost-benefit reviews.

Another important planning priority for FY 14 is to both fund and design, in a cost-effective manner, improvements to the professional development systems that serve all employee groups. In particular, the College must continue to provide relevant and high quality opportunities for all faculty and staff to develop skills and knowledge to be able to do their work at a high level of proficiency. Preserving professional development funding at adequate levels will remain a budget priority.

HCC has been very successful in growing its programs and services while keeping increases in full time positions very modest. To the extent budgets permit, the College will add new positions to address the increased workloads. However, the new standard will require academic units campus-wide to formulate more faculty position proposals where the job is configured to be able to teach a variety of courses. Similarly, the creation or reworking of administrator and staff job descriptions that are explicit about cross-training and routine job rotations will be encouraged. In addition, staffing strategies that build cross- positional redundancy that counters the reality of unexpected turnover which can be very problematic at colleges like HCC that have mostly job functions that are staffed by a single person.

(10) Continue Restructuring Continuing Education, the Business Incubator (TIC) and Expand Workforce Development Programs and Services (G. Altieri, T. Shank, D. Warner, Associate Dean of Online Education, continuing education program managers, other members of the President's Cabinet, division and department heads, and selected staff)

Lifelong learning and training services for new and established businesses are central parts of the College's community based mission. However, like so many areas of higher education, lifelong learning programs and business incubation services are being transformed significantly to meet the new realities. Online registration and online course offerings have grown exponentially in recent years. Also, national trends and projections make it clear that more growth in job related continuing education, versus personal avocation interest programming, is where enrollments will grow the most in the next three to five years. HCC is continuing to shape its array of credit and credit-free course and program offerings to serve both the new demands for content as well as the relatively new instructional delivery preferences, while retaining successful traditional programs. In particular, a renewed emphasis will be placed upon expanding customized contract training and business incubation services, spanning both credit-free and for credit offerings to suit particular employer preferences.

Additionally, through both credit and credit-free educational programs and business incubation services for start-up firms, as well as customized training for established entities, HCC will help to foster business development in Washington County, especially in STEM, health care, and business related fields. This emphasis will help broaden the base of available high skill / high wage local jobs which are needed to strengthen the future economic development potential of Washington County and the surrounding region. The College will continue to play a leadership role in supporting the expansion of local biosciences, energy technology, and computer technology / cybersecurity employers as a

very important part of the future regional economy. In addition, business, social sciences and health science programs, along with humanities offerings, will continue to position HCC as both a high tech economic development catalyst and the epicenter for post-secondary career and liberal arts education in Washington County. In regard to the growth of the humanities offerings, recent progress with representatives for Nora Roberts would give indication that the establishment of the summer romance writers' institute, carrying the Roberts name and targeting her national fan base, will likely be a planning priority for FY 14 as well.

(11)   Accelerate Information Technology (IT) System Assessments and Develop Goals and Planned Changes to be more Reflective of the High Costs, Substantial Training Needs, and Development Requirements that are Necessary for the College to Remain Technologically Current. (A. Barker, G. Altieri, D. Warner, C. Fentress, Associate Dean of Online Education, T. Shank, B. Macht, PRGR staff, members of the President's Cabinet, division and department heads, and faculty and staff)

FY14 will be a critical year for planning the future of information technology at HCC. The substantial cost, extensive lead time to make changes, and the extreme level of complexity associated with quality information technology infrastructure and operational services has reached a level of such high importance that HCC must now conduct a comprehensive study and reset plans for the future. The study would cover IT's structure, staffing, current budgets, operational practices and future financial assumptions to make certain this vital part of the College does not become a major inhibiting factor that could seriously restrict the College's capacity to grow to meet student and community needs. An update to the technology plan is overdue and is now scheduled to be completed in FY 13. Once that is in hand then several central questions need to be addressed. First and foremost, how best to structure IT for the long term to meet the dynamic needs that the College will have in fulfilling its higher education mission? Second, what will the transition plan to accomplish the preferred IT model and yet in the interim continue to function in a quality fashion. As HCC formulates a plan to make the needed IT enhancements that are required for future success, it will be constrained by financial limitations that will surely impact what can be done with staffing, contracted services, equipment and other essentials. Consequently, since these matters of visioning what is needed and how best to make the transition will be especially challenging, excellent foresight, intensive research, and superb planning are needed to make the necessary improvements.

In a world that is rapidly shifting to cloud based solutions, mobile applications, and contracted services for many vital IT support needs, this work to analyze and set the future course for IT at HCC is vitally important. The FY 14 study will have an expanded scope that would go beyond services and finances, to include organizational structure and staffing, both examining levels of expertise needed and minimal level of employees required to stay abreast of the accelerating increase in the number of internal IT projects which must be addressed and the increased volume of electronic systems that need to be maintained.