**Academies: Where Are We Now?**

The Academies Roadmap Project is a college-wide exciting and engaging review of our current practices for serving students through all phases of contact, in and out of the classroom. The overarching goal is to develop an intentional college-wide structure (academies) to increase student persistence, retention, engagement and goal accomplishment including graduation. The term “Academies” is being used to describe the entire model. Based on the program that they apply for, students will be admitted to a “School” within that model. The six schools will be the: School of Arts and Humanities; School of Business, Hospitality, and Entrepreneurialism; School of Community Engagement and Development ; School of Health Related Sciences; School of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM and Applied STEM) and the School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies.

An Academies model will:

1. Create personalized pathways that help students develop and articulate their individual goals and persist through the necessary stages to accomplish their goals (1-Learning First, 2-Career Pathways)

2. Develop and implement new organization of functional structures to ensure holistic, personalized support (1-Learning First, 3-Partnerships, 4-Effectiveness, Efficiency). The Academies model will create a “circle of support” services surrounding each student.

3. Establish and implement assessment processes that will inform best practices across all phases of the academies model (1-Learning First, 4-Effectiveness, Efficiency)

4. Require students to engage in high impact learning practices; expand the number of high impact opportunities available across MCC campuses (1-Learning First, 3-Partnerships)

Goals accomplished for year one were:

1. A 20 person cross-functional steering committee representing eighteen different departments was established and worked all academic year.
2. Seven subcommittees, populated by 75 college members from across all divisions, were established, met regularly and made excellent progress.
3. Two college-wide professional development events were offered - one in November and one in January. They were extremely well attended (172 members of the college community in November and 152 in January) and received much positive feedback. The second event spurred higher levels of engagement as the subcommittees led break-out sessions and welcomed questions and feedback.

Following is a summary of work completed by the Academies working subcommittees and future directions:

* + 1. **Advisement Processes (Co-Chairs, Marcus Watts and Sally Dingee)**
  1. The committee spent many hours discussing the issues related to how advising will be different in an Academies model.  The primary themes revolve around the centralized vs. de-centralized concerns.  Questions considered were: Is the college moving to multiple advising centers?   Or will the current model be distributed differently?
  2. This sub-committee hosted an informational session primarily for faculty members to discuss the potential changes that could occur with the implementation of the Academies model.  The session could be described as a Current State, Future State analysis.
  3. Subcommittee members participated in the development of the job descriptions of the Academy Coordinator and the Academy Advisement Specialist.

Next Steps: The future of this sub-committee will be focused squarely on making a recommendation about how the advising process will change physically and theoretically at the college.  The recommendation will be made based on the data gathered from the committee work and the faculty information sessions.

**2. High Impact Practices Subcommittee (Chair, Mark Bellavia)**

This year the High Impact Practice Subcommittee wrote a draft of definitions and minimum criteria for the High Impact Practices (HIPs) that are currently used on campus.  These HIPs include Service Learning, Writing Intensive Courses, Undergraduate Research Scholarly Inquiry and Creative Activity (URSICA), Learning Communities, Diversity and Global Learning, Collaborative Learning, and Leadership Track Certificates involving First Year Experience and the Leadership Education and Development program. In order to make sure our definitions and criteria are relevant to our college they reached out to the faculty and staff on campus that specialize in each area to be sure that they accurately represent how the practices are used here at MCC.

Next Steps: The committee’s next steps going forward are to bring the definitions to Faculty Senate for approval in the Fall semester (September or October), take an inventory of the HIPs currently used on campus, and then to determine which HIPs to prioritize in helping the TCC develop some professional development events.

**3. Admissions/Financial Aid/Registration and Records/Student Accounts sub-committee (Chair, Krista Tyner)**

1. This subcommittee explored how a structured liaison relationship would fit into the Academies model.  Staff members within each office would be assigned to School as a direct contact for students, faculty, and advisors within that school.
2. Explored what role each office could play in the advisement and orientation process for students in each school.
3. Admissions suggested possible changes in Banner coding to better track and communicate to students within specific schools.

Next Steps: In Fall 2014 the committee will become a communications committee and focus on the development of the internal and external communication opportunities necessary to keep everyone informed.

**4. Curriculum Subcommittee (Chair, Eileen Morris)**

After getting feedback and after much discussion, this subcommittee proposed a list of Groupings for Schools, along with the appropriate programs that would belong in each School.

Schools now finalized:

School of Arts and Humanities

School of Business, Hospitality, and Entrepreneurialism

School of Community Engagement and Development

School of Health Related Sciences

School of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM and Applied STEM)

School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies

1. After consulting with the HIPs subcommittee, this group created a draft job description for a High Impact Specialist role
2. Composed a draft of the Faculty Liaison role
3. Assigned all programs to appropriate Schools
4. Planning for summary descriptions of each School

Next Steps: For Fall 2014 the committee plans to work on identifying courses with potential for HIPs in each School; write School descriptions appropriate for students’ access; begin looking at a Career Development piece.

* 1. **Orientation/COS/FYE (Chair, Ebony Caldwell)**

1. Student Life and Leadership, Student Services at DCC and Title III worked together and in collaboration with the Academies subcommittee to: conduct a student survey and a faculty/staff survey to inform the redesign of New Student Orientation (NSO), developed college-wide measureable orientation outcomes, and conducted student focus groups for COS and FYE. ​​
2. The redesigned New Student Orientation was launched in Summer 2014, to include enhanced student services and faculty involvement.
   * Students had the opportunity to make future advising appointments, receive information about upcoming Program Advising and Registration, receive support with Financial Aid paperwork, schedule placement testing if needed, and address requisite Health Services issues.
   * Students participated in a class simulation and an academic expectations workshop both created and facilitated by faculty members.  The redesigned Orientation invited students by academy curriculum groups. The redesigned NSO was created with a healthy balance of student and academic services to enrich the student experience.
3. COS and FYE will be piloting collaborative scheduling in Fall 2014 to enable faculty and staff to provide greater support for student engagement.

Next Steps: This committee will review the COS and FYE integrated pilot, evaluate changes made to the NSO, and work toward the Title III objective to intentionally integrated Orientation/COS/FYE also known as the Student Success Collaborative.

**6. Technology (Chair, Betty Stewart)**

The Technology subcommittee spent the year identifying technology currently used around campus and worked with the other subcommittees to determine technological needs moving forward.

Next Steps: This committee will become the Professional Development committee in Fall 2014.  They will be able to address technological needs as well as identify and coordinate the many professional development offerings needed to implement the Academies model. They will collaborate with the TCC, the Faculty Senate and H.R. to deliver professional development opportunities.

**7. Assessment (Chair, Michael Heel)**

The assessment subcommittee reviewed the assessment protocol shared by Queensborough Community College.  They decided that MCC’s protocol would vary significantly from what was shared to ensure best assessment practices and strong measurements as the project is implemented.  The subcommittee parsed out its members to attend the other subcommittee meetings so the large group could have the picture of what was happening across all areas and provide input into how to design the different phases of the Academies model so that each component can be appropriately assessed.

Next Steps: For fall 2014, the assessment subcommittee will focus on design of the assessment protocol for Phase I implementation.

**Further accomplishments for the year:**

An Academies Coordinator position was created, searched and filled.  The new Coordinator, Karen McCarthy, began on July 29, 2014.

A FIPSE First in the World grant proposal has been submitted in conjunction with Chattanooga State Community College, College of the Canyons and the American Association of Colleges and Universities. This grant proposal is an attempt to leverage federal resources to support the High Impact Practices (HIPs) focus of the Academies model and to create and measure a research based approach to “intentionalizing” student experiences with HIPS in the classroom.

As you can see it’s been a very busy year for the committees working on the Academies Model at MCC! We eagerly anticipate 2014/2015 as we resume work on this very important, college-wide project. Please look for more information and for professional development opportunities in the future.