Middle States Commission on Higher Education
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DRAFT: Team Report to the Commission on Higher Education Submitted to Mohawk Valley Community College, March 14, 2018

Mohawk Valley Community College
Dates of Evaluation: March 4-7, 2018

The Evaluation Team Representing the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Section A: Team Members, Titles, and Institutional Affiliation

- Dr. James D. Ball, Team Chair: President, Carroll Community College, Westminster MD
- Dr. Barbara Abdul-Karim: Associate Professor, College of Southern Maryland, La Plata, MD
- Dr. Stephen Capelli: Senior Vice President Emeritus, Wor-Wic Community College, Salisbury MD
- Dr. Nassim Ebrahimi: Associate Vice President for Strategy Planning and Effectiveness, Prince George's Community College, Largo, MD
- Dr. Scott Eckhardt: Director of Student Conduct and Title IX Coordinator, Community College of Baltimore County, MD
- Mr. James Hrabosky: Vice President, Finance and Administration, Butler County College, Butler, PA
- Mr. George Payne: Vice President- Applied Technologies, Montgomery College, Rockville, MD
- Dr. Linda Scherr: Dean, Division of Arts and Sciences Middlesex County College, Edison, NJ
- New York System Representative: Dr. Deborah Moeckel

Section B: Institutional Representatives at the Time of Visit

Officers of the Institution at the time of the visit:

President/CEO
Dr. Randall VanWagoner
Mohawk Valley Community College, 1101 Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501

Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Maryrose Eannace
Mohawk Valley Community College, 1101 Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501

Chair of the Board of Trustees
William S. Calli Jr.
Mohawk Valley Community College, 1101 Sherman Drive, Utica NY 13501

Section C: Team Findings

I.   Institutional Overview: Context and Nature of the Visit

Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC), a unit of the 64-campus State University of New York (SUNY), is a publicly supported community college. MVCC currently enrolls approximately 6,667 full-time and part-time students. Over 60 academic degree programs and 25 certificate programs prepare students for a variety of technical and semi-professional careers in business, industry, social service, health care, STEM and other fields, as well as for preparation and transfer to the Baccalaureate. Degrees offered include AA, AS, AAS, and AOS programs as approved and monitored by SUNY. Additionally, via the office of Continuing and Community Education Services, the College offers personal enrichment and professional development and certification programs as well as customized training services to area businesses. Over 6,000 students are served annually through MVCC's Corporate and Community Education Programs. MVCC offers three fully online programs.

MVCC's main campus facilities in Utica include an Academic Building, Physical Education Building, Alumni College Center, Payne Hall, which houses administrative and library facilities, a Science and Technology Building housing MVCC's FABLab, the Information Technology/ Performing Arts/Conference Center, and the Robert R. Jorgensen Athletic/Events Center, a 112,000-square-foot facility housing a fitness center, a field house, three multi-purpose courts, and an indoor track. MVCC also offers student housing. The Rome Branch Campus, located at 1101 Floyd Avenue in Rome, N.Y. enrolled approximately 1,131 students in FY2017. The Rome Campus Student Services Center is a one-stop-shop for all services including admissions, advisement, financial aid, counseling, disability accommodations, payments, student activities, library and other services.

MVCC also operates an Aviation Training Center at Griffiss Business and Technology Park and is a partner with SUNY-Canton in the Dental Hygiene Training Clinic at the Griffiss Veterans Administration Facility. MVCC also offers small business development services via the "thINCubator" business incubation center located in newly revitalized warehouse in downtown Utica. The College also operates an Educational Opportunity Center in downtown Utica, which serves as a center for literacy skills development, ESOL and High School Diploma Equivalency programs.

MVCC institutional priorities are reflected in the newly revised Vision, Mission and Goals statements. Institutional priorities were clearly reflected in MVCC's Strategic Plan *Catalyst 2020,* as well as in various unit plans. Priorities were also reflected in major planning and budgeting development documents. The team congratulates MVCC on its decision to include over 900 stake holders from the campus and from the community in the Mission revision process.

MVCC's last Accreditation visit was in 2007, which occurred not long after the current President had arrived. Visiting-Team Chair, Dr. James Ball, served on the 2007 Evaluation Team. This yielded a distinct advantage in assessing institutional progress and changes to campuses and programs.

The current Self-Study and Evaluation Team visit was accomplished under MSCHE Standards, as revised in 2014, and applicable to visits held during FY 2017-18. MVCC's Self-Study design

corresponded to the new standards, Requirements of Affiliation and Federal Compliance requirements. Self-Study teams represented all MVCC constituent groups and seven working committees developed draft responses under each Standard, and included presentation of relevant information, data, and an analysis of findings. Institutional "Commendations and Commitments" were provided at the end of each standard and summarized at the end of the Self Study.

The Evaluation Team Chair preliminary Visit occurred October 22-24, 2017. The visit consisted of a thorough review of MVCC's first draft Self –Study Documents, and feedback to campus via meetings with the President, Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Self-Study Chairs, and Self-Study Team, and Student Government Officers.

Team members received the final Self-Study and related materials, exhibits, links to web site resources and internal web document and the Documentation Roadmap per the required deadline. A preliminary schedule of interviews was established in advance of the visit and additional interviews and requests for documentation were handled after the team arrived on Campus. A list of interviews is provided under **Section E** of this report. Team members, George Payne and Scott Eckhardt, visited the above mentioned off-campus locations to interview staff at and verify stated programs and services are adequately in place.

II. Evaluation Overview

The Evaluation Team extends sincere appreciation to MVCC for exceptional hospitality and assistance to our process. This assistance was invaluable as the team approached the final day of the visit as a major East Coast snow storm disrupted oral report and exit plans. Due to predictions of heavy snow, four team members departed prior to the Oral Report; however, each visitor had accomplished their investigation and had assisted in the report's development prior to exiting. MVCC's liaison was very gracious and accommodating in rearranging the time of the Oral Report and travel plans for the Team. Three Visitors, Scott Eckhart, Nassim Ebrahimi, and Steve Capelli, and Dr. Moeckel representing SUNY, were in attendance as the Team Chair delivered the Oral Report at 8:45 am, March 7, 2018.

MVCC's Self Study demonstrated a forthright and honest assessment of its performance relative to MSCHE standards and its own Vision, Core Values, and Mission. Visitors observed the Campuses' open and inclusive culture as well as its strong commitment to continuous institutional improvement. The team commends MVCC on making "commitments" for improvements rather than using the language of "internal suggestions" for improvement.

MVCC demonstrates a strong focus on improving student success and has in place pervasive practices for assessment and improvement. MVCC's resourcefulness has enabled the procurement of multiple grants and philanthropic resources to support strategic plan success initiatives. These initiatives have resulted in improved student completion rates. Additionally, a $30 Million expansion and renovation of the Rome Campus resulted in a beautiful new learning space, and renovations and expansion of the Utica campus have been extensive over the past decade. Renovations and restructuring of the former academic services and tutoring center resulted in the development of the "Learning Commons", an innovative and successful blending of ideas and services that has made a significant difference in support for student learning. The team congratulates MVCC on its success in winning grants and its many initiatives that give wings to its successful student completion initiatives.

MVCC's open, transparent, and inclusive culture demonstrates a commitment to diversity and to amplifying all voices so they can be heard. While the Team was on Campus, MVCC received word that it had received an exemplary program award from SUNY for their Shared Governance Practices.

Further, MVCC serves as a linchpin for "Building Community" in Oneida County and its outreach in the community is impressive. Programs to revitalize dilapidated housing; or, to bring ESOL offerings academic skills and literacy services to areas within Utica where they are most needed; or, to help serve a sizable immigrant population in the region are commendable examples of this outreach. Comments from a local Legislator and Workforce Development leaders indicated that MVCC has emerged over the last decade as a thought leader and an essential partner in the Oneida County's endeavors to transform and grow. Thus, MVCC is modeling its Vision to "Transforming Lives through Learning" and it's Mission to serve as the "Community's College."

Standard I: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the self-study, other institutional documents and interviews with faculty, staff, students and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to the standard:

The Strategic Planning Council (SPC) has been active since 1998 and has as its core charge, the development of the College's Mission and Vision statements, College-Wide goals, objectives, action plans and its outcome assessment procedures. Composition of the Council includes wide representation among constituent groups.

The current Mission and Strategic Plan, *Catalyst 2020*, was developed with the assistance of an outside consulting firm and involved a process whereby input from nearly 900 community members, faculty/staff and students was garnered to reshape the mission, vision and goals that are both descriptive and measurable. A local legislator indicated the resulting plan put the College in a position of partnership and thought leadership with Oneida County, advancing initiatives that serve area economic and community development needs.

The Catalyst 2020 document includes five strategic goals and 14 measurable objectives. The mission, vision and strategic goals appear to be broadly internalized and exhibited by the College faculty, administrators and staff. MVCC is committed to being the "community's College".

The institution has developed and implemented reasonable assessment procedures to measure and communicate the attainment of its stated mission, vision statement and strategic goals.

STANDARD I

4

In the team's judgement the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices:**

  1. The team commends Mohawk Valley Community College for its well-developed and communicated, mission statement, vision statement and strategic goals.

- **Suggestions:** None

- **Recommendations**: None

Requirements of Affiliation #'s 1, 7, 10, and 14

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'s 1, 7, 10 and 14.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The College notes with pride that ethics and integrity are central tenants of the College's mission, vision, and values. They are well engrained in student, governance, and planning documents. A culture of trust is evident through internal policies and external compliance, which are readily available to stakeholders in print and on the College website.

A culture of respect, diversity and inclusion is reflected through a wide variety of processes, programs, and celebrations. Guiding statements reflecting these core values are found in the mission and values statements, the Student Code of Conduct, hiring procedures, and student achievement data points. The College Diversity, Equity, & Inclusiveness Plan outlines expectations and chronicles the College's progress on key initiatives through surveys, periodic reporting updates, and action plans for moving the needle on this College-wide commitment.

An extensive array of programs, services, and special events demonstrating this core value are available to students, faculty, staff, and community members. Positive trends in minority student graduation rates, employee climate surveys, and student opinion surveys demonstrate continuous institutional growth in supporting the climate of respect, diversity, and inclusiveness.

The College communicates information through its Office of Marketing and Communications via various publications and its website. College goals, student resources, program requirements and program costs are easily available both in print and via the College website.

Employment policies and procedures appear to align with state, and federal laws. Provisions for addressing grievances under Collective Bargaining are in place and appear to be fair and impartial. Processes for addressing student grievances are clearly stated and accessible in the Student Handbook. The College is proactive in sharing information about educational costs, affordability, and student debt. Such information is available through workshops provided by the Financial Aid office, through the College Seminar, and is easily accessible on the website. The College Foundation Scholarships have been a substantial resource in helping students afford the costs of attendance.

The College has reinforced its commitment to academic freedom through a new Academic Freedom policy as well as through the Faculty Bill of Rights. A wide array of student activities, special events, and courses demonstrate a commitment to free speech and individual freedom of expression.

With regard to procedures for recruitment, hiring, promotion, and evaluation, the College observes the requirements of bargaining agreements, state and federal regulations, and College policies. Evaluation processes require faculty and staff to align professional goals with College goals. Conflict of interest procedures pertaining to employees' roles and responsibilities are well established.

The College exhibits compliance with all applicable federal, state, and MSCHE policies, regulations, and requirements. These procedures are up to date and are published on the College website. A dashboard of current assessment and institutional performance data is readily available for progress monitoring and for prospective student access.

STANDARD II

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices:**

  1. Continuous progress for inclusiveness and accessibility is found in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan.
  2. A revitalized comprehensive College marketing and communications plan has been implemented.
  3. The College has developed a strong onboarding process that orients new employees to the vision, mission, and values, all of which emphasize student success.
  4. The College fosters a culture of continuous growth, innovation, and collaboration.

- **Suggestions:**
  1. The team affirms the College's commitment to "ensuring that all documents both in print and online contain accurate and consistent information" (Commitment #2a).

- **Recommendations:** None

Requirements of Affiliation #'s 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'s 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

<u>Summary of Evidence and Findings</u>

Based on a review of the self-study, other institutional documents and interviews with faculty, staff, students and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to the standard:

MVCC offers a wide variety of academic and non-credit bearing programs consistent with the mission, vision and goals of the College. The College offers 66 academic programs and 34 certificate options. MVCC has many programs of a technical nature to prepare students to meet growing business, industry, and government needs. Of its degree and certificate programs, three are offered fully online. Programs foster a coherent learning experience that supports proficiency in general education learning outcomes.

The faculty are appropriately qualified to fulfill the educational mission of the College, and strongly engaged in the design, delivery, and assessment of courses and programs. Minimum qualifications for full- and part-time faculty are clearly outlined for each discipline. Full-time and part-time faculty evaluations are performed consistent with rank or the amount of time teaching at the College and include classroom observations by Associate Deans. The College appears to emphasize and fund opportunities for promotion, sabbatical, and participation in professional development activities.

MVCC has witnessed consistent growth in its online and hybrid course offerings. Faculty must complete the required training before teaching online and hybrid courses. The quality of online course development is guided by best practices and use of a modified Quality Matters rubric. Standardized rubrics and other evaluation materials facilitate consistent evaluation of online instruction. Associate Deans have access to observe online courses and assess faculty teaching and student learning.

All academic program requirements are clearly articulated throughout the website and other print or electronic publications. The College website also provides information about Admissions, Financial Aid, College Policies, Student Support Services, Articulation Agreements, Dual-credit, Online Learning, and Non-Credit offerings. The Marketing and Communications department is working closely with academic departments to update course and program information and address the issues of missing and inconsistent information which were identified in surveys. An RFP for a new website design with capability to update multiple platforms simultaneously has been issued.

To ensure the rigor of its offerings, and compliance with SUNY, NYSED and Middle States requirements, faculty regularly participate in the review and update of courses and programs on a five-year cycle. The Nichols Assessment Model that connects institutional effectiveness with the assessment of learning outcomes is applied. Associate Deans are responsible for overseeing faculty assessment activities within each department.

The faculty systematically evaluate programs, ensuring learning outcomes and rationale for programs are consistent with learning needs and the Mission and Vision of the College. The College-Wide Curriculum Committee ensures new programs and changes made to curriculum are appropriate. Newly developed procedures add value to the curriculum approval process. The College-Wide Curriculum Committee is commended for its new online curriculum approval system, whereby all communication, records of approval are centrally stored and available to committee members and administrators.

A complete list of courses that satisfy general education requirements is available in the College Catalog. An extensive review process, monitored by the General Education Committee, demonstrates the College's commitment to its general education program. All academic departments are represented on the committee. The College effectively meets SUNY and NYSED registration and reporting requirements. Assessment of general education courses follows a four-year cycle. Students complete assessment of general education information literacy, critical thinking, and diversity and global view competencies, as required at the time of graduation.

MVCC's Center for Corporate and Community Education (CCED) provides personal enrichment and professional development courses that support the individual growth, skill enhancement, and entrepreneurial skills of the student body and local community. Unlike credit programs, there are no procedures in place to evaluate the effectiveness of these non-credit programs; student opinion surveys are the only currently used assessment tool. The College acknowledges and is investigating ways to expand assessment efforts.

An array of learning support services exist that meet student needs at critical points on their academic journey. The Learning Commons houses an open computer lab, tutoring services, meeting rooms, lockers for storage of student material, and community outreach and educational tech services within a creative, comfortable and attractive learning environment. Completion Coaches provide a wide range of support services and individual guidance to help students overcome barriers to college success. A full-service bookstore is also available on each campus.

The Rome branch campus is a beautiful learning space serving the College and business and industry needs and houses seven programs unique to its location. Facilities and services are complete and complementary of the overall offerings of the College. Operations and needs of the Campus appear to be well integrated within the strategic planning and budgeting cycles of the College. The campus expands the College's strategic location of programs and services within Oneida County.

STANDARD III

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant accomplishments, significant progress, or exemplary/innovative practices**

  1. The well-utilized Learning Commons is an exemplary resource that provides an innovative range of services designed to help students achieve academic success.
  2. The College-Wide Curriculum Committee (CWCC) is commended for its revised curriculum approval process. The CWCC website, handbook, checklist, and other supplemental material support seamless and efficient curriculum change or development.

3. The Rome Branch Campus expansion and renovation is an important resource for Oneida County and a major accomplishment of the College.

- **Suggestions:**

1. The team affirms the College's commitment "to having CCED, EOC, thINCubator, and AIM review and revise assessment processes for all offerings" (Commitment 3b).
2. The team suggests that CCED expand promotion opportunities for students to bridge non-credit to credit learning leading to degree or certificate completion.

- **Recommendations**: None

Requirements of Affiliation #'s 8, 9, and 15

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'8, 9, and 15.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributed to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the self-study; other institutional documents; and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others; the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The College has developed and offers many support programs and services to meet student's academic and social needs. All new students are provided necessary advisement relative to their required courses based on their placement test scores and prospective program. Student interviews indicated the admissions process was responsive, included several early touch points for assistance, and provided a very welcoming feeling. MVCC requires all students to attend an in-person orientation program, with some exceptions taking the program online, before being able to register. This is an attempt to build an immediate relationship with the student and thus hoping to increase student retention and promote success.

All students are appropriately assessed upon entry, advised according to goals and program, and pointed to support services if goals are not readily clarified. To aid in assisting a high percentage of ESOL students, the College implemented an intensive English option course, which saves time and money for students and qualifies them for English proficiency. MVCC has current initiatives to reform developmental education including Quantway and the Accelerated Learning Project (ALP).

With up to 75 percent Pell eligible students in any given semester, MVCC has among the highest percent of Pell Grant recipients in New York State. Though the student loan default rate remains

relatively high, MVCC demonstrates an aggressive program promoting financial literacy for students accessing federal and private loans. The MVCC Foundation provides over $350,000 per year in student scholarships in support of student success and completion.

MVCC is engaged in several efforts to enhance support for student success including participation in Achieving the Dream, Pathways to Graduation Project , a Title III funded project, a transformative series of "wrap-around" services for students though the grant funded College Community Connection (C3) program. Recent success data indicate an increase in graduation rates from 23% in 2011 to 31% in 2017; and, reduction in the achievement gap for Black and Hispanic students from graduation rates of 8% and 14% in 2015 to 18% and 26%, respectively, in 2017. The institution continues to raise benchmarks for student retention and achievement.

Consistent with the College's mission, services are provided to meet the needs of various student populations including veterans, at-risk students, ESOL students, and students with disabilities. The College provides comprehensive Student Life and co-curricular experiences. A vigorous program of over 40 clubs and organizations is offered and monitored. MVCC's extensive and successful athletic program supports over 19 competitive teams and provides athletes with the necessary support to ensure that the required GPA is maintained. Leaders from Academic and Student Affairs units collaborate to better integrate the student experience in and out of the classroom. One example of this collaboration is the establishment of the new position of Resident Director for Academic Initiatives. Library resources and staff appear to be extensive and efforts to directly support learning programs is in place. Resources include physical collections, online databases, reference support, and research assistance, and interactive web research tools.

The College maintains procedures to protect and secure student records through the Banner administrative system. A policy regarding the use and definition of directory information is communicated via the College Catalog and Website.

Procedures for academic grievances and grade appeals are in place and the Student Conduct process, overseen by the Office of Civic Responsibilities, is communicated online and aligned with national standards. Behavioral intervention and community resource assistance is also available.

The five residence halls are independently operated by a separate affiliated Dormitory Corporation employing most all residence life staff, who support academic and community development initiatives. Students enthusiastically commented to Team members on the benefits of residence halls in building community and engagement within the College.

STANDARD IV

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices:**

    1. The team commends the institution for its extensive and successful commitment to and improvement of student success.

2. The College has committed to converting the funding from grant funding to operational dollars to sustain key grant funded student success projects long term.
3. MVCC participates in the (triannual) SUNY Student Opinion Survey (SOS) and regularly benchmarks performance in comparison to Community College cohort institutions. When the College sees a statistically significant difference from past scores or from rising cohort benchmarks, improvement strategies are introduced to improve the decrease or capitalize on an increase.

Suggestions:

1. The team affirms the institution's commitment "to continuing the process of identifying and assessing Student Learning Outcomes for all Student Affairs areas of the College" (Commitment 4f).

Recommendations: None

Requirements of Affiliation # 8 and 9

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation # 8 and 9.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher learning.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

The MVCC Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan is the organizing framework for assessment of student achievement of institutional and program goals. The Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC), a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Council, provides oversight for assessment processes and monitors the work steps of the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan. The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis and the Assessment Liaison supports the College community by organizing, supporting, and documenting assessment processes, assisting with analysis of data, and communicating results to stakeholders via the Institutional Effectiveness website. These relationships and their effectiveness are further examined in the Visiting Team report under Standard IV.

MVCC has clearly stated educational goals at the course-, program-, General Education, and institutional levels that are interrelated and consistent with the College Mission. Program learning outcomes are developed by discipline faculty and updated based on business and industry requirements, transfer opportunities, SUNY and NYSED requirements, national standards, and/or program advisory board recommendations. Institutional-level learning outcomes are expressed in five College-Wide Competencies statements. The interrelationship between the College-Wide Competencies, the College's Diversity and Global View program, and MVCC General Education learning outcomes ensures that graduates of all programs demonstrate appropriate core knowledge and skills. This is also true for Associate in

Occupational Studies and Certificate programs that do not include courses in the liberal arts and sciences. Curriculum Maps for each academic program identify the alignment between course and program learning outcomes, which, in turn, link to the College-Wide Competencies.

MVCC has vigorous and mature processes and procedures in place for the systematic assessment of student achievement of program and institutional goals. Updated annually, the MVCC Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan is a comprehensive roadmap for the assessment of outcomes for academic, service, and administrative areas. The Assessment Liaison ensures that all areas adhere to the timelines of the plan and that assessment activities are useful, well documented, and that results are disseminated. The General Education Assessment Plan lays out the process for the assessment of SUNY General Education Goals on a four-year cycle. Each General Education Goal is assessed using direct measures – authentic assignments that are evaluated with detailed faculty-developed rubrics. The Critical Thinking, Information Management, and Diversity and Global View Competencies are assessed in students' final semester using an online instrument.

The assessment of academic programs occurs within the five-year comprehensive Academic Program Review. The Academic Program Review process provides formative and summative assessment data on learning outcomes. The Program Outcomes Assessment Report (POAR) template is the component of the academic program reviews in which faculty analyze data collected with respect to program outcomes and document the use of assessment findings to inform program improvements. Many curricular changes to courses and programs that resulted from the analysis of assessment data were significant enough to require approval from the College-Wide Curriculum Committee.

The Program Outcomes Assessment Report (POAR) template is not only used for the assessment of academic programs but also for non-academic units, including Student Affairs, Administrative Services, the College Senate, and offices reporting to the President. The POAR templates delineate the operational goals and supporting outcomes of programs, services and activities of departments and provide for systematic assessment, review of data, and action plans for improvement.

In addition to the primarily direct measures used for program review, the institution also uses indirect measures to obtain additional evidence of institutional effectiveness. Measures include national surveys (NCCBP, CCSSE), the SUNY Student Opinion Survey, and locally developed surveys such as the MVCC Commencement Survey. The Academic Program Review process and other assessment processes also require the College community to examine key institutional data to improve graduation, retention, transfer, and overall student success including IPEDS data, Achieving the Dream performance indicators, Voluntary Framework of Accountability metrics, and SUNY Student Achievement Measure (SAM) data. The Institutional Effectiveness Council provides feedback and analysis on the information gathered from these measures, which are then reviewed by the President's Cabinet to inform resource allocation and planning. Further, the information is also shared at the Annual Data Summit, held each January since 2015. The Data Summit enables all departments to focus on information and College-Wide student success initiatives and is an effective way to extend the culture of assessment to faculty, staff and students.

Assessment results are used for the improvement of educational effectiveness. The team verified examples of improvements to student learning, pedagogy, curriculum, academic programs, and support services. A notable example was the use of assessment data to support the Pathways to

Graduation project, funded through Title III, which helped fund a range of initiatives to improve educational effectiveness and student success, including renovating the Learning Commons, deploying Completion Coaches, and developing digital toolkits to support success in gateway courses. Assessment results are also used to support professional development activities for full-time and part-time faculty and staff.

MVCC has a resource allocation process in place that links assessment and budgeting to the current Strategic Plan and its underlying Objectives and Metrics. Budget requests are reviewed to ensure that requests for resources are supported by assessment or other data.

The Assessment Liaison and the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis support the College community by providing workshops and training on assessment, helping with the collection, analysis, and documentation of data, and sharing the results. The Assessment Liaison is primarily responsible for the progress made in assessment at the College, ensuring the schedules established in the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan are met and that faculty and staff are well-trained and supported in their assessment activities. The Assessment Liaison and Director of Institutional Research and Analysis serve as members of many committees and councils, attesting to the importance the College puts on the usage of data to inform decision-making and the assessment of initiatives and processes.

STANDARD V

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant Accomplishments, Significant Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices:**

    1. The team commends MVCC on a pervasive culture of assessment and innovative improvement practices, such as the annual Data Summit that enables all departments to focus on information to guide and revise College-Wide success initiatives.

- **Suggestions:**

    1. Assessment Data, including Academic Program Reviews, and POAR Templates, and Curriculum Maps exist in a series of Microsoft Word files and excel files, the structure of which makes it difficult to aggregate and analyze data when planning program improvements. The College might consider alternate repository formats for inventorying assessment documentation to improve ease of access and use of assessment data.

    2. MVCC has benefited from an experienced, hardworking, and visionary Assessment Liaison whose efforts contributed greatly to the foundation and maintenance of the College's culture of assessment. The College should ensure succession planning for this key role.

- **Recommendations:** None

Requirements of Affiliation #s 8, 9, and 10

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'8, 9, and 10.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

<u>Summary of Evidence and Findings</u>

Based on a review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to the standard:

Catalyst 2020, Mohawk Valley Community College's 5-year strategic plan, clearly articulates measurable institutional objectives that are linked to the College's mission and vision with appropriate targets for improvement.

MVCC's budgeting process includes the alignment of strategic department objectives with institutional goals and budget requests. The College has employed the use of the budget and planning pivot tables to facilitate budgeting and annual institutional planning, and endeavors to leverage this useful tool to enhance the understanding and transparency of the budgeting process. Use of data and assessment results in justifying budgeting requests is evident but is currently somewhat limited. The College has expressed a need for greater alignment of operational unit level assessment with budgeting.

The Strategic Planning, Enrollment Management, and Institutional Effectiveness Councils are invaluable to the sustainability of the planning, assessment, and institutional improvement culture of the College. They allow for meaningful, ongoing communication with and participation by representatives from various internal stakeholders across the College.

The College's Academic; Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment; Diversity and Inclusiveness; Information and Educational Technologies; and Facilities Plans are aligned with and in support of Catalyst 2020. They contribute to the further operationalization and monitoring of institutional effectiveness measures and goal attainment. The plans and progress are reviewed routinely, and managed and monitored by related Councils.

The College employs adequate human resources and maintains the physical and technical infrastructure adequate to support the College's operations, wherever and however programs are delivered. Financial resources appear to be adequate at this time; however, current state revenue projections coupled with continuing enrollment decline may stress the current norms and may require the institution to become even more proactive in resource development and alternative fiscal modeling.

The College has been very aggressive and successful in procuring financial support from grants, private donations, gifts, and its not-for-profit affiliates to help support strategic goals. This increase in alternate sources of revenue is a significant accomplishment; grant funding exceeded its goal by over 200%. In fact, grant funding provided the resources for over 80% of new *Catalyst 2020* strategic initiatives for two-consecutive years.

In terms of fiscal management, the Board of Trustees adopted an official fund balance policy to maintain an unrestricted balance within a range of 5% to 15%. This goal remains challenging, especially during current trends of enrollment decline and intense competition for a diminished student pool. Resources provided by grant funds, which must be absorbed and sustained by the College long term, represent approximately 10% of current annual revenue. MVCC's tuition rate places the institution in the lowest third of the 30 SUNY community colleges. Moreover, the College offers many high-cost occupational programs as compared to their peers. These factors suggest that developing additional scenario building and budget modeling strategies accounting for greater variation in enrollment decline may be needed for long term planning. Plans are under development for expanding revenue generating "Social Enterprises" such as the thINCubator, as additional avenues for generating revenue.

The College conducts annual independent audits to confirm financial viability. Irregularities are addressed in a timely manner with evidence of follow-up on any concerns cited in the audit's accompanying management letter.

STANDARD VI

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant accomplishments, significant progress, or exemplary/innovative practices:**

    1. The team commends MVCC on its strategic planning and budgeting process that includes the alignment of department objectives, institutional goals, and budget requests. The use of the budget and planning pivot tables to facilitate budgeting and annual institutional planning is noted as exemplary practice.

- **Suggestions:**

    1. The team suggests the use of alternative dynamic budget modeling scenarios to account for greater variation in enrollment decline and a resulting decline in revenue.
    2. The team supports the College's commitments to:
        - "Developing new, and monitoring all, revenue streams to ensure the long-term financial stability of the College" (Commitment 6b).
        - "Refining the Planning and Budgeting Pivot Tables for identifying and monitoring annual objectives that support the Strategic Plan and effective resource allocation across all departments" (Commitment 6c).
        - "Examining additional ways to ensure transparency of the resource allocation process" (Commitment 6d).
        - "Training budget managers to integrate operational goals and POAR goals/outcomes into one reporting model to enhance planning, assessment, and resource allocation processes" (Commitment 6e).

- **Recommendations:** None

Requirements of Affiliation #8, 10, 11, and 15

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'s 8, 10, 11, and 15.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution had education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to the standard:

The Board of Trustees of Mohawk Valley Community College consists of nine citizens of Oneida County, five of whom are appointed by the College's sponsor, Oneida County, and four of whom are appointed by the governor. There is one student member of the Board of Trustees who is elected for a one-year term as part of student government elections. The institution eagerly awaits the confirmation of two gubernatorial appointments to fill vacant Board positions.

The Mohawk Valley Community College Board of Trustees is actively and appropriately engaged in the life of the College. Mohawk Valley Community College falls under the administrative authority of Oneida County and New York State and operates according to New York State Education Law. The Board of Trustees is vested with statutory authority for the supervision of the College's fiscal affairs, employment, compensation for College staff, and the establishment of student tuition and fees. The Board has taken an active role in its responsibility to develop and approve policy. The duties and responsibilities of the Board and the President are delineated in the Bylaws of the Board. New Board members meet individually with the College President for orientation concerning their roles as Trustees.

MVCC Trustees are well versed in the mission of the College and its strategic plan. They are supportive of the College's goals and evidence considerable pride in the institution. The Board conducts its own bi-annual assessments and meets collectively for retreats at least 2 times per year.

Separate audit reports are completed annually by an external certified public accountant and reviewed by the Board. The College's most recent audit shows no material weakness or significant deficiencies.

The President and the College administration are effectively implementing policy and providing vision and leadership that have ensured that teaching and learning are taking place at high levels. There are two shared governance bodies, the College Senate and the Student Congress.
The College Senate is given the opportunity and structure for the faculty, staff, and students to make recommendations on policy directly to the President. The Student Congress has impactful input on College policies by having representative seats on both College Senate and the Board of Trustees. The President and the three Vice Presidents attend College Senate meetings. The purposeful interaction among senior leadership and College staff provides a platform for exchange of information that leads to collaborative and informed decision making and improved

processes. This interconnected structure also promotes goal achievement and accountability within and among the major divisions of the College and has brought the College recent distinction in the State of New York as an Exemplary Practice in shared governance.

The College is committed to a diverse employee workforce and achieves this through its hiring and recruitment process. The College uses personality strengths profiles when onboarding new staff and has successfully piloted a more streamlined process to improve hiring turnaround time.

Prior to arriving at Mohawk Valley Community College, the President (hired in 2007), accrued many years of administrative experience as a Vice President for Learning and Academic Affairs for Metropolitan Community College as well as having many years direct experience as an administrator in educational support services and institutional research and planning. As a holder of a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Michigan, the President also maintains energetic participation in professional development seminars focusing on leadership, organizational development and institutional advancement. He currently serves as President of SUNY New York Community College Association of Presidents, and is active in the Strategic Horizons Network, ACCT, and AACC professional associations.

The President is committed to communicating matters of importance to the College community. This is accomplished in a variety of ways including direct verbal communication to the staff, the President's Blog, and other published communications found internally within College materials and externally in local publications and newspapers. The President provides weekly updates to the Board of Trustees via e-mail. The President supervises and monitors the administrative structure through the President's Cabinet to ensure that institutional goals are met.

The organizational chart clearly depicts the administrative structure and reporting lines. The current administrative structure supports the strategic direction of the College. The recent redesign of the academic division was conducted based on an assessment of the effectiveness of the previous structure, and was brought to the College Senate for advice and feedback.

Administrators have appropriate experience, are properly trained and have a strong commitment to the institution. There is a formal process in place to review staff and administrators as to their effectiveness in carrying out assigned duties. Additionally, many avenues are available for staff professional development, including financial support for advanced education and attendance at professional conferences. During the last reaccreditation process, it was noted that the College needed to implement a succession plan to address future retirements in the administrative area. The College initiated two leadership development programs to assist in training new leaders. These efforts have helped the College identify qualified internal candidates to successfully fill new roles or positions at the College. Additionally, the College employs a robust program to recognize employee exemplary performance.

STANDARD VII

In the team's judgement, the institution appears to meet this standard.

- **Significant accomplishments, significant progress or exemplary/innovative practices:**

    1. The College has two excellent leadership development programs to assist in professional development that should assist in the College's succession planning efforts.

2. The team commends MVCC leadership for exemplary partnerships with community constituents, businesses, government officials and other external stakeholders.
3. The team commends MVCC for its dynamic and inclusive shared governance structure, and congratulates MVCC on its recent recognition in this category by SUNY.

- **Suggestions:** None

- **Recommendations:** None

Requirements of Affiliation #'s 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14

In the team's judgment, the institution appears to meet Requirements of Affiliation #'s7, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Section D: Verification of Compliance

I. Affirmation of Continued Compliance with Requirements of Affiliation

Based on a review of the self-study and accompanying materials, interviews, and the Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations, the team affirms that the institution continues to meet all *Requirements of Affiliation.*

II. Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations

The team affirms that the institution meets all accreditation-relevant federal regulations, which is based upon the review of the self-study report, accompanying materials, and the Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations and the evaluation visit.

Section E: Verification of Data and Student Achievement

I. Verification of Data and Self-Study Information

The team conducted a substantial number of interviews with campus leadership, committees, organizational working groups, and branch operation personnel and examined a great deal of documentation to review and substantiate MVCC's Self Study findings and conclusions:

Interviewees included:
- Board of Trustees,
- Local Legislator Edward Welsh,
- President Randall VanWagoner,
- Executive Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board Jill Heintz,
- Three Vice Presidents,
- Eight Officers of the President's Cabinet,
- Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents,

- Nine Associate Deans,
- Executive Director of the Foundation,
- Comptroller,
- Director of Communications,
- Director of Institutional Research and Analysis,
- Executive Director of HR,
- Approximately 75 Students,
- Several Faculty,
- Auxiliary Services Corporation Personnel,
- Residence Hall Directors and Assistant Directors,
- Rome Campus Dean and several staff,
- Youth Build Program,
- AIM Center Staff,
- CCCED Staff,
- thINCubator Staff,
- Griffiss Business and Technology Park Campus Aviation program,
- Self-Study Steering Team Co-Chairs and Standards Committee Members,
- Full College Senate,
- Senate General Education Committee,
- College-Wide Curriculum Committee Chair,
- Strategic Planning Council,
- Institutional Effectiveness Council,
- Coordinator of Assessment,
- Grants Team,
- Five Collective Bargaining Association (CBA) Heads,
- And others

Documentation Examined:

SUNY representative Dr. Deborah Moeckel provided extensive data and documentation which provided context concerning SUNY requirements and MVCC's performance:

1. Student Satisfaction Surveys
2. Institutional Effectiveness Performance Data
3. Crosswalk General Education Competencies and MSCHE competencies
4. Council on Effectiveness: Academic Assessment Program Rubric
5. Council on Effectiveness: Institutional Effectiveness Rubric
6. External Instructional Locations (SUNY/MSCHE)
7. Students at State Operated Campuses, College in the High School, Fall 2016
8. Memorandum to SUNY Presidents 11-1 Section 9, Regarding Transfer Evaluation Requirements
9. Credit Course in the High School Policy
10. Official Enrollment Report (Enrollment by County in HE Institutions)
11. Taskforce Report on Micro Credentialing, 2013-2017, and Feb. 7, 2018 memorandum to Campus Presidents
12. Provost's Report to Faculty Senate Plenary Presentation, April 21, 2017 State Budget and Enrollment Projections)

MVCC documents reviewed by the team included the extensive list of documents as noted in the included Self-Study Attachments, Addenda, and Website housed materials (as listed in the Institution's Documentation Road Map). The list below duplicates some of the exhibits provided to the Team in the Self Study and Documentation Road Map and it also reflects many additional documents reviewed during the visit. However, it is not an extant list of documents and materials reviewed by the Team:

1. MSCHE Institutional Profile
2. IPEDS Profile
3. NCES Profile
4. MVCC Website
5. MVCC Internal Web
6. Paige Group Reports
7. MVCC Strategic Plan *Catalyst 2020*
8. MVCC Strategic Plan Measures
9. President's Blog
10. College Catalogue and Website
11. Various College and Employee Handbooks
12. Collective Bargaining Agreement
13. Vision, Mission and Goals Statements
14. SPC Meeting Minutes over several years
15. *Hawk Vision* Communications Editions
16. Code of Conduct and Commitment to Civility
17. Faculty Tech Academy Materials
18. Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan and Unit Plans
19. Institutional Effectiveness Website
20. MVCC Principles of Assessment Document and Assessment Handbook
21. Institutional Effectiveness Committee Meeting Minutes
22. Course Student Learning Outcomes (on the website)
23. Program Student Learning Outcomes (on the website –under curricular display pages)
24. General Education Student Learning Outcomes data, internal documents and SUNY Reports
25. MVCC General Education Assessment Plan and documented evidence of assessments
26. Multiple Program Outcomes Assessment Reports (POARs)
27. Academic Program Review (APR) Tool
28. Multiple Academic Program Review examples and templates
29. Curriculum Maps and Curriculum Proposal and Process examples
30. Diversity and Global View Plan
31. Information Management, and Diversity and Global View Assessment Instrument and Outcomes Data
32. College-Wide Competencies
33. General Education Crosswalks - SUNY/MSCHE
34. Budget Planning and Monitoring Live Pivot Table
35. Strategic Plan Pivot Table (showing relevant initiatives, budget and performance data)
36. Examples of Documented Changes from Assessment Data
37. One dozen completed 2017-2018 budget request worksheets from across the College
38. Catalyst 2020 annual plan budget allocations by initiative: 2016-2017 and 2017-2018
39. MVCC BOT Fund Balance Policy
40. Financial presentation to Board of Trustees (unrestricted fund balance information, Enrollment Management Committee projections, Preliminary Budget Projection Scenarios 2018-2019, and the 2018-2019 Financial Plan.

41. Completed non-instructional unit POAR templates
42. Five-year rolling Capital Plan
43. 2017-2020 Academic Plan Detailed Program Review Schedule 2018-2021
44. Online Courses Developed over five-year period
45. Charts showing number of online and hybrid sections for last 5 years
46. Face-to-face and online grade comparison data
47. Distance Learning Instructional Observation Forms and Evaluation Rubric
48. College-Wide Curriculum Committee Curriculum manual and checklist
49. SUNY New Program Proposal Forms
50. NYSED List of Approved Programs
51. NYSED Instructions for registering a new program
52. Follett Discover Promotional Handout
53. List of Associate Deans and VPs
54. Institutional Organization Charts
55. Institutional Audits and related fiscal health opinions

Based on review of materials and interviews, the team confirms that data and other information provided by the institution are reasonably valid and conform to higher education expectations.

II. Student Achievement

After interviewing institutional stakeholders, the team confirms that MVCC's approach to its student achievement goals is effective, consonant with higher education expectations, and consistent with the institution's mission.

Section F: Third-Party Comments (if applicable)

None applicable

Section G: Conclusion

The team thanks Mohawk Valley Community College for its honest and forthright representation in its Self-Study, and for interviewee candidness during interviews on campus. The Evaluation Team hopes that the institution will find the ideas contained in this report useful, all of which are offered in the spirit of collegiality and peer review.

As a reminder, the next steps in the evaluation process are as follows:

1. The institution replies to the team report regarding accuracy of findings and to suggest corrections to any errors of fact.

2. The institution will have an opportunity to provide a formal written Institutional Response, addressed to the Commission.

3. The team Chair will submit a Confidential Brief to the Commission, summarizing the team report and conveying the team's proposal for accreditation action.

4. The Commission's Committee on Evaluation Reports carefully reviews the institutional self-study document, the evaluation team report, the institution's formal response, and the Chair's Confidential Brief to formulate a proposed action to the Commission.

5. The full Commission, after considering information gained in the preceding steps, takes formal accreditation action and notifies the institution.