

**Committee on Equal Opportunities  
Campus Visit  
Kentucky Community and Technical College System  
Madisonville Community College  
March 26, 2007**

Adopted by the CEO: June 20, 2007

Revised: June 12, 2007

**Executive Summary**

**Purpose and Process:** The purpose of the campus visit is to allow members of the Committee on Equal Opportunities to review institutional activities that support the objectives of *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities*. The CEO is charged with monitoring institutional progress toward implementing *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities* and *The Partnership Agreement* with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Monitoring is completed through data analysis and campus visits.

Prior to conducting visits at community and technical colleges, the CEO met with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System office and the presidents of the community and technical colleges. Following that meeting, the CEO conducted a campus visit at Jefferson Community and Technical College. The experience helped to tailor future community and technical college visits to focus on campus environment and strategies implemented to achieve the four objectives in the Kentucky Plan.

In March 2007 members of the CEO conducted its second KCTCS campus visit at Madisonville Community College. Madisonville Community College is a comprehensive, two-year college. With the main campus located in Madisonville, MCC is one of 16 KCTCS two-year, open-admission colleges. MCC was originally established as a member of the University of Kentucky's Community College System in 1968. In 2001, the college consolidated with Madisonville Technical College, which was originally established in 1937 as the Madisonville Area Trade School. MCC's purpose is to make postsecondary education opportunities available to Kentucky's citizens and the workforce. MCC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Madisonville Community College is comprised of four campuses. Three campuses are in the city of Madisonville: North (main) Campus, Health Campus, Technology Campus, and Muhlenberg County Campus. The four campuses of MCC play an integral role in the statewide mission of the KCTCS for affordable postsecondary education and workforce training. The five counties contributing the greatest share of the institution's enrollment are Caldwell, Henderson, Hopkins, Muhlenberg, and Webster. According to MCC administrators, 1,497 students from Hopkins County were enrolled in fall 2006.

**Core Focus:** The report begins by identifying the general focus of review and discussion with the college's administration and the campus community. (The committee did not visit the campus in Muhlenberg County.) The committee's goal was to learn about the college's strategies and leadership in implementing the objectives of the plan and the results of those efforts.

**Report Summary:** MCC is part of KCTCS and is governed by the KCTCS Board of Regents. MCC, also has a local board of directors. The CEO visited the three campuses of MCC in the city of Madisonville March 26, 2007.

The institution offers a variety of academic and technical programs to prepare students to transition to a four-year degree or to enter the workforce. The college offers associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in over 20 academic program areas, adult education, developmental education, workplace essential skills training, and distance learning.

The enrollment reported by MCC in fall 2006 was 3,997, with 205 African Americans, and 3,769 in fall 2005, with 175 African Americans enrolled. The enrollment of all students increased from 3,363 in fall 2002 to 3,997 in fall 2006. Similarly, the representation of African American enrollment at MCC increased from 146 in 2002 to 205 in 2006.

Dr. Judith Rhoads, president of MCC, provided opening remarks indicating that the college is committed to achieving broad diversity goals and objectives established by the KCTCS, as well as specific objectives identified by MCC. The president presented an overview of the mission and institutional goals, including a draft Diversity Plan. Additionally, various collaborations with other organizations in the Madisonville community were discussed: MNHHS/TRIO, YMCA, Family Resource Centers, Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, NAACP, ACE<sup>2</sup>, and Murray State University. MCC administrators also reported that the School Counts Program has partnerships with 300 businesses, public schools, and colleges in the general area.

According to Dr. Rhoads, MCC was the first among the KCTCS institutions approved for consolidation with the technical college. She noted that MCC provides a supportive and challenging environment for all students and expects the institution be noted for its academic quality and be the college of choice for area students. The health care program already has a very good reputation and attracts students from very broad areas. The institution is working to revise its missions to include "developmental education" and "diversity" as focus areas. The institution regularly organizes special events around Black History month (February), for example, the American Spiritual Ensemble and the West Louisville Girls Choir.

It was noted that the North Campus houses most of the institution's administrative functions, the Loman C. Trover library, and the Division of Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. The North Campus consists of the John H. Gray Building, the Joe C. Davis Science and Technology Building, the Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, and The Learning Resource Center. Most recently, plans have been approved for the construction of a new facility on the North Campus: The Brown Badgett Sr. Advanced Energy and Technology Building.

Approximately 600 students are enrolled in the 10 health programs offered at the Health Campus. According to MCC, the weekend LPN program produced 16 total graduates, with several of African Americans, this year. It was stated that African Americans overwhelmingly enroll in the health profession, for example, physical therapy, and the nurse assistant program. Currently, a total of 192 students are enrolled in the RN program while 60 are enrolled in the LPN program.

The Technology Campus activities plan to relocate to the North Campus beginning fall 2008 (to The Brown Badgett Sr. Energy and Advanced Technology Center). While Dr. Rhoads acknowledged that the technology program is not very diverse, the institution anticipates more diversity in this area.

The ACE<sup>2</sup> building currently houses the adult education program, which has an enrollment of 1,300 students. African American enrollment in this program has increased each year. MCC employs one African American staff member in the program.

According to MCC administrators, the Muhlenberg Campus is located in a very poor county with a very high unemployment rate. Financing postsecondary education is a challenge for the students. Approximately 700 students are enrolled at this campus. The goal of the institution is to change the educational level of this region. To help facilitate continued development of the nurturing environment, students organized the Diversity Club (approximately 35 students attend the meetings).

The president noted that MCC supports the broad mission of KCTCS to promote excellence in teaching and learning, increase student access and success, expand diversity and global awareness, and enhance the economic development of communities and the Commonwealth. In terms of recruitment, Dr. Rhoads indicated that each KCTCS institution is given a service area and colleges do not transition out of the designated area to recruit students. Dr. Rhoads noted that given the low college education attainment rate (10.6 percent) there is a great deal of work to do. Demographics indicate that the average age of students is 27, 71 percent of the degree-seeking students receive some type of financial aid, 62 percent attend part-time, 46 percent are first-generation college students, 56 percent are female, and 8 percent of fall 2006 students are GED graduates.

Approximately \$231,613 in financial aid was awarded to minority students in fall 2006; \$228,799 was awarded in spring 2007. One resource available to the institutions as a pipeline for minority students is the Upward Bound Program at North Hopkins. 45 percent of the participants are African American. MCC received grants totaling \$200,000 from the fiscal court and \$300,000 through coal grants. The Baker Award, named after Senator Walter Baker, offered scholarships for the resource center totaling \$20,000. Additionally, the STARS Program provides \$10,000 to students interested in attending artistic and cultural events in the community which they would otherwise be fiscally unable to attend.

MCC also has three of the federal TRIO Programs (Upward Bound, Education Talent search, and Student Support Services). The TRIO Programs are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO outreach and support programs target, serve, and assist low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities to move through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs. MCC, according to administrators, established additional strategies to increase student retention, for example, students are paired with master advisors in the summer before classes begin. Advisors are asked to meet with new students three to four times before the beginning of the semester. An objective is to ensure interaction between student and advisor for more than just signing the course schedule. The strategy has experienced varying degrees of success. MCC noted that fall to spring retention rates have increased since the program began.

The MCC Diversity Committee's charge is to work with administrators to address diversity concerns that impact the college; assist with the development of a plan to address the CPEs EEO requirements for degree program eligibility and the need for a more inclusive college environment; sponsor various events that celebrate the various cultural backgrounds represented at the college; and work in conjunction with Student Affairs and the Director of Cultural Diversity to implement programs and plan events for the student body and college faculty and staff. To date, MCC and the committee are providing the following initiatives for minority students: the Multicultural Student Association, Governor's Minority Student College Preparation Program Summer Camp, Black Achievers Program, Experience Culture Sessions, Graduation brunch, and Voices. (While professional development is not offered to students, students have been invited to attend some of the college's diversity events for faculty and staff.)

The institution recognizes and actively supports the following partnerships that are aimed at enhancing the campus environment for minority students: MNHHS/TRIO, YMCA, Family Resource Centers, Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, the NAACP, local African American churches, ACE<sup>2</sup>, and Murray State University. MCC provides the following access support services: recruitment, master advising, financial aid/scholarships, retention, work and learn, ready to work programs, early alert system, quality enhancement plan, and the learning center. Administrators stated that the need to ensure that students have a point of contact when they are in trouble encouraged them to offer these services.

MCC recently completed SACS accreditation; and was recognized as the top institution in the system for receiving grants totaling \$10.3 million. The president also acknowledged that there are still challenges at MCC, for example increasing the number of African American faculty, staff, and students among the populations at the institution. There is also a need to increase the number of minority graduates and transfer students.

MCC administrators stated that faculty, staff, and administrators began working on a diversity plan approximately a year ago. The plan is now in its final stages for completion and will begin to be implemented shortly. At the time of the campus visit, the diversity plan committee included faculty and staff representation but no students. The same was true of the institution's standing diversity committee. The institution agreed with CEO members that students should be included on the committees because students are the audience most affected.

In closing, administrators indicated that there are ongoing conversations regarding programs and services for Hispanic students. It was noted that the Hispanic population in the MCC service area is small but the campus community supports providing a welcoming educational environment for all ethnic minority groups interested in pursuing a postsecondary education.

Overall, the CEO team was pleased with the campus visit. The team recognized the president for her commitment to increasing the level of diversity at MCC and commended the institution for embracing the commitments and objectives of the Kentucky Plan and the Partnership Agreement.

## **Recommendations by the CEO**

The general conclusion of the committee was that Madisonville Community College has challenges to broaden its campus environment to better communicate its support of diversity within the Madisonville community and the service area. MCC has identified and is implementing strong strategies to attract more diverse student, faculty, and staff populations and to encourage community organizations to work collaboratively to promote diversity and education as a tool for community and economic development. A stronger communications/marketing strategy should be employed, to build collaborative relationships to solidify a level of trust within the African American community, and help dispel a complex history that seems to curb participation in postsecondary education at high levels by racial and ethnic populations in the Madisonville area.

### **Specific Recommendations Are:**

1. There must be a concentrated effort to manage the need to preserve heritage and tradition at MCC while nurturing a new, more attractive, and inclusive environment to create a public institution that flourishes.
2. MCC should more aggressively pursue the appointment of ethnic minorities to the local board of directors. The current board does not have an African American serving compared to having a strong presence in the community and service area. There was no evidence that MCC has requested assistance with securing ethnic minority representation.
3. MCC should clarify its process for adopting the diversity plan, including ensuring that it is discussed as a part of the official meeting agendas of the faculty, professional staff, and student governments, and that these meetings be open to all to attend and have input. These actions should take place before the institution officially adopts the plan for implementation.
4. The committee recommends that the newly established position of director of diversity be included as a member of the president's cabinet. While the line of reporting may not be directly to the president, the committee believes it essential that the director of diversity be engaged in policy development. This will also ensure that each campus is consistently and effectively addressing the needs of ethnic minority students, faculty, staff, and administrators.
5. Based on focus group conversation, advising policies are not consistent among the four campuses. MCC should conduct a desk audit of its advising policies/procedures to assure consistent interpretation and implementation across the four campuses.
6. Based on focus group discussion, customer service in the financial aid office presents challenges for students attempting to obtain advice and counseling. MCC should periodically conduct impromptu service audits of the financial aid office to determine whether current policy and procedures are yielding the level of service envisioned by the administration.
7. MCC should not ignore the reported perceptions of the public, students, faculty, and staff regarding the marginalization of minorities at the four campuses. Instead, the information should be embraced and communication/marketing strategies implemented to promote diversity through campus activities and programming. (There seems to exist in the ethnic

minority communities perceived negative images/stereotypes regarding the institution's openness to embracing greater diversity).

8. MCC should consider making diversity achievements a strong ingredient in the administrator/faculty/staff annual evaluations. The system should reward good performance by administrators, faculty, and staff in regard to diversity in colleges and departments.
9. MCC has a strong student recruitment and admissions program. However, the strategies employed by the program seem to yield very few ethnic minority enrollments, despite the strong presence of minorities in the service area. MCCC should conduct a desk audit of recruitment efforts, policies, and procedures to ensure efficiency of implementation and productivity. A standing recruitment committee with a subcommittee to focus exclusively on the recruitment of ethnic minority groups for all campuses may enhance these efforts.
10. MCC should seek to build a stronger relationship with Murray State University to provide greater access and transfer opportunities for qualified students interested in pursuing bachelor's degrees.

## **Communications**

1. To the extent possible, MCC should provide uniform services at each campus and provide information to that effect at whatever central location students use to retrieve such information. There were conflicting interpretations within the system of the services provided at each campus compared to the main campus.
2. Using a best practices approach, MCC should establish and promote the support services that are available to students at each campus. Where practicable, MCC should provide consistent services at all campuses to reduce the cost of attendance for students and to reduce confusion regarding the availability of services.
3. Students were complimentary of the parking available on each campus but they were disturbed that the lighting at two campus sites was insufficient, specifically at the Muhlenberg campus. Currently no lighting exists at the end of the parking lot, according to students.
4. The college should, by policy, include diversity events and activities on the MCC published master calendar. Students spoke highly of the MSA (Multicultural Student Association) and suggested that it have more prominence.
5. MCC should clearly communicate its policies regarding safety and security (on each campus) to students. Students indicated that they were unaware of who (on each campus) to contact should an emergency arise and that it would be helpful if MCCC would provide decals for vehicles to help identify vehicles that belong on campus, compared to those that do not. It was stated that this would be particularly helpful to students taking night classes and must sometime walk through dark areas in the parking lots after class.

6. Students noted that sometimes information provided by advisors/counselors do not align with current policy and procedures at MCC. They indicated that many advisors and administrators are unable to assist them with online registration.
7. MCC, based on student observation, should provide additional tutors and better scheduling at each campus to ensure access and success. Currently, the North Campus has nine tutors to assist students; the Technical Campus has one, the Health Campus one, and the Muhlenberg Campus one. Typically, tutoring services are available only on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 2 p.m. at the Muhlenberg Campus; however, most students are in class during the hours when tutoring is offered. The resource center also maintains hours when students are attending class.
8. In its marketing and advertising, MCC should more, effectively communicate and demonstrate that ethnic minorities are welcome as employees; currently there are very few African Americans employed as faculty and professional staff. Based on this lack of representation, the perception in the community appears to be that African Americans need not apply for positions at MCC.

### **Employment and Career Advancement**

1. MCC should clarify its message regarding the role of the director of diversity and the affirmative action officer (human resources) in the search process. During the focus group session, it appeared that neither knew that the other had a role in the search process or what was their specific role. A search committee or applicant would not have the appropriate resource to assist with the employment process unless there is more clarity.
2. MCC should review current strategies to ensure that the policies promote and result in the desired outcome, particularly in support of more diversity at higher levels within the institution. Discussions with faculty and staff appeared to raise questions regarding the existence of a formal plan to increase diversity at MCC.
3. To promote diversity as a plus, MCC should implement a recognition/rewards program that publicly acknowledges the success of campuses and individuals for achieving diversity objectives. Deans, chairs, professional staff, and students should be recognized for accomplishments and encouraged by actions of top administrators to achieve diversity objectives.
4. Implementation of a formal junior faculty and staff career development strategy will assist the institution to attract and retain a strong compliment of African American faculty and staff.

### **Recommendations or Concerns to the CEO**

1. MCC requested that the CEO assist with ensuring representation of ethnic minorities on the local board of directors. CEO was asked to write the governor and request that an African American be appointed to serve on the board of directors of MCC.
2. MCC asked the CEO to encourage comprehensive universities to more actively discuss potential opportunities for collaboration. Students need more opportunities to enroll in baccalaureate degree completer programs.
3. The CEO should actively/directly share the names and contact information of SREB Compact for Faculty Diversity Ph.D. completers as a resource to community and technical colleges to further increase diversity among the faculty, professional staff, and administrators.
4. The CEO should encourage the KCTCS to pursue, on behalf of all community and technical colleges, a program of discounted or free credits to support career advancement or professional development for community and technical college faculty and professional staff.

### **Discussions with Constituent and Focus Groups**

**President and Leadership Team:** The highest priority of *The Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities* and *The Partnership Agreement* with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights is to create campus and community environments that are supportive of diverse student, faculty, and staff populations.

President Judith Rhoads and the MCC leadership team highlighted strategies and programs that have been implemented at Madisonville Community and Technical College campuses to achieve the objectives and commitments outlined in *The Kentucky Plan* and *The Partnership Agreement*. The president gave an overview of the institution's strategies, initiatives, and programs, noting that she believes MCC will meet each of the four objectives during the upcoming evaluation period.

The North Campus houses most of the institution's administrative functions: the Loman C. Trover library, and the Division of Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. The North Campus consists of the John H. Gray Building, the Joe C. Davis Science and Technology Building, the Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, and the Learning Resource Center. Most recently, plans have been approved for the construction of a new facility on the North Campus: The Brown Badgett Sr. Advanced Energy and Technology Building. The presentation discussed the mission, goals, student enrollment, support programs, diversity initiatives, partnerships, support services, employment, student, faculty and staff recruitment initiatives, and challenges encountered by the institution. The president indicated that the mission of MCC, like KCTCS, is to create a pathway of opportunity for citizens of the Commonwealth to achieve success. MCC focuses on workforce education, associate degree production, transfer programs, and meeting the changing needs of the local economy.

The college is committed to achieving broad diversity goals and objectives established by the KCTCS, as well as specific objectives identified by MCC. The president presented an overview of

the mission and institutional goals, including a draft diversity plan. MCC is developing and will soon adopt a new diversity plan to increase enrollment and success among ethnic minority students and promote diversity and multiculturalism and will continue to develop a supportive and welcoming campus environment. The plan, as presented in draft form to members of the CEO, was expected to be adopted in April or May 2007, with implementation beginning with the new academic year (2007-08). The draft plan begins with a statement of diversity, followed by an equal employment opportunity policy statement. The draft plan outlines both internal and external policy dissemination to ensure that students, employees, and applicants for employment are aware of MCC official policies regarding equal opportunity. The draft identifies the primary responsibility for implementation as resting with the equal education opportunity coordinator, assisted by others at the institution. Finally, the draft highlights goals and objectives that proactively support policy and equal opportunity and affirmative action programs of the KCTCS. The draft document concludes by highlighting student recruitment and retention and faculty recruitment and retention initiatives, along with community and civic engagement.

The president noted that students attending MCC come from approximately 42 counties. Most African Americans at MCC come for the health care programs. The college is focusing on the pipeline issues by supporting formation of a YMCA Black Achievers program, TRIO program, governor's minority student college preparation program, graduation brunch, and other outreach programs that are focused on the African American and Hispanic communities. Additionally, various collaborations with other organizations in the Madisonville community were discussed: MNHHS/TRIO, YMCA, Family Resource Centers, Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, NAACP, ACE<sup>2</sup>, and Murray State University. Madisonville CTC administrators also reported that the School Counts Program has partnerships with 300 businesses, public schools, and colleges in the general area.

MCC is revising its missions to include "developmental education" and "diversity" as focus areas. The institution regularly organizes special events around Black History month (February), for example, the American Spiritual Ensemble and the West Louisville Girls Choir. Approximately 600 students are enrolled in the 10 health programs offered at the Health Campus. According to MCC, 16 percent of African American graduates participated in the weekend LPN program. It was stated that African Americans overwhelmingly enroll in the health profession, for example, physical therapy, and the health assistant program. Currently, a total of 192 students are enrolled in the RN program, while 60 are enrolled in the LPN program.

The population on which MCC relies directly for its enrollments is limited. For example, 6.2 percent of the population of Hopkins County is African American, Muhlenberg County has 4.7 percent of its population, Webster County has 4.3 percent and Caldwell County has 4.8 percent while only 0.6 percent of the population of Crittenden County is African American. By comparison, the African American enrollment at MCC increased from 146 in fall 2002 to 205 in fall 2006. Total enrollment grew from 3,363 in fall 2002 to 3,997 in fall 2006.

To foster student success, MCC implemented an early alert system that helps identify students that experience challenges in the classroom or as part of their daily routine. This program makes available opportunities to interface with faculty advisors to collaboratively identify strategies to assist the student get back on track. The program serves to focus efforts on student retention and subsequently graduation, or successful transfer to a four-year institution to pursue a four-year

degree. Additionally, MCC has a master advising program, financial aid/scholarships, work and learn, and ready to work programs to help focus attention on quality enhancement. It is important that businesses view the product as having quality and being competitive for employment opportunities.

MCC identified its most visible challenges increasing the number of African American faculty, increasing the numbers of African American professional staff, increasing the number and percent of African American students enrolled, and increasing the number of African American students receiving degrees and graduating.

The institution is challenged by the lack of diverse representation among membership of the local board of directors. The board provided names of potential appointees to the KCTCS board, but was not successful in having an African American appointed. There seemed to be some uncertainty regarding who (MCC or KCTCS) should stress the importance of having diverse representation on the local board of directors.

**Student Focus Groups:** The committee engaged in discussions with students at three locations, North Campus, Technology Campus, and Health Campus. The first student focus group, held at the North campus, was comprised of 16 students and explored activities associated with the North and Muhlenberg campuses. The majority of students were Caucasian with African American and Hispanics included. They all agreed that MCC has identified programs and strategies to ensure that students have a good experience while enrolled, but suggested that the implementation of the programs and strategies lack focus. This was particularly evident for the Muhlenberg and Technology campuses.

Students expressed concern that those enrolled at the Muhlenberg Campus appeared to have an insufficient selection of programs and courses to complete degree requirements, and suggested that MCC offer additional courses at that location. It was noted that working adults find it difficult to have sufficient time away from jobs to travel to Madisonville in the middle of the day for classes. Student support services (tutoring, computer center, general activities, and programs) at the Madisonville campuses are very good but is lacking at the Muhlenberg Campus. One student noted that she was surprised by the scarcity of African American students enrolled at the north campus and even fewer at the Muhlenberg Campus, particularly given the representation of African Americans in Hopkins County. She suggested that the institution should focus more effort toward recruiting ethnic minority students and faculty to the North Campus in particular and also to the other campuses.

Generally, students were complimentary of programs, activities, and support groups available at MCC, for example, the MSA, SGA, tutoring, and computer labs. The availability of parking is good; students do not have difficulty finding parking or having their cars towed. They did note that it would be helpful if more lighting is provided for the parking areas, particularly during the late evening hours (concerns regarding safety). Students were particularly concerned about lighting in the parking areas at the Muhlenberg Campus and the Technology Campus, stating that there are no lights at the end of the parking lot. The females indicated that the janitor, when available, will escort them to their car at night. Students indicated that, while they appreciate the assistance of the janitor, their safety is not his responsibility, and they believe the institution should

play a greater role in providing safety and security. Other students stated that it would be nice to have at least one security officer visible on campus.

Some stated that a local police officer occasionally drives through campus, however not often enough. Also, students suggested that, because MCC does not have campus police, there should be some mechanism (decals) in place, for safety reasons, to help distinguish student vehicles from those of other citizens in the community.

Some students believed that it is also important that students be self-reliant. They indicated that "there is a great deal of support at MCC, and if students don't make it, it's kind of their own fault." They noted that free tutoring and other support services are available and students should avail themselves of the services. Other students indicated that they are familiar with a number of available resources but many times the resources are not readily identifiable. Several students expressed frustration with advising, for example, inconvenient hours of advisors, inadequate information given students that unnecessarily delay their graduation, and difficulty with returning emails.

The committee asked students about their knowledge and opportunity for input in the new diversity plan being implemented by MCC. Several students stated that they would like to have an opportunity to read and share their opinion regarding the plan. Student government noted that it has no representation on the committee that is developing the plan and would like to participate on behalf of all students. Generally students agreed that conversations have taken place regarding the recruitment and retention of minority students but do not believe any institution-wide policies are in place. They thought that more effort should be placed in marketing and outreach, particularly in the high schools, to get students excited about attending MCC.

A white female observed that the main campus does not appear to be diverse; "stating that you don't see very many African Americans or other minority students. Every class I have consists of majority students." Students stated that they were disappointed that MCC employed only a few African Americans. According to students, one African American professor is employed at the Muhlenberg Campus, but noted that he may leave at the end of the spring semester. They were unable to identify any African Americans as high-level administrators, but did note that one African American is employed in the office of the registrar. An African American student noted that African Americans typically are not employed at the institution because they believe they would not be hired even if they applied. Students indicated that they would like to see more African American faculty at the North and Technology campuses; it would improve the environment and help to attract more students with diverse backgrounds.

Students were asked to describe the MCC master advising program, how students are informed that it exists, whether they use the service, and what has been their experience with the faculty who provide the services. The students indicated that they were familiar with the advising program but were quick to point out that sometimes the information provided by advisors and counselors is not helpful or is incomplete. Students appeared to view the role of advisors and counselors as providing more discrete direction regarding course selection and career options. An example given offers a glimpse of student's expectation compared to services offered, the example, a student enrolled at the main campus was given inadequate information to select a career path; the student took courses aimed at the career option (at MCC) for four years. When the student finally graduated, she found that the only employment option was to serve as a substitute teacher with

the degree she earned. Students believed the student made choices based on inadequate advising and counseling. The students concluded that advising services should be improved and that better communication is needed to ensure proper understanding of the roles of advisors and the level of information being provided.

Focus group participants at the Technology and Health campuses repeated many of the statements offered by the group at the North Campus. It should be noted that student government participants from the North Campus also participated in the discussions at the Technology and Health campuses.

Students at the two remaining sessions suggested that MCC should encourage students, faculty, and staff to participate in mandatory diversity courses. Students enrolled at the Technology Campus agreed that diversity is good for both African Americans as well as whites. They too indicated that it would be good to have an opportunity to review and discuss the diversity plan prior to it being adopted and implemented by MCC.

The students indicated that advising at the Technology Campus is much improved. The student focus group was very complimentary of the advisors at the technical school. Many stated, "there is a great deal of assistance here; the advisors over here will bend over backwards for you." They would like more tutors at the Technology Campus, particularly in the math science areas. Students indicated that while financial aid information is available, additional staff would allow more timely service. In terms of services, several students asked whether it would be possible to flag courses that do not transfer; they said that "some classes at the technical school don't always transfer. They would like to know which classes do not transfer before enrolling.

Students at the technology campus indicated that the options for scheduling classes are very limited and many time do not fit with their work schedules. For example, tech classes are offered in the morning, and students are unable to enroll in evening classes because required classes are not offered in the evening. The students noted that additional options would be available after the technical programs are relocated to the North campus.

When asked about their thoughts on diversity, technical school students stated that they could not understand why there are no minority teachers at the Technology Campus. They suggested that the institution should consider offering diversity classes or mandatory seminars to help engage students and faculty in developing a more diverse climate. Technology Campus students said that they had looked at the fall 2007 class schedule and noticed that the African American faculty normally teaching at Muhlenberg is not listed to teach any classes and wondered whether he is being released from employment. They implied that the campus is not diversity friendly. Several Hispanic students suggested that the institution consider offering a diversity training class as a requirement for students to graduate, understanding that it may be inconvenient so the class could be offered during the intersession. A foreign language component could be included to enable staff to better communicate with Hispanic citizens as a part of their employment or for students interested in enrolling at MCC.

Ten students at the Health Campus participated in the focus group discussion. The students were very complimentary of the faculty and staff of the Health Campus. They spoke highly of the 2 + 2 program with Murray State University and Indiana Wesleyan. A majority of the focus group

participants were enrolled in the nursing program and said that they selected the nursing program at MCC because of its outstanding reputation. Most are enrolled in the nursing associate degree program.

Students stated that the nursing program has a highly selective admission process utilizing a combination of the ACT/GPA to determine admission status. According to the students, admission requirements for the health programs are more stringent than the requirements for general admission to the institution. The health programs are very challenging; students are required to earn a minimum ACT score of 21, or a GPA of 3.0-3.5 for admission. There is no African American full-time faculty at the MCC Health Campus; however, there is an African American part-time instructor. A student stated that it is important for her to have a diverse faculty and hope that the institution can employ ethnic minorities in the health areas. She also pointed out that ironically only one African American and two Asian students currently make up the diverse student representation among her class mates at the Health Campus.

Students pointed out that one particular area of diversity is increasing and noted the increase in the number of males applying for and being admitted to the nursing program and the profession at-large. Four of the 41 students currently enrolled in the nursing program at MCC are male. The Health Campus assigns two individuals in each class to offer tutoring services for students who are challenged. The times suggested that it would be helpful if more tutors are available at more convenient times during the day.

**Faculty and Professional Staff:** The focus group members at MCC included faculty from the main, technical, and health campuses. It was explained in each of the three sessions that one objective of *The Kentucky Plan* is to increase the number and proportion of African Americans employed as faculty and professional staff at the public institutions. The committee noted that, because of a perceived limited pool of qualified candidates and internal institutional variables, recruitment and retention of African Americans to faculty and staff positions is a significant challenge.

Much of the discussion among the faculty and staff echoed comments made by students. Faculty and staff noted that the institution is trying to recruit additional ethnic minorities but are experiencing difficulty identifying people who are willing to locate in the Madisonville area. Faculty and staff agreed that diversity among the teaching staff and administrators would send a strong message to students and the public regarding the campus environment as well as encourage more students from diverse backgrounds to enroll at MCC. It was clearly noted that they believe the institution is serious about increasing the level of diversity at MCC and that an African American chairing a diversity committee (presently developing the diversity plan) is very vocal about the importance of the new plan and its success. Faculty indicated that there are provisions in place to assure that diversity is included in search pools. For example, the affirmative action officer and the director of diversity review applicant pools to identify qualified ethnic minorities. However, they admitted that the review by the affirmative action officer and director of diversity is advisory at best. They agree that the message regarding diversity in search pools is not clear.

Faculty and staff summarized the advising program as follows: all incoming students are required to meet with an advisor; students participate in an orientation and interface as a group, as well as

individually, with an advisor; the student is responsible for making the first contact with the advisor and to follow-up in the summer before enrollment; students who participated in the TRIO programs are contacted by the TRIO programs; some students seek out the advisors/counselors on their own; often students and advisors communicate via e-mail. Recently, the advising process changed and as a result there may be a lack of clarity regarding the procedure for advising.

Based on the old advising policy, the process for contacting students, prior to the beginning of the fall semester, is MCC staff receives a targeted data list, from that list the advisor makes a follow-up contact during the summer to provide information, a second contact is made with students who have not enrolled by the end of the summer, and a further contact is made prior to the beginning of the fall semester. It was noted that advisors do not always provide an option for students to utilize on-line registration. Students are required to meet with the advisor prior to using the on-line registration but some students failed to complete the face-to-face meeting with the advisor.

With regard to financial aid, members of the faculty and staff stated that over \$460,000 in financial aid was awarded to minority students last year. Information regarding financial aid is web based. Students can search the web to identify and apply for financial aid. Other information regarding the availability of financial aid is advertised in the local papers. There is an expectation by the administration that the student's advisor provide information regarding financial aid as well.

Financial assistance and scholarships is available through the TRIO programs for students from low-income families. The program assists students with tutoring and exposes them to the process for completing the application for financial aid. Focus group members stated that non-traditional students are often intimidated by the FAFSA and typically determine that the form is too difficult to complete. The TRIO programs staff serves approximately 160 high-risk students each year.

Faculty and staff are aware that a diversity committee was created to develop a new plan for ensuring diversity is a high priority at MCC. Some focus group participants indicated that the diversity committee has not connected with the entire community of educators, and the draft was developed with input from a large number of individuals at the college. One participant was concerned that the diversity plan, once adopted, would not be utilized by the institution and simply placed on a shelf. Other participants said that they are unaware that a new diversity plan was going to be adopted in April or May. A CEO member indicated that he was not pleased that the faculty and students were not given an opportunity to provide input in the diversity plan.

When asked about the search process and ensuring that the applicant pool is diverse the group indicated that a human resources representative reviews the initial applications but does not have any input after the initial review. Human resources and the director of diversity are not allowed to be a part of the search committee. However, the human resources representative engages in conversation with the search committee before interviews. The role of the diversity director is limited to forwarding letters to constituents when vacancies become available. Finally, one of the staff stated that over the years the institution has learned that it is best served by growing their own. However, no one in the focus group offered an example of success or identified an individual at MCC who is a product of the grow-your-own program.

Faculty and staff at the Technology Campus reported that no African Americans are employed as faculty by the technical programs. Over the years the technical programs have had difficulty identifying and attracting women and minorities. A staff person suggested that MCC contract with a minority placement service to increase ethnic minority representation at the four campuses.

On the topic of retention, a focus group member from biomedical sciences stated that the program is promoted heavily because it is the only program of its kind in Kentucky. Retention of biomedical students has been excellent. All students graduate on time; they were referred to as "stellar students." Several faculty and staff indicated that the Madisonville community often follows the leadership of the institution, and the larger community seems to embrace a "who cares" attitude towards diversity. It was observed that African American physicians typically do not do well in Madisonville and are forced to locate their practice elsewhere. In many instances they believe that "there is nothing to sustain them in the Madisonville area." Another participant indicated that perhaps if MCC increased the representation of the minority faculty and staff the pipeline of minority students may increase as a direct result.

Overall, the CEO team was pleased with the campus visit. The team recognized the president for her commitment to increasing the level of diversity at MCC and commended the institution for embracing the commitments and objectives of the Kentucky Plan and the Partnership Agreement.

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