



Quality Program Summary and Federal Compliance Information

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NCA Higher Learning Commission
Quality Check-UP Visit
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February 12, 2009

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Carroll Campus
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Carroll, IA 51401-2525
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Newton Polytechnic Campus
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Newton, IA 50208-3049
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Urban/DSM Campus
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Des Moines, IA 50314-3049
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Quality Program Summary

Introduction

Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) began to explore the adoption of AQIP as an alternative accreditation model in 2001, coinciding with the arrival of a new college president. The college embraced a new culture of planning, and the new strategic planning process included up-to-date mission, vision, and values statements, in addition to strategic goals and objectives. When President Denson was appointed in November of 2003, he expanded the new planning model, and over a two year period, guided the development of a long range strategic plan that focused on DMACC's goal to be FIRST in Quality, FIRST in Service, and FIRST in Affordability in Iowa, and compared to like institutions across the country. The FIRST Goals were adopted in 2006, and will guide the college planning processes through 2016. Each of the three FIRST goals includes specific indicators of effectiveness that include measurable outcomes. The FIRST goals provide the framework for all institutional planning; additional specific goals and objectives are developed at several different levels of the college. The Action Projects submitted to AQIP every three years are selected as a result of an analysis of the projects that can best improve the quality of the programs and services at DMACC. A series of action plans are developed each year to support the advancement of the FIRST goals at the operational level.

DMACC established the AQIP Leadership Team and attended a Strategy Forum for application to AQIP in 2002, and was accepted into AQIP in January, 2003. The first three action plans were submitted in the summer of 2003; those were retired by 2006, and replaced with five additional action plans. The Systems Portfolio was submitted to AQIP in November, 2006, and the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report was received in March, 2007. The Systems Portfolio and Systems Appraisal served as an integral component of DMACC's state accreditation visit by the Iowa Department of Education, held in March, 2007. DMACC was fully approved for continued state accreditation through the 2012-2013 academic years. The Leadership Team attended the second Strategy Forum in October of 2007, identifying two additional action plans that are currently in progress.

DMACC's Strategic FIRST goals, the Systems Portfolio, and the college wide Action Plans and Action Projects are available on DMACC's public website at www.dmacc.edu, under the Favorite Links: AQIP button.

DMACC's adoption of AQIP, and the continuous quality improvement model it represents, coincides with a period of significant growth at the college and relatively stagnant state financial support for operations. DMACC has grown 35% in both student enrollment and in credits offered since 2003, a rate which requires focused strategic initiatives and careful fiscal planning to provide quality programs and services at an affordable tuition rate. Through a focus on the processes outlined in the nine AQIP criteria, our FIRST goals, and the collection and analysis of data that benchmarks results against our own goals, the Iowa community colleges, and our national peer group, DMACC has been able to devote its resources to those services and initiatives that improve the quality of service to students. This Quality Program Summary summarizes the results of some of those key initiatives implemented since the submission of the Systems Portfolio, and outlines current efforts to maintain the quality programs and services for which DMACC is known.

Section I: Strategic Planning Efforts **FIRST Goals**

DMACC's FIRST Goals drive all planning at the college, at all levels, and serve as the foundation from which all decision-making processes are formulated. The FIRST Goals and the yearly scorecard are reviewed with all faculty and staff during the two all-college in-service days each year, and are available for public review on the DMACC website located at: www.dmacc.edu under quick links/AQIP. The DMACC Board of Directors monitors the Scorecard outcomes each year, and uses the results as a component of their evaluation of the President. The indicators of effectiveness for each of the goals drive the creation of the action plans and action projects, developed at several different levels of the college. The data generated each year by the indicators of effectiveness are used over time to identify established trends in our student performance, the number of students who access our programs and services, the quality and effectiveness of the services provided, and in the growth in the financial support available through the DMACC Foundation to help students most in need. Copies of the FY 2007 and 2008 FIRST Goals scorecards are attached.

Section II: AQIP Action Projects

DMACC has implemented nine Action Projects since joining AQIP. These Action Projects were identified at the AQIP Strategy Forums or through analysis of the indicators of effectiveness for each of the FIRST Goals. Each of these action projects supports at least one of the DMACC FIRST Goals and enhances DMACC's ability to provide quality service to the college community. All Action Projects are available for review on the AQIP website. A brief summary of the 2007 and 2008 projects is outlined below.

- 2003: Implement a meaningful and workable plan for college personnel development (project now retired).
- 2003: Develop a framework to evaluate effectiveness of innovative course development methods (project now retired).
- 2003: Identify the processes that contribute to student success (project now retired).

2007: Institutionalize and expand Learning Communities

DMACC has increased the number of Learning Communities: in 2006 only 10 Learning Communities were offered, all on one campus; by 2008, the number had grown to 34, offered on three campuses, including a joint STEM-based learning community with Iowa State University. The Institutional Research Office reports that students in Learning Communities consistently persist at a higher rate than their peers in traditional classes. While the persistence rate varies somewhat each year, data analysis in FY 04, 05, and 06 reveals a fall to spring persistence rate of 85.4% for students in Learning Communities, compared to 66.4% for traditional courses. The college will continue to expand Learning Communities to other campuses and to more career and technical programs.

2007: Conduct assessment of faculty and staff perceptions of DMACC institutional quality.

In March 2008, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered to 1116 employees at DMACC, with a 43.3% response rate. The instrument included 55 items, and respondents were asked to rate items on a five-point satisfaction scale. The overall results indicate a healthy campus climate, yielding an overall 3.67 mean score. The student focus category received the highest mean score (3.94), and the institutional structure category received the lowest mean score (3.45). The entire PACE survey is available in the Office of Institutional Research.

2007: Conduct assessment of institutional effectiveness through measures in student learning

Assessment of student learning at DMACC has always been and will always be focused primarily at the course level. Course assessment data in the hands of faculty is the single most powerful tool instructors have in crafting their teaching to affect student learning. In 2008, the college decided to

administer the CAAP assessment to provide an additional measure of student achievement, measuring gains from the freshman to the sophomore year. In fall 2008, a sample was selected for the reading and critical thinking CAAP assessments. DMACC sophomores scored at or above the 53rd percentile for both tests, and as expected, DMACC freshman scored well below the 50th percentile. Students averaged a 9 percentile point increase during their DMACC careers in both reading and critical thinking. This inaugural use of the CAAP assessment to help the college measure the effectiveness of its core competencies yielded useful data, and contributes to the web of evidence that proves that DMACC students are learning the information and skills necessary for success in the future. DMACC will use the CAAP assessment periodically to supplement the overall assessment of student learning of the general education core competencies. The entire CAAP report is available in the Office of Institutional Research.

2008: Develop an extended English Composition course

English 104, Resources for Composition, was developed by the Writing faculty over a one year period, and offered for the first time in FY09. This course provides a college credit environment that stresses and reinforces the skills necessary to negotiate writing at the college level. The course is designed for students who are capable of college level writing, but need more time and directed college writing experience. ENG 104 is a three credit, elective course that slows the 15 week pace of Basic Composition by extending the course over two semesters. The Institutional Research department will track the students enrolled in ENG 104 over a period of time to determine its effectiveness as valid preparation for subsequent writing courses. It should be noted that the concept for this course was conceived and developed at the October 2007 Strategy Forum by the team that attended.

2008: Develop a quality program infrastructure for other distinctive functions (Key Performance Indicators)

In writing the Systems Portfolio, it was determined that the college did not have a formal process to measure the effectiveness of the non-teaching units of the college. In 2007, the college implemented a system of Key Performance indicators (KPIs) for non-instructional units that align with the DMACC FIRST goals. These departments have identified specific measurable goals that will help improve service to students and to our stakeholders. Those currently in operation are Enrollment, Business Office, Purchasing, Student Services, and Retention and Persistence. The KPIs are available on the DMACC intranet at <http://perform.dmac.edu>.

Section III. Action Plans

Each year, an analysis of the FIRST Goals scorecards facilitate the planning process at a more operational level- the development of strategic action plans. The action plans are developed at multiple levels of the institution, but are coordinated at the Cabinet level and through the college's operations leadership team; the 'Joint Deans', which includes the campus provosts and academic deans, and representatives from Business Services, Human Resources, Continuing Education, Marketing, Information Solutions, and Student Services. The 2006 Systems Portfolio includes the action plans established for the 2006-2008 planning cycle; in 2008, a new set of action plans was approved to address emerging needs. A brief summary of key outcomes is listed below.

2006-2008 Action Plans

Increase alternative delivery development

Major accomplishments: Enrollment growth in DMACC's online courses has outpaced all other alternative delivery methods since 2002, when the first online courses were offered. In 2004, 2338 students were enrolled in 10,951 online credit hours. By 2008, 6890 students were enrolled in 44,650 online credit hours. The increased number of offerings supports the goal of providing access to

students; the new processes for managing and evaluating online course delivery support the quality goal.

Online course retention rates and grade distribution are tracked each semester, and compared to the same courses delivered in face-to-face sections. Census data retention rates for online courses have remained at an average of 4 percentage points below those of face to face courses; in 2008 the percentage improved to only 2 percentage points difference (83.8% retention for online, 85.2% retention for face-to-face). All online courses must be reviewed on a regular cycle by a design team, and their effectiveness evaluated using a rubric to ensure that the course is current, uses technology effectively, and engages the students on a regular basis. An online instructional guide has been adopted that outlines the instructional practices, course expectations, and information security protocol for online courses. The faculty driven Online Oversight Committee monitors the quality of online faculty training, course development, and course evaluation and assessment activities.

Improve enrollment management

Major accomplishments: In 2007, DMACC established an enrollment management team, comprised of key institutional leaders, including the President. The Director of Enrollment Management and the team have developed a comprehensive and detailed plan to recruit and retain students in key demographic categories to DMACC. The plan includes specific and targeted plans for each academic department and campus, as well as key performance indicators for each aspect of the plan and specific communication strategies for each targeted student demographic. While it is encouraging that the 2008-09 enrollment numbers reflect a significant increase in nearly all target demographics, it is too early to measure the long term outcomes of this new comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan. The Plan will continue to drive the strategies DMACC employs to recruit and retain students.

Continue new program development

Major accomplishments: Since 2006, DMACC has developed and offered ten new credit certificate or degree programs in response to industry needs. Additionally, the Continuing Education department responded to the need for additional short term non-credit training programs by creating, in cooperation with the academic deans, six new entry level skill training certificates.

Expand assessment of student learning

Major accomplishments: The assessment of student academic achievement at DMACC is centered on course level assessment and program assessment. Since 2006, faculty leaders have developed and deployed assessment tools for 120 different courses, and conducted 26 comprehensive program evaluations to improve student learning (another 16 are due in 2009). Within disciplines and programs, faculty members document the outcomes of each phase of the assessment cycle, and any changes in instructional delivery and/or student learning. While the faculty district chairs and program chairs remain the primary leaders for the assessment process, a new Assessment Team, comprised of key faculty leaders, was created to provide additional support to programs and disciplines as the college continues its assessment journey. In 2008, as an AQIP Action Project, DMACC administered the CAAP assessment in reading and critical thinking to supplement DMACC's overall assessment of student learning in our core curriculum competencies. The CAAP assessment is summarized in Section II, AQIP Action Projects.

Increase full time faculty positions

Major accomplishments: Since the FIRST goals were adopted in 2006, one of the primary objectives under the Quality goal has been to hire new full time faculty lines in disciplines that traditionally use a higher than average percentage of adjunct faculty, and for growing career programs. It is a core belief at DMACC that a strong core of fulltime faculty is the cornerstone of a quality

institution. In the three years (07, 08, 09), since the FIRST goals were established, DMACC added 43 new full time faculty lines.

Improve student retention

Major accomplishments: In December 2008, DMACC successfully completed a five year Title III Strengthening Institutions grant that focused on three primary objectives, one of which was to develop intervention strategies for improved retention and persistence. Several strategies were designed and tested to determine those that would have success in retaining students considered most at risk of dropping out. The most promising results from a pilot mandatory placement project for late registrants revealed a 12% increase in course retention for the participating students. The pilot is in its third year, has yielded consistent results, and will be institutionalized in 2009. Two additional retention projects were implemented in 2007 to support DMACC's most at risk students. The STEP programs, involving intensive advising and academic support services, were designed to support GED students and ESL students moving into credit coursework. While the initial sample sizes were small, the results were promising, and the college will continue to support these initiatives. A unique project that yielded positive results in student retention was the Call Center Project, funded by a DMACC Innovation Grant. The Call Center staff focused on contacting students that were identified as potential non-returners to DMACC within or between semesters, and offering assistance, encouragement, referrals, and support. The evaluation analysis of the calls yielded statistically significant and measurable results, with nearly 2000 credit hours retained/gained through this intervention. The full report is available in the Office of Institutional Research. For more information about DMACC's efforts to improve retention, see Section III: responses to strategic issues.

Increase Foundation scholarships

Major accomplishments: A key goal of DMACC's five year Title III grant was to increase opportunities for students to attend DMACC by increasing the number of scholarships provided through the Foundation. Matched by a \$300,000 federal allocation, the Foundation raised \$400,000 to establish a \$700,000 Foundation Endowment Fund. Foundation assets grew from \$9,963,905 in 2006 to \$12,497,406; Foundation scholarship awards increased from 569 in FY 2006 to 680 in FY 08. In 2007, the Alumni Association was moved from Student Services to the Foundation, and a new Alumni Association Director was hired. In the first year of operation, 358 new active alumni became donors to the Foundation for student scholarships. This increase in assets, number of scholarships awarded, and number of active donors to the Foundation support the critical FIRST goal of ensuring that DMACC is affordable for students.

2008-2010 Action Plans

While many of the action plans listed above contain ongoing objectives, new action plans were adopted in 2008 in response to several factors: the 2007 FIRST goals scorecard, the strategic objectives identified in the Systems Appraisal, increased enrollment causing pressure on programs and services, and demand for new and expanded programs. The action plans, and the FIRST goal each plan supports, are posted on the AQIP website. Although many of the current action plans are still in the beginning stages of implementation, the college has made significant progress in implementing others. A brief summary of key current action plans is listed below.

Explore opportunities to better support adjunct faculty, including revision of adjunct faculty evaluation processes, to provide more and better feedback.

Progress: Like many other institutions that are growing rapidly, DMACC relies on a large cadre of adjunct faculty. Our adjunct faculty group is highly qualified and dedicated, but because of their part-time status, is often disconnected from the college's quality improvement activities. To better support

the adjuncts, DMACC has committed significant resources to provide better feedback, particularly in the first term of teaching:

- New adjunct faculty orientations are held on each campus, each semester, and the participants are paid to attend.
- All new adjunct faculty members participate in a third week response activity with their students during their first semester of teaching, and review the results of the response in an individual conference with the academic dean or provost.
- New adjunct faculty members will be assigned a mentor to provide support and guidance.
- All first time adjunct faculty members participate in the performance review process.
- Adjunct faculty has access to a website designed to meet their needs. It can be found under the Human Resources button on the DMACC website www.dmacc.edu. Click on the HR/Employment link, and find Resources for Adjunct Faculty.
- In 2008, the college began an adjunct faculty professional development program entitled *Adjunct Advantage* to aid the college in the retention and development of quality instructors. In the first year, there are 23 participants.
- Each August, DMACC hosts an August Academy, designed primarily as a professional development opportunity for the adjunct faculty. Well over 150 adjuncts participate in the program each year at no cost to them.

Implement new programs to meet industry needs.

Progress: For fall 2009, DMACC will offer new degree programs in Optometric Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Environmental Science, Wind Energy (as a part of Industrial Electrical Mechanical Technology) and Fluid Power Technology. New certificates will be added in Diesel Technology Maintenance, Early Childhood Education, Digital Forensics Investigation, Interactive Media for Graphic Design, and Corel Painter. Development is underway for the following programs for FY 2010 and 2011: Paramedic Specialist, Physical Therapy Assistant, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Health Information Technology.

Conduct LEAN analysis of college-wide support functions

Progress: In 2006, as a part of DMACC's efforts to improve the quality of our services, the college committed a full-time training consultant to implement LEAN processes at DMACC. Since the program began, 12 complete LEAN analyses have been completed, four are in progress, four are in the planning stages, and three have been identified as future projects. The LEAN processes and decision points are managed by the front line employees in collaboration with supervisory staff. Results of completed projects are significant. For example, the Business Office reduced the processing time for book vouchers by 95%; the Admissions Department reduced the processing time for online applications by more than four days and saves over \$20,000 annually in postage; and Marketing reduced the error rate in the class schedule tabloid by 50%. A complete list of the savings gained through the DMACC LEAN projects is available in the Institutional Research office.

Develop funding proposals for under-represented populations at DMACC: underemployed and unemployed workers, at-risk high potential youth, new immigrants, and older workers

Progress: Proposals have been developed for each of these target populations, and potential funding sources have been identified. A project that has received funding and is integral to addressing workforce issues is *Central Iowa Works*. Supported by an Iowa Values Fund allocation and a grant from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, *Central Iowa Works* has created five industry sector boards (Manufacturing, Construction Trades, Financial Services, IT, and Healthcare). These boards, composed of key employers in Central Iowa, conduct gap analysis on projected employment needs in each employment sector, and then map career pathways (skills and competencies) for each of the jobs for

which a need for employees exists. DMACC's role is to coordinate the *CIW* activities, ensure that the college programs for each of the employment sectors meet the needs of the industries, and to create Career Readiness Certificates for those basic skills that all new employees need. The project is in its second year of development, and response and involvement in the business community has been outstanding. By 6/30/2009, the first major analysis of the impact of *CIW* will be complete.

Section IV. Response to Strategic Issues Identified in Systems Appraisal

“The institution does not appear to have a systematic process for deciding what data are needed, what trends are important, and analyzing and using data for decision-making and tracking institutional performance.”

Response: Decisions about data needs at DMACC are driven by the FIRST goals. Evidence of progression toward these three goals is tracked by comparing DMACC's performance over time (trend line), with other Iowa community colleges, and to a group of peer institutions nationally. Twenty indicators of effectiveness for the three goals are evaluated annually for the institutional scorecard. While the scorecard is published only once yearly, the data collected is analyzed within and between semesters, during budget and program planning activities, and reviewed regularly at the joint deans meetings and Cabinet. Internal systems have been established to identify trends early so that changes in processes and procedures can be made to address any issues prior to a summative evaluation of a key indicator. In 2007, DMACC developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to allow the college to take corrective action quickly by several point in time measures throughout the semester. Beginning in 2005, DMACC's institutional researcher made data and its analysis easily accessible to all faculty and staff through the implementation of the SAS Business Intelligence platform. This SAS system allows direct access to data on a 24/7 basis for custom analysis by faculty and staff. Comparative data has become very important to DMACC as the indicators of effectiveness for the FIRST goals are measured against the Iowa community colleges and a cohort of national peer colleges. To accomplish this, the college uses National Community College Benchmarking Project data, as well as data from the Iowa Department of Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics. The National Student Clearinghouse is used for follow-up on students and the college has recently gained access to Iowa's Unemployment Insurance Database to identify students working in Iowa. This network of comparative data sources has strengthened our ability to benchmark appropriately and assess students' success while enrolled in and upon leaving DMACC.

“The methods used to understand student and employee needs, expectations, and issues do not appear to occur on a basis that is consistent and timely enough to provide actionable data.”

Response: DMACC began administering the ACT Student Opinion Survey in 2003, with the goal of repeating the survey every three years. The purpose of this timeframe was to identify systemic trends over time, with different cohorts of students. Additionally, the three year span allows time to identify issues from survey results, develop actionable items, implement those changes, and allow time for the actions to affect student opinion. Since the writing of the Systems Portfolio, the college recognized that the assessment of employee climate was lacking and did not contribute reliable data to the planning process. Since that time, the college has devoted significant effort into assessing employee climate, both in terms of job satisfaction and in perceptions of capacity for improvement. In 2007, the college administered the AQIP Examiner Survey to gain insight into the perception of faculty and staff of how well the structures and processes at DMACC support the AQIP framework for improvement. A representative group of DMACC faculty and staff completed the survey. The survey results demonstrated a clear understanding among employees of how our processes and structures support the AQIP

framework, and provided the college with valuable information regarding strengths and areas upon which to improve. In addition to examining perceptions of DMACC's framework for quality improvement, the staff and faculty participated in the PACE survey in 2008. The PACE results are described in Section II: Action Projects. The nexus of these two surveys allows the college to ascertain the extent to which faculty and staff understands and supports the AQIP processes, and how valued they feel as college employees. These assessments are now scheduled regularly into the college planning processes, and will provide valuable data from which to plan action projects for improvement.

“The institution does not appear to have a systematic, formal process for recruiting leaders who mirror the diversity of the student body, leadership development, and succession planning.”

Response: DMACC is committed to promoting diversity through hiring processes, providing opportunities to engage in activities that celebrate the many ethnic and cultural communities that the college serves, and recognizing practices that encourage cultural understanding and social enrichment. In 2006, the college-wide Diversity Committee was elevated to the status of a Commission. The Commission has sharpened the college focus on those activities that promote changes in organizational behavior that lead to greater representation of diverse students and staff, and recognition and celebration of diverse opinions and perspectives. (<http://go.dmacc.edu/diversity/pages/welcome.aspx>) To attract a more diverse workforce, the college has implemented the following practices:

- Advertising for positions has been broadened to include additional internet web sites that reach diverse job candidates.
- Job postings include a qualification of demonstrated proficiency in working with diverse populations.
- The compliance officer conducts Affirmative Action audits on each search in which underrepresented candidates are in the applicant pool to ensure that all candidates are fairly represented in the interview process.
- DMACC partners with Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Commission for the Blind, and Veterans Affairs to increase the pool of job applicants with disabilities.
- Faculty and staff participate in a host of organizations that represent the diverse communities that DMACC serves. DMACC is a prominent sponsor of several festivals, awards, and other functions sponsored by NAACP, AdmirAsian, Sisters on Target, Alianza, and others. These organizations provide support in the recruitment of a diverse pool of applicants for positions at all levels of the institution.

These efforts, and many others, such as an Innovation Grant to support a Diversity Across the Curriculum initiative, were factors in the selection of DMACC as the first non-business and educational institution to receive the Greater Des Moines Partnership 2008 Diversity Award. (<http://go.dmacc.edu/diversity/Pages/diversityaward2008.aspx>)

The college is involved in several succession planning programs, and employs both in-house and external resources to provide the training. Each year, a group of nominated faculty and staff attend the Community College Leadership Consortium (CLIC) and Leadership Institute for a New Century (LINC) programs offered through Iowa State University and the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees. Each year, the college also sends candidates to the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, and the Midwest Chair Academy (hosted by DMACC in 2006 and 2008). The college offers a Supervisory Training Program, and developed its own Administrative Leadership Program for faculty interested in moving into administrative roles. Of the first cohort of seven that completed the three year program in 2007, two have already moved into academic dean positions at the college. DMACC has a generous professional leave policy for employees to participate in postsecondary coursework, travel, or additional work experience. While the college does not have a formal succession plan with individuals identified for

key positions, there are many talented individuals that possess the skills and abilities to move into significant leadership roles in the college when the need arises.

“As indicated by the institution, it does not have a systematic approach to assessment and placement of incoming student which results in a diminished ability to detect and address discrepancies between necessary and actual student preparation and differing learning styles.”

Response: The issue of mandatory placement for underprepared students has been debated for years at DMACC. Over several years, the IR department has conducted comparative analysis of student Compass scores and performance in a variety of courses to determine if correlation exists. In some programs, a strong correlation has been found, and for those programs, students must perform at a certain level to be admitted. As a part of the Title III grant, the IR department examined the correlation between Compass scores and success in three key gateway courses: Finite Math, English Composition I, and Introduction to Psychology. The data suggested that there was no significant correlation between Compass scores and student success in the courses. Those results led to deeper examination of factors that enhance student success at the college. Another study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of traditional first year support courses offered at the college: The College Experience, Study Strategies, and Learning Communities. A sample size of 16,954 students was analyzed; the results indicated that fall to spring persistence of students enrolled in one of the first year support courses or Learning Communities was higher by approximately 12 percentage points than the overall fall to spring persistence rate of the college. The study also found that the most dominant factor that influenced a student’s chance of success at DMACC was registration time. Late registrants (particular full time students) emerged as those most at-risk of leaving DMACC before finishing a course or a semester. This data led to several strategies to improve student success at DMACC:

- Intrusive advising and placement for students registering the last week before classes began.
- Mandatory placement in Learning Communities of key gateway courses for students registering during the first week of classes.
- Intensive advising and support for GED and ESL students enrolled in credit courses for the first time.
- The development of a new writing course: Eng 104 for students that need additional time to master college level writing (see Section II: Action Projects for details).
- The development of a new Math course, Math for Liberal Arts, as an addition to the core math curriculum. The Math faculty determined that there was not an adequate basic math course for non-science majors, which contributed to the low persistence rate in the Math course sequence.
- New cut scores on the Compass were adopted by the Math department for placement advising to better reflect the skills needed to succeed in college level courses.
- The English department has created a directed self-placement chart that assists students to assess their own ability to succeed in writing courses. The department is also in the process of creating an English placement test that will allow student to write essays (over the course of the first week of classes) that will be reviewed by the English faculty to recommend course placement based on writing samples. This placement sample will be implemented in the spring semester, 2010.

In summary, DMACC has invested substantial time and resources into the detailed analysis of student preparedness, the correlation of Compass scores to student success, and the subsequent pilot programs and courses created to improve the chances of success for high risk students. The 2008 FIRST in Quality scorecard indicates that this investment is beginning to pay off- the within term course retention rate increased from 90% to 90.5%, and the fall to spring persistent rate increased from 69.3% to 70.1%. The

college realizes that the data must be tracked over a period of years to establish trends but is confident that efforts to improve student success are working.

Section V: Conclusion

The AQIP process for continuous quality improvement was adopted at a critical point in DMACC's history. It provides a framework for planning and for identifying and measuring results of quality initiatives at a time when the college is growing quickly and must allocate its resources to those initiatives that provide the best value to students and members of the college community. The FIRST goals, and the Action Projects and Action Plans outlined in this report build on our strengths and address opportunities outlined in the Systems Appraisal Feedback. There is a strong commitment at DMACC, at all levels, to operate within a continuous quality improvement model and to build a culture that embraces measures of institutional effectiveness and processes that contribute to excellence. Our goals: to be FIRST in Quality, FIRST in Service, and FIRST in Affordability reflect that commitment.

Federal Compliance Information

Title IV Compliance

Des Moines Area Community College maintains compliance with all Title IV requirements related to the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Compliance is validated annually through the College's annual audit, which includes a review of the College's operational practices within its business and financial aid offices. Past audit reports are on file in the DMACC Business Office located on the Ankeny Campus.

As required by federal statute the College submits annual documents, to designated state or federal entities, which include: updated Title IV program participation agreements, reports, surveys and questionnaires. Copies of these documents are on file in the Financial Aid or Institutional Effectiveness Offices located on the Ankeny campus. These documents include:

Federal

- Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP)
- Federal Student Aid Program Participation Agreement Updates
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Reports
- Clery Campus Crime Report
- Equity in Athletics Report
- Graduation and Transfer Rate Annual Report
- Student Loan Clearinghouse Reports
- Student Right-to-Know Disclosures
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Activities
- Constitution Day Activities
- Voter Registration Compliance
- Financial Literacy Compliance

State of Iowa

- Iowa Financial Aid Survey
- Iowa Ethnic Diversity Survey
- Iowa Student Budget Survey

Loan Default Rate

Des Moines Area Community College's Direct Loan Cohort Default Rate for FY2006 is 8.8%. While the rate is higher than the national average, of 5.2% for all types of institutions, it is comparable to the FY2006 national average Public 2-3 Year Institutions of 8.4%. When compared to other Iowa Community Colleges, DMACC has the 7th highest rate.

Northwest Iowa Community College	2.4%
North Iowa Area Community College	5.7%
Hawkeye Community College	7.1%
Iowa Lakes Community College	7.3%
Northeast Iowa Community College	7.9%
Iowa Valley Community College	8.5%
Southwestern Community College	8.5%
Kirkwood Community College	8.7%

Des Moines Area Community College	8.8%
Eastern Iowa Community College	9.1%
Western Iowa Technical Community College	9.4%
Iowa Central Community College	9.5%
Indian Hills Community College	10.6%
Iowa Western Community College	11.1%
Southeastern Community College	14.2%

For the past three reported cohorts DMACC's rates have been fairly consistent: FY2006 – 8.8%; FY2005 – 8.8%; FY2004 -8.7.

Efforts to reduce DMACC's cohort default rate include: Required entrance counseling sessions for all student borrowers; required completion of a budgeting module for students who are on Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Warning; annual district-wide Financial Literacy Day; and a partnership with the Iowa State University Financial Counseling Clinic which provides financial counseling to students with high levels of consumer debt.

Credits and Program Lengths

DMACC utilizes semester credit hours as the measure of its program learning experiences. The credit hours for each course and program of study are listed in *DMACC's 2008-09 College Catalog*. This publication can be accessed on DMACC's website at <http://go.dmacc.edu/catalog/pages/welcome.aspx>. Degree and program requirements are outlined on pages 25–29. A link is available to each individual program's Program Information Brief (PIB), at <http://go.dmacc.edu/programs/Pages/welcome.aspx>. In addition, links to all course descriptions can be found at <http://www.dmacc.edu/courses/crsrod.asp?theletter=A>. Hard copies of these documents will be available during the on-site review.

Determination of appropriate credit hours and competencies for courses and programs are evaluated by the DMACC Curriculum Commission to assure that each course and program are comparable with similar offerings at other accredited postsecondary institutions. Plans for new programs are vetted by the Commission, and once approved by the Commission, are submitted to the Iowa Department of Education for review and approval.

Tuition

The 2008-09 tuition and fee schedule can be found on page 15 of the *DMACC 2008-09 Catalog*, in the *DMACC Fall, Spring and Summer Registration Schedules*, and on the DMACC website at <http://www.dmacc.edu/tuitionfees.asp>. The tuition rates to attend DMACC for the 2008-09 academic year are, \$107 per credit hour for resident and on-line students, and \$214 per credit hour for non-resident students. DMACC does not charge a general student fee to support academic achievement centers, computer labs, student development, support services or student activities. All of these services are supported through tuition revenues. However, students taking on-line classes are assessed a technology fee of \$20 per credit hour. This fee supports the costs of maintaining on-line technology and the training of faculty who teach on-line classes.

A comparative report of tuition and fees at Iowa Community Colleges, *2008-09 Iowa Community College Tuition and Fees Report*, is available at http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=252&Itemid=2182#TuitionFeesReports. The state average of combined tuition and fees is for the 2008-09 academic year is \$122 per credit hour; with a range of \$107 to \$145 per credit hour.

General information concerning tuition, fees, and educationally related expenses is created by the Financial Aid Office. Specific program costs, such as, necessary books, supplies, tools, uniforms, etc., are created by the individual program chairs. Student educational costs and budgets are approved annually by the College's Board and posted on DMACC's website and printed on each Program Information Brief (PIB). This information is provided in hard copy to prospective students upon inquiry. It is also provided to students during campus open houses, and during student registration and orientation sessions.

Dual Accreditation

DMACC offers 70 programs through which students will earn either a diploma or a two-year degree that are accredited under the blanket approval of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. DMACC also offers 58 programs which lead to certificates of specialization. In addition, DMACC has 10 programs that are accredited by specialized accrediting or regulatory entities. At the time this report was prepared all programs are fully accredited with no restrictions or provisional approvals.

Programs with dual accreditation include: Dental Assistance, Dental Hygiene, Legal Assistant, Medical Laboratory Technology, Medical Assistance, Mortuary Science, Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Surgical Technology, and Veterinary Technician. Letters of specialized accreditation will be available in the resource room during the AQIP onsite review.

Organizational Records of Student Complaints

DMACC strives to understand the needs of students, staff, the general public, and other stakeholders. This includes being open, sensitive, and responsive to concerns and complaints. Student concerns and complaints are received through a variety of forms: emails, phone calls, petitions, face-to-face meetings, and written correspondence. Student concerns and complaints are maintained in several locations within the DMACC, depending on the nature of the issue. Whenever possible, DMACC attempts to resolve student issues at the lowest level of authority.

DMACC has 12 procedures that a student can use to formally pursue a concern. These procedures are outlined to students in the *DMACC Catalog* (pages 5, 16,19, 22, 32), the *DMACC Student Handbook* (pages 41-75) and on the DMACC website at http://www.dmacc.edu/student_services/policies_procedures.asp.

Students are directed to begin the complaint process with a Campus Ombudsperson since many times the student may be unclear as to what the issue(s) may be and is unaware of his/her options of resolution. The Ombudsperson's role is to assess the student's situation; direct the student to appropriate services, both on- and off-campus, dependent upon the student's issue; and, provide the student with options of what DMACC procedure(s) might be most appropriate to use.

Generally, issues of an academic nature will be directed to the academic department and the appropriate academic dean for investigation and resolution. Complaints concerning student-to-student conduct are referred to the Judicial Affairs Officer. Complaints concerning faculty/staff-to-student conduct are sent to both Human Resources and the Judicial Affairs Officer. The Executive Director of Human Resources and the Judicial Affairs Officer coordinate the investigation of any complaints of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

The following is a list of Student Services procedures that students can utilize to resolve a concern/complaint:

ES4110	DMACC Residency for In-State Tuition
ES4300	Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress
ES4615	Student Rights

ES4620	Ombudsperson Responsibilities
ES4630	Student Conduct, Discipline and Appeal Procedure
ES4635	Tobacco Free Campus
ES4640	Student Complaints Concerning Faculty/Staff Actions
ES4640	Discrimination Compliant Procedure
ES4650	Petition for Policy Waiver
ES4660	Appeal of Final Grades Procedure
ES4670	Academic Misconduct
ES4680	College Review Board

DMACC maintains a log of incident reports for each campus and the district. This log is maintained by the DMACC Safety Officer. Incidents maintained on this log may include: accidents, theft, and misconduct. Incident reports are sent to DMACC Security, the DMACC Safety Officer, the Executive Dean of Student Services, the Judicial Affairs Officer, and the appropriate campus provost for follow-up.

In addition, DMACC maintains a confidential hotline that students, staff and the general public can utilize to report a concern. Incidents reported to this site are investigated by DMACC Cabinet members. Information concerning the hotline is located on DMACC's website at http://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report_custom.asp?clientid=13831.

Third Party Comment Solicitation

In compliance with the requirement to seek third party comments prior to the AQIP review team visit, DMACC has posted an announcement on our public website at www.dmacc.edu. In addition, a press release was sent to the newspapers in our district and a paid notice ran in 44 major newspapers in the district. A copy of this ad is located in the attachments.

Advertising and Recruitment Materials

The reference to DMACC's affiliation with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools-The Higher Learning Commission is located on page 6 of the *2008-09 DMACC College Catalog*, page 1 of the *2008-09 DMACC Student Handbook*, and on the DMACC website at <http://www.dmacc.edu/accreditation.asp>.

The DMACC Marketing Department works closely with the Provosts, Academic Deans, Program Chairs and the Enrollment Management Team to make certain that DMACC's advertising and recruitment information is accurate and consistent. Copies of DMACC marketing and recruitment materials will be on file in the Resource Room during the AQIP Team visit.

Samples of the various DMACC marketing and recruitment materials are included as attachments. The samples include: (1) DMACC Viewbook; (2) College Planning Timeline brochure; (3) Pre-Professional Program brochure; (4) Adult Learner brochure; and (5) two DMACC newspaper ads.