Year: 2010-2011

Service Program: Institutional Research

Supervisor: Marilyn Belwood

I. Mission

The mission of Institutional Research is to support Missouri Valley College’s mission, vision, values, and goals by providing meaningful, accurate, and timely information to facilitate institutional effectiveness, planning, decision making, and policy formation.

II. Goals

- Articulate and cultivate a shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success
- Create a culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities
- Encourage information sharing and collaboration across campus
- Compile, analyze, and interpret information used to improve effectiveness
- Use information to both pose and answer policy questions
- Assist in coordination of accreditation activities

III. Service outcomes

- A shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success will be cultivated in the college community.
- A culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities will be created in the college community.
- Information sharing and collaboration will increase across campus.
- Effectiveness will be improved with information that is compiled, analyzed, and interpreted.
- Information will be used to both pose and answer policy questions.
- Assistance will be provided in coordinating accreditation activities.
IV. Service delivery map

Functions:
1) Informational e-mails
2) Institutional Research Web page
3) Program reports (annual) – academic and service
4) Program reviews
5) Senior Exit Survey (annual-formerly Graduate Survey)
6) Work with AAB
7) Professional development
8) NSSE/FSSE
9) Assessment advisor-Change Request-MACC program
10) Framework-Strategic Plan
11) Mission review

The following table indicates the functions in the past year that address respective service outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service outcomes</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared understanding of success factors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of assessment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing/collaboration</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved effectiveness using info</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info used to pose/answer policy ques.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation activities coordinated</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
V. Assessment tools
All service outcomes will be assessed with one or more of the following methods:

1) Periodic client survey and/or focus group (indirect measure)
   The survey/focus group will involve members of the college community and will focus on the service outcomes of the program. This assessment will be conducted every two to three years. (Alternatively, questions may be included in a broader, college-wide survey.)

2) Log to monitor aspects of each function (direct measure)
   The following information will be kept for each function:
   - Participation of relevant groups
   - Completion of project
   - Dissemination of information
   - Progress of project
   This information will be reviewed each year to identify weakness/problems that IR can correct or improve.

3) Annual review of hits on the MVC website to identify information or resources most used (direct measure)
   This information can help IR provide more relevant and useful information on the website. (Note: IR web page was created fall 2009.)

4) Periodic assessment of specific projects through feedback, focus groups, or interviews (indirect measure)
   Information from these assessments can be used to improve processes. For example, feedback from faculty and staff on the program review process can be used to determine ways to better facilitate the process.

### Assessment Methods for Service Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service outcomes</th>
<th>Periodic survey/focus group (2-3 years)</th>
<th>Log to monitor functions</th>
<th>Annual review of web hits</th>
<th>Periodic assessment of specific projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared understanding of success factors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture of assessment created</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing/collaboration</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved effectiveness using info</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info used to pose/answer policy ques.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation activities coordinated</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
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</table>
VI. Summary of findings

Findings are summarized below under each assessment tool listed in Section V.

1) Periodic client survey and/or focus group (indirect measure)
No surveys or focus groups were conducted this year.

2) Log to monitor aspects of each function (direct measure)
The table below shows the functions described earlier with respect to the following:
   - Participation of relevant groups (P)
   - Completion of project (C)
   - Dissemination of information (D)
   - Progress of project (Pr)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Info e-mails</th>
<th>IR Web page</th>
<th>Program reports</th>
<th>Program reviews</th>
<th>Senior Exit Survey</th>
<th>AAB work</th>
<th>Prof. develop</th>
<th>NSSE/FSSE</th>
<th>Assess. Advisor MACC</th>
<th>Strategic Plan</th>
<th>Mission Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P (89%)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some further explanations of the table follow:
Informational e-mails—E-mails are sent throughout the year on an as-needed basis. Many e-mails this year focused on introducing and explaining the program reports in which all faculty and staff are to be involved. Links to results of surveys were also sent via e-mail to the campus community.

IR Web page—The Web page will serve as an ongoing resource for institutional surveys, program reports, program reviews, and other assessment information. During the 2009-2010 academic year, results of the 2005 and 2009 NSSE and FSSE surveys, program report forms and related information, program review guidelines, Senior Exit Survey results, and links to assessment resources were added.

Program reports—This year marked the initiation of annual program reports for all academic and service programs. Information about the reports was disseminated through e-mails, discussion at the dean/chair meetings, workshops (in November) for both faculty and staff, and individual meetings with the DIR. Questions about the reports led the DIR to construct documents with additional explanations for each section of the report and put them on the IR Web page. Although a small percentage of programs turned in completed reports at the end of the year, there was evidence that many had done some work and had completed the first sections of the report.
Program Reviews—Information about program reviews and the rotation schedule was given by the DIR in the dean/chair meetings. The rotation will begin the next academic year.

Senior Exit Survey—This survey had a high response rate (89%) due to its administration through the Registrar’s Office (included as part of the graduation forms that are required of seniors to complete). Results of the survey from each academic year are disseminated to the campus community at the beginning of the subsequent fall semester.

AAB work—Involvement of the members of the Assessment Advisory Board is ongoing. The wide variety of members provides multiple perspectives and invaluable input for projects and decisions. AAB members further facilitate dissemination of knowledge of assessment and assessment activities. Some members repeat their yearly service on the AAB, and this provides continuity to the group. New members provide fresh thoughts.

Professional development—The DIR and educational consultant attended the annual meeting of the Higher Learning Commission in April. The DIR attended the annual forum of the Association for Institutional Research. Both the DIR and educational consultant continually research, read, and review relevant topics and current trends in higher education.

NSSE/FSSE—The DIR conducted a PowerPoint presentation of the results of these two surveys (National Survey of Student Engagement and Faculty Survey of Student Engagement that were administered in spring 2009) for faculty in January 2010. NSSE benchmark results were discussed, and further investigation into the topic of academic challenge was initiated.

Assessment Advisor-MACC—The DIR assisted in all assessment planning, delineation, and related documentation for a master of arts in community counseling for which the College is seeking approval from the Higher Learning Commission. (The College is submitting a Change Request to offer master’s degree programs with, specifically, a master’s in community counseling as the first such program.)

Strategic Plan—Dissemination of assessment strategies and techniques, initiation of program reports and involvement of faculty and staff, discussion of NSSE/FSSE and Senior Exit Survey results, and completion the mission review are all vital to and part of a successful strategic planning process. Strategic planning will officially be launched in the academic year 2009-2010.

Mission review—The mission review process concluded successfully with a revised mission being approved by the board of trustees in September 2009. There was wide participation and an overwhelming consensus on the desired mission and direction of the College.

3) Annual review of hits on the MVC website to identify information or resources most used (direct measure)
The IR web page was created in September 2009. Information and resources were added throughout the year. The page was reorganized several times in an effort to increase clarity and ease of use. The record of hits was not reviewed this year.
4) **Periodic assessment of specific projects through feedback, focus groups, or interviews**  
(indirect measure)

Questions and feedback from faculty and staff regarding completion of the program reports prompted the DIR to construct additional information and resources for this project. The DIR and educational consultant revised and simplified the form for classroom evaluation of teachers.

In summary, the Senior Exit Survey and the mission review were completed, and there was progress in all other functions. Information was disseminated on all projects during the year. Participation was high for the Senior Exit Survey. Members of the Assessment Advisory Board were active and engaged. Faculty and staff provided input for the program reports which helped to improve the process.

**VII. Level of achievement of goals**

Below each goal is evidence that progress was made in achieving the respective goal.

1) *A shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success will be cultivated in the college community.*

2) *A culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities will be created in the college community.*

3) *Information sharing and collaboration will increase across campus.*

(Note: The first three goals are quite interconnected. Therefore, evidence that progress was made in achieving the first three service outcomes is combined below.)

Evidence:

- Framework for annual program reports and program reviews put into place
- Participation of faculty and staff in program report workshops and additional small group meetings with the DIR
- Questions from faculty and staff about completion of program reports and sharing of information among themselves
- Discussion of NSSE/FSSE results by faculty and staff and new questions that arose which prompt further investigation
- Faculty in academic programs and staff in service programs worked together on program reports
- Institutional Research Web page created with ongoing additions and updates
- Dissemination of information via e-mail, the IR Web page, workshops, small groups, and individual communication
- Discussion of all aspects of assessment in meetings of the AAB
- Assessment information is shared with the Board of Trustees and used for decision making

4) *Effectiveness will be improved with information that is compiled, analyzed, and interpreted.*

Evidence:

- As a result of the process of working on the program reports, many academic and service programs have identified changes they plan to make (or have already made) to improve their services to the students.
5) **Information will be used to both pose and answer policy questions.**

Evidence:
- As a result of the process of working on the program reports, many academic and service programs have identified changes they plan to make (or have already made) to improve their services to the students.

6) **Accreditation activities will be coordinated.**

Evidence:
- Because all functions either directly or indirectly relate to the coordination of accreditation activities, there is evidence of progress in the last service outcome. For example, the annual program reports include a yearly assessment cycle, and this documented information will be used in the upcoming Self Study.

VIII. Staff/Clientele/Program information

The office of institutional research was created in fall 2008, and the director is the sole full-time staff member. Virginia Zank, former long-time MVC faculty member, serves as an educational consultant to the college and works closely with the DIR on projects. The Assessment Advisory Board, composed of faculty (one from each division), staff (2), students (2-3), members of the Board of Trustees (2), and the Chief Academic Officer, meets monthly with the DIR and is actively involved in many assessment activities.

Clientele of Institutional Research is the college community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, Board of Trustees), the public, and external state, federal, and accrediting agencies. Services support institutional planning and decision-making.

One full-time staff: Dr. Marilyn Belwood
- Director of Institutional Research (since fall 2008)
- Education: Ph.D. in educational psychology with concentration in statistics and measurement; M.S. in statistics; B.A. in mathematics; BFA in painting and drawing

One part-time: Virginia Zank
- Serves as education consultant to MVC and works closely with the DIR
- Education: M.A. in English; B.S. in secondary education

IX Analysis/Interpretation

All major projects were successfully completed, and the framework for annual program reports and program review was put into place. The IR Web page was launched, and updates continue to be made. The Assessment Advisory Board provided valuable input and assistance. Communication and dissemination of information continues to be of primary importance. Providing training on assessment remains a priority. The DIR attempts to provide continued education in this area through e-mails, workshops, and the IR Web page.
Limitations of IR primarily stem from having a single full-time staff member. The lack of supporting staff was particularly problematic in initiating the program reports. It was not possible to provide the necessary encouragement and assistance for many faculty and staff who had difficulties and were unfamiliar with the assessment process. Additional staff would have allowed more interaction with faculty and staff and assistance for this project to proceed more efficiently.

The educational consultant provides invaluable assistance. Since she is off-campus, work between her and the DIR takes place primarily via phone, e-mail, and monthly visits to campus. This arrangement has worked very well.

This past year held additional challenges for the DIR. Due to the unexpected departure of the Chief Academic Officer in December, she assumed the duties of Interim CAO until July 1, 2010. The demands of this job took precedence over the activities of institutional research, and, as such, only the most important functions were maintained. Many projects were put on hold.

X. Action plan

- Increase program report understanding and completion by faculty and staff
- Initiate the program review rotation
- Increase communication with the college community by directing them to the Institutional Research web page where information can be easily accessed
- Create survey to assess client understanding and use of assessment, satisfaction with IR services, and needs which have yet to be addressed
- Refine process of working with the Assessment Advisory Board
- Provide more useful information to faculty for assessment of student learning
- Refine methods of assessing IR service outcomes
- Create outline/timeline of general assessment activities year-by-year
- Establish success criteria for meeting goals/service outcomes