

## **Focused Visit Report**

After the team reaches a consensus, the team chair completes this form to summarize and document the team's view. Notes and evidence should be essential and concise. **Note:** If the visit involved more than five areas of focus, please contact the institution's HLC staff liaison for an expanded version of this form.

Submit the completed draft report to the institution's HLC staff liaison. When the report is final, submit it as a single PDF file at <u>hlcommission.org/upload</u>. Select "Final Reports" from the list of submission options to ensure the report is sent to the correct HLC staff member.

Institution: Manhattan Area Technical College

City, State: Manhattan, Kansas

Visit Date: 11.11-12/2019

**Names of Peer Reviewers** (List the names, titles and affiliations of each peer reviewer. The team chair should note that designation in parenthesis.)

Dr. Jeanne Swarthout, President Emeritus, Northland Pioneer College

Kate Ferrel, Executive Vice President – Academic and Student Affairs, Nicolet Area Technical College

#### Part A: Context and Nature of Visit

1. Purpose of the Visit (Provide the visit description from the Evaluation Summary Sheet.)

A focused visit on student outcomes assessment (4B) resulted from a Standard Pathway Mid Cycle Review in May of 2017. In a Higher Learning Commission letter dated October of 2018, the date of the Focused Visit was set and "...the institution should be able to demonstrate, at a minimum, the following: 1) that all four areas in its assessment model are being assessed systematically; 2) that the resulting assessment data are being collected and analyzed systematically; 3) that these data are being used through formal means to make improvements in student learning and educational programming; 4) that assessment results are made available through appropriate disclosure or student achievement information webpages; 5) that relevant documents, such as course syllabi, contain clearly stated learning outcomes that are linked to program and institutional outcomes; and 6) that professional development opportunities in assessment are available to faculty and staff.

#### 2. Accreditation Status

- Accredited
  - Accredited—On Notice
  - Accredited—On Probation

#### 3. Organizational Context

The Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC) is a public institution serving ten counties in Kansas. The institution considers its mission as a technical college with general education coursework which contributes to its technical programs. MATC offers 14 technical programs and 13 certificates at the date of its most recent HLC Update. The institution is engaged in dual/concurrent enrollment with area high schools with the intent to increase the number of school districts and students engaged in high school to college programs. MATC serves close to 900 full and part-time students. The college and its employees fully engaged with the Focused Visit Team. MATC's Board of Directors' future members are appointed by current members of the Board.

#### 4. Unique Aspects of Visit

The institution is scheduled for a Comprehensive Visit in May of 2021.

5. **Interactions With Institutional Constituencies and Materials Reviewed.** List the titles or positions, but not names, of individuals with whom the team interacted during the review and the principal documents, materials and web pages reviewed.

#### Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

Board chair Two board members President/CEO Executive Assistant to the President-Resource Development Coordinator/Board Clerk Vice President of Student Success/Chief Academic Officer/ Chief Student Services Officer Vice President of Operations/Chief Financial Officer Chief Information Security Officer Senior Administrative Assistant to VPSS Director of Adult Education/Director of Title III Director of Institutional Reporting and Instructional Technology Business Administration Instructor Communication Instructor Director Dental Hygiene Welding Instructor ADN Instructor x 2 Coordinator of the Teaching and Learning Center INT Instructor Students x 14, all areas Faculty Senate Representatives Co-Chair Chair Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Instructor Chemistry Instructor Operations Coordinator Administrative Assistant to ALC Director of Financial Aid/VA Certifying Officer Registrar Human Resources Representative Program Advisory Committee Members, 5 from different technical programs

#### **Materials Reviewed**

Board of Directors Minutes 2018/2019 2017 Mid-Cycle Team Report Focus Site Visit Report submitted by MATC on September 10, 2019 **Current Organization Chart by Function** Policies and Governance Committee Structure MATC Assessment Plan – Revised Fall 2019 MATC Core Abilities Assessment Matrix Faculty Resource Guide/Employee Handbook Student Handbook **Faculty Resource Guide Organizational Catalog Institutional Policies and Procedures Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee Curriculum Committee** Assessment Committee Distance and Hybrid Online Course Material for: Certified Nurse Assistant (blended) Introduction to Business (online course) Introduction to Sociology (online course) General Psychology (high school delivery) Beginning Algebra (traditional format) Manual Transmissions and Transaxles (traditional format) Video, Adding a Written Communication Rubric to an Assignment **Comparison of Results HLC Focused Visit** Two technical program reviews 12 syllabi (seven Core Abilities courses, five technical program courses

- 1. Areas of Focus. Complete the following A and B sections for each area of focus identified in the visit description on the Evaluation Summary Sheet. Note that each area of focus should correspond with only one Core Component or other HLC requirement.
  - **A1.** Statement of Focus:

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

4B Assessment of Student Learning

- B1. Statements of Evidence (check one below):
  - Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
  - Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
  - Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
  - Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

#### Evidence:

1) All four areas in its assessment model are being assessed systematically.

The four areas of MATC's assessment model are Core Abilities (a subset of the Kansas Board of Regents Kansas Core Outcomes Project), Technical Programs, Co-curricular, and Indirect Measures of Student Learning. Indirect Measure of Student Learning is a set of qualitative measures, different from the other three areas of assessment. However, in MATC's report submitted to the visiting team, the college uses language around Indirect Measures of Student Learning in a manner that indicates that this assessment is appropriate for institutional assessment and includes course evaluations, student satisfaction surveys, and Program Advisory Committee (PAC) evaluations. Surveys are designed and administered through EvaluationKit which integrates with Canvas for efficiency and ease of student participation. There is no apparent systemization by which Indirect Measures are integrated into institutional assessment.

The visiting team addresses all areas of the assessment model to examine for systematic processes. Core Abilities and Technical Programs assessments are conducted systematically to a large degree. The visiting team found documented evidence of:

Course mapping to degree program for Core Abilities

Use of KBOR outcomes in MATC Core Abilities courses (exception not consistently present in online courses which are a small subset of MATC courses)

Use of external accreditors' outcomes in Technical Programs (outcomes and assessment of certificate programs within degree programs not clearly delineated)

Technical Programs assessment of Core Abilities outcome currently selected for review

All data sets analyzed and entered into appropriate templates or in text form

Use of effective rubric in Core Ability Written Communication currently being assessed

Clear use of multiple committees (Assessment, Curriculum, Data Committees) to support, promote and improve student learning

Lack of systemization, particularly in Technical Programs and Co-curricular, resides in the final assessment steps such as clear identification of the outcome, quantifiable measures, clear linkage between improvement change, and follow-up measurements to clarify if learning improvement has been achieved. Co-curricular assessment is in the very early stage of implementation. The institution is using indirect measures of student learning in this area and has not yet identified the specific learning outcomes targeted for improvement. Therefore, co-curricular assessment is not yet systematic in implementation.

2) The resulting Assessment data are being collected and analyzed systematically.

MATC's Assessment Plan (Revised: Fall 2019) document outlines the methodology used in systematic assessment of student learning in all four areas. This depiction consistently identifies the activity/objective, timeline/measurement, coordination/responsibility, and follow-up/analysis plan across the four student learning components. The Assessment Committee Forum Session participants shared the systematic process used to collect and analyze student course evaluation feedback. Before student grades are released, students are required to complete the course evaluation. While mandating student evaluations has yielded a significant amount of data, the Student Forum Session did reveal that students feel a degree of survey fatigue. Faculty receive course evaluation information after they have submitted their final grades. Department heads and the Chief Academic Officer also receive the course evaluation results and use this information to provide feedback, to construct goals for the next term, and to adjust action and assessment plans.

During the Student Forum Session, Dental Hygiene students pointed to a recent policy change around reasonable time expectations for an instructor to respond to students. This policy change was based on feedback provided to the instructor and institution via the course evaluation process. The Curriculum Committee Forum Session cited other work across the institutions which illustrates continuous improvement based upon data analysis such as the elimination of the fundamental, pre-college courses and the elimination of redundant competencies within programs.

The CAO provided reviewers the Electrical Power and Distribution (EPD) Program Review Report for Academic Year 2017-2018. The program review outlined Curriculum Review and cited three curriculum changes; however, it lacked explanation on the basis of these changes. Additionally, it did not tie the revisions to any source of data, data analysis, or external forces such as the evolution of industry equipment or technology. Under Program Outcome Assessments, the report expanded upon the EPD's affiliation with the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI). The data provided suggests that both written-cognitive and performance measures have increased. NOCTI is an end-of-program, third party assessment. Throughout the program, students are assessed on NOCTI written-cognitive and performance measures. The data can help instructors better target instruction based on individual student mastery, and works to bolster student retention and completion. Within the written-cognitive NOCTI assessment, student scores increased 11% from 2015 to 2017. Performance-based outcomes realized an increase of 7.23% across the same time period.

Against the back drop of the Mid-Cycle Report and delivery of feedback, the institution has had one academic year to consider previous reviewer and Commission feedback and impart

systematic assessment practices across the institution. Industry-recognized, third-party assessments such as the NOCTI assessment used in Electrical Power and Distribution Program can provide the institution with a framework for continued forward momentum in assessing, collecting, and analyzing data systematically.

MATC's Assessment Plan (Revised: Fall 2019) document provides evidence of the spring 2019 Co-Curricular Assessment results. With an *n* of 6 and data collected from just a single semester, the number is too small and the information has been gathered too recently to expect any institutional impact. The recently-acquired EvaluationKit software integrates with Canvas and is increasingly used across the institution to gather evaluation and survey data. As MATC's Co-Curricular assessment matures, this tool will make the collection and systematic analysis of data easier and will help the institution to pivot in the ways it supports Co-Curricular engagement and assessment. Reviewers facilitated several conversations around Co-Curricular Assessment across a number of Forum Sessions. Cabinet members offered that since the May 2017 Mid-Cycle Review, the assessment lens has been trained primarily on Core Abilities, and that Co-Curricular activities were cited but are not being assessed and systematically analyzed.

3) These data are being collected and analyzed systematically.

While MATC's progress in systematizing assessment is varied across the institution, since the Mid-Cycle visit in May 2017, the institution has created several structures to maximize data collection efforts and further build institutional capacity to move the needle on student learning and educational programming outcomes. The institution operates under a shared governance model with four core faculty-driven committees: Faculty Senate, Curriculum, Professional Development, and Assessment. In particular, the Assessment Committee maintains the Assessment Plan which contains an assessment philosophy and implementation plan to provide guidance on resources available, reporting cycle, levels of assessment, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement. This plan is updated biannually with the latest revision dated Fall 2019. As a small institution, many of MATC's formal committees are comprised of individuals who serve on multiple committees. During Forum Sessions, staff re-iterated they see this duplication of representation as a benefit in maximizing communication across the cross-functional, cross-collaborative committee structure and will assist in creating consistent, formal assessment processes.

MATC has made significant investment in software (EvaluationKIT, ExamSoft, SRSS, Canvas) which will systematize data collection and make the information more transparent to the greater college community. Critical to institutional effectiveness is the college's ability to prioritize assessment efforts, allocate appropriate resources, and more formally close the loop on a more targeted set of outcomes.

4) Assessment results are made available through appropriate disclosure or student achievement information webpages.

In its Focused Visit Site Report of September 10, 2019, the institution provided locational information for student information on its web pages. The visiting team found numerous ways to access the information, convenient and easy to use for most web users. The Student Achievement information webpage provides Placement Reports, Completion Rates, License Pass Rates, and third-party credentials achieved. The team did not locate data directly related to Core Abilities, co-curricular, or institutional assessment. It may be too early in the assessment renewal cycle for these other measures of Student Learning to be relevant.

5) Relevant documents, such as course syllabi, contain clearly stated learning outcomes that are linked to program and institutional outcomes.

The visiting team examined course syllabi and program reviews from a variety of MATC documents; the examination indicated that, for the most part, syllabi contain clearly stated outcomes. For Core Ability courses, the outcomes replicate the Kansas Core Outcomes Project, though MATC adopted only a subset of those outcomes considered relevant to the mission of the institution. The Core Ability outcomes are not consistently expressed in online course syllabi. The technical programs utilize external certifications to define outcomes. The technical programs do not identify those related to specific certificates with a program; however, certificate-specific outcomes can be extrapolated on a skill-level basis in courses. Technical programs also assess the program relationship to Core Abilities. Course mapping to program outcomes are present in program review documents. A specific challenge for MATC is the consistent application of outcomes and assessment in dual/concurrent high school enrollment in MATC courses, particularly as growth in enrollment is anticipated to increase across the five-county service area.

The visiting team found no documented evidence of linkages of the four areas of assessment directly to institutional improvement or how resources are allocated to specific assessment activities. Specific actions for student learning improvement are not systematically expressed nor is there a plan to objectively measure whether implemented improvements have the desired result in the future. Use of benchmarking may provide more effective uses of assessment of student learning.

Co-curricular assessment at MATC is in early stages of implementation with an initial pilot effort looking at three formal student activities targeting student engagement, enrichment, and leadership. This area of assessment is heavily dependent on indirect measures of student learning, some of which call for student reflection on the learning experience. During the visit, the team learned of several areas of services which may be considered in future co-curricular assessment such as tutoring, job shadowing, and student service projects. To date co-curricular assessment lacks specific definition of the outcomes to be evaluated, direct and measurable methods of assessment, as well as key results and actions for learning improvement.

The visiting team's evaluation of MATC's progress in systematizing assessment is variable, as would be anticipated at an institution redesigning its assessment efforts. The early to mid-stages of assessment are well systematized and meetings with faculty and committees reaffirmed the contents of documents. The final stages revolving around closing the assessment loop are less clearly documented and yield inconsistent evidence of a systems approach to assessment. The challenges remaining regarding systemization of the later stages of assessment may result from the institution's desire to measure everything for assessment rather than focus on a specific subset of outcomes.

6) Professional development opportunities in assessment are available to faculty and staff.

The institution has targeted professional development resources in assessment primarily for faculty but also staff through funding in-service activities. Interviews with faculty and staff verified the use of professional development funds for twice-yearly assessment-focused information and in-house training activities. Professional development resources support the assessment-dedicated time of the Chair of the Assessment Committee. MATC supports faculty and staff in assessment by frequent attendance at The Higher Learning Commission's Annual Conference; this effort could be enhanced by including an additional faculty and staff member. MATC charges students a \$2.00 fee toward student activities. A portion of that resource is available to enhance student learning assessment in the co-curricular area.

#### A2. Statement of Focus:

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

#### B2. Statements of Evidence (check one below):

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

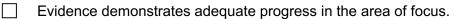
The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

A3. Statement of Focus:

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

#### B3. Statements of Evidence (check one below):



Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.



- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

#### A4. Statement of Focus:

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

B4. Statements of Evidence (check one below):

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
  - Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

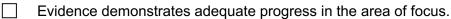
The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

**A5.** Statement of Focus:

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

B5. Statements of Evidence (check one below):



Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.



- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

2. **Other Accreditation Issues**. If applicable, list evidence of other accreditation issues, identify the related Core Components or other HLC requirements and note the team's determination as to each applicable Core Component or other HLC requirement in Part B.

None identified

### Part B: Recommendation and Rationale

#### **Recommendation:**

Evidence demonstrates that no monitoring is required.

Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.

Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

#### Rationale for the Team's Recommendation

The Focused Visit Team finds Criterion 4 Component B as Met with Concerns. Manhattan Area Technical College has taken mitigating action regarding previous findings on 4B. However, concerns remain regarding the institution's current status on assessment of student learning in all four areas of their assessment model. The visiting team notes that the institution's progress to date identifies Institutional Attention Needed rather than Commission follow up. The Focused Visit Team is aware that the institution is scheduled for a Comprehensive Visit in May, 2021. As this visit is already scheduled, the assignment of HLC follow-up with a monitoring report is redundant. The team also notes that the revival of assessment of student learning is in its formative stage at MATC; the institution lacks data on assessment spanning any significant time period. The visiting team highlights areas of concern resulting from the Focused Visit; the institution may want to consider these points for improving student learning results as it prepares its Assurance Argument prior to the spring 2021 Comprehensive Visit. Areas of concern include:

A more systematic approach to linking specific outcomes to learning improvement efforts and results indicating the improvement was effective/not effective;

Moving to more use of direct, measurable tools of evaluating student learning, particularly in cocurricular assessment;

A more inclusive definition of what institutional activities may be co-curricular;

A clear link between assessment of student learning, budgeting, and institutional effectiveness; and

Planning around bringing dual enrollment and the Adult Learning Center into assessment activities.

#### **Stipulations or Limitations on Future Accreditation Relationships**

If recommending a change in the institution's stipulations, state both the old and new stipulation and provide a brief rationale for the recommended change. Check the Institutional Status and Requirement (ISR) Report for the current wording. (Note: After the focused visit, the institution's stipulations should be reviewed in consultation with the institution's HLC staff liaison.)

#### Monitoring

The team may call for a follow-up interim report. If the team concurs that a report is necessary, indicate the topic (including the relevant Core Components or other HLC requirements), timeline and expectations for that report. (Note: the team should consider embedding such a report as an emphasis in an upcoming comprehensive evaluation in consultation with the institution's HLC staff liaison.)

The team may call for a follow-up focused visit. If the team concurs that a visit is necessary, indicate the topic (including the relevant Core Components or other HLC requirements), timeline and expectations for that visit. (Note: The team should consider embedding such a visit as an emphasis in an upcoming comprehensive evaluation in consultation with the institution's staff liaison.)

#### **Core Component Determinations**

Indicate the team's determination(s) (met, met with concerns, not met) for the applicable Core Components related to the areas of focus or other accreditation issues identified by the team in Part A. If a Core Component was not included in an area of focus, it should be marked as not evaluated.

Number	Title	Met	Met With Concerns	Not Met	Not Evaluated
1.A	Core Component 1.A				$\boxtimes$
1.B	Core Component 1.B				
1.C	Core Component 1.C				
1.D	Core Component 1.D				
2.A	Core Component 2.A				
2.B	Core Component 2.B				
2.C	Core Component 2.C				
2.D	Core Component 2.D				
2.E	Core Component 2.E				
3.A	Core Component 3.A				
3.B	Core Component 3.B				
3.C	Core Component 3.C				

Number	Title	Met	Met With Concerns	Not Met	Not Evaluated
3.D	Core Component 3.D				$\boxtimes$
3.E	Core Component 3.E				
4.A	Core Component 4.A				
4.B	Core Component 4.B				
4.C	Core Component 4.C				
5.A	Core Component 5.A				
5.B	Core Component 5.B				
5.C	Core Component 5.C				
5.D	Core Component 5.D				

Other HLC Requirement Determinations Indicate the team's determination(s) (met or not met) for the HLC requirements related to the areas of focus or other accreditation issues identified by the team in Part A.



# Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:	Manhattan Area Technical College, KS		
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Monitoring Focused Visit		
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	A focused visit on student outcomes assessment (4B). (focused visit no later than 12/1/2019)		
DATES OF REVIEW:	11/11/2019 - 11/12/2019		
X No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements			

#### **Accreditation Status**

Nature of Institution				
Control:	Public			
Recommended Change: No change				
Degrees Awarded:	Associates			
Recommended Change: No change				
Reaffirmation of Accreditation:				
Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation:	2010 - 2011			
Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation:	2020 - 2021			
Recommended Change: No change				

#### **Accreditation Stipulations**

General:

Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.

#### **Recommended Change: No change**

Additional Location:

Prior HLC approval required.

**Recommended Change: No change** 



# Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs: Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.				
Recommended Change: No change				
Accreditation Events				
Accreditation Pathway	Standard Pathway			
Recommended Change: No change				
Upcoming Events				
Comprehensive Evaluation:	05/03/2021			
Recommended Change: No change				
Monitoring Upcoming Events				
None				
Recommended Change: No change				
Institutional Data				
Educational Programs	Recommended			

Undergraduate		Change: No change
Certificate	13	
Associate Degrees	14	
Baccalaureate Degrees	0	
Graduate		
Master's Degrees	0	
Specialist Degrees	0	
Doctoral Degrees	0	

### **Extended Operations**

**Branch Campuses** 



# Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

None

**Recommended Change: No change** 

**Additional Locations** 

None

**Recommended Change: No change** 

**Correspondence Education** 

None

**Recommended Change: No change** 

#### **Distance Delivery**

41.0101 - Biology Technician/Biotechnology Laboratory Technician, Certificate, Advanced Biotechnology

51.1004 - Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician, Associate, Clinical Medical Laboratory Technician – A.A.S

#### **Contractual Arrangements**

None

**Recommended Change: No change** 

#### **Consortial Arrangements**

41.0101 - Biology Technician/Biotechnology Laboratory Technician - Certificate - Certificate - 41.0101 Biology Technician/Biotechnology Laboratory Technician (Advanced Biotechnology Certificate) - Advanced Biotechnology

51.0909 - Surgical Technology/Technologist - Certificate - Certificate - 51.0909 Surgical Technology/Technologist (Surgical Technology) - Surgical Technology

#### **Recommended Change: No change**