

Charges to the MC Self-Study Work Groups

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and explains whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals and objectives, consistent with the aspirations and expectation of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission, goals, and objectives are developed and recognized by the institution with its members and its governing body and are utilized to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Two primary questions will guide the inquiry for this standard:

1. How does the current mission reflect the character and purpose of the College?
2. How are the College's mission and goals monitored, reviewed, and evaluated?

The following questions might be helpful in gathering data that provide evidence for assessing the College's programs and practices within the context of the primary questions.

1. What is the College's mission? How was the mission developed? To what extent does the current mission accurately reflect the character and purpose of the College?
2. What are the College's goals, and objectives? How were the goals and objectives developed? To what extent do the current goals and objectives accurately reflect the character and purpose of the College?
3. What evidence is there that administrative, curriculum, and resource allocation decisions are driven by and connected to the College's mission, goals, and objectives? **(Cross-reference Standards 2 and 11)**
4. To what extent are the College's mission, goals, and objectives clearly stated and understood internally and externally, by institutional leaders in the academic, continuing education, and administrative areas, including the Board of Trustees? Does each of these areas have goals and objectives which support the mission?
5. How do the mission, goals, and objectives incorporate issues of diversity and equity and reflect broad representation and participation of the College community and its stakeholders?
6. In what ways are the College's mission, goals, and objectives clarified, realistic, and achievable?
7. How are "Learning College" initiatives being incorporated into the College's mission, goals, and objectives? What is the process for development and articulation of these initiatives within the College?
8. How do the College's current mission, goals, and objectives identify and assess student learning and institutional improvement? **(Cross-reference Standards 7 and 14)**

Standard #2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

1. In what ways do the College's strategic planning processes ensure that planning is linked to the College mission, goals, and objectives? How does the College ensure that there are appropriate plans for the maintenance and expansion of:
 - o academic initiatives and programs
 - o instructional and information technology
 - o facilities
 - o other instructional equipment

How are these plans linked to and based on student learning and institutional assessments, which are based

on mission, goals, and objectives? **(Cross-reference Standards 1, 7, and 14)**

2. To what extent is the conceptual and procedural relationship between the College's various strategic plans and the budget process effectively understood and integrated?
3. How is the standard annual planning process maintained and communicated to the College community? To what extent are various constituencies included in the planning process?
4. How specifically are outcomes monitored during the plan implementation phase of the planning process to evaluate if the plan is being achieved for programs, services, and initiatives according to the related mission, goals, and objectives:
 - o at the institutional level
 - o at the campus level
 - o at the unit level
 - o at the department level

In what ways are the procedures that monitor outcomes the same across the College?

5. How does assessment of planning occur at the College? How are both quantitative and qualitative assessments used and reported? Who is responsible for ensuring this takes place:
 - o at the institutional level
 - o at the campus level
 - o at the unit level
 - o at the department level

What specifically happens at the College to ensure that assessment data are used to renew the institution and maintain quality?

6. How will the suggestions for improvement under other standards be included in the strategic planning processes?

Standard #3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, physical facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

1. What quantifiable assessment measures are in place to continually evaluate the utilization and allocation of financial, technical, physical, and human resources throughout the College in support of its mission? How have findings from these assessments been used to affect current and future resource acquisition and allocation?
2. In what ways are financial, technical, physical, and human resources and their allocation related to and supportive of the College's mission, plans, goals and objectives?
3. How are staffing procedures and needs identified and communicated to the College? How does the College determine that it has sufficient faculty and staff to support and maintain its mission?
4. How are staffing procedures and needs communicated to the College? Does the College have sufficient faculty and staff to support and maintain its mission?
5. To what extent is the College committed to professional development among faculty and staff, and how is that commitment reflected in the budget and College goals and objectives?
6. How does the budget process reflect the College's mission, goals, and objectives? How are budget priorities established? By what means are these priorities communicated throughout the College?
7. How does the budget process utilize planning and assessment documents and data to address resource acquisition and allocation for the College?
8. How does the College determine facility resource trends and needs? How does the College utilize and disseminate data to assess these needs for planning and budgeting?
9. How does the College ensure efficient and timely acquisition and allocation of:

- physical resources
- technical resources
- equipment

Are there comprehensive facilities and infrastructure life-cycle management plans appropriate to the College's mission, goals, and objectives?

10. How do the various internal constituents have input into the configuration and maintenance of College space, including buildings, office space, classroom space, parking lots, and shared space?
11. How is the annual audit conducted and who is involved? How is the external auditor selected? How are concerns addressed, remedied, and documented?
12. How is the internal audit procedure initiated and conducted? What is the process for requesting an internal audit? Who can request an audit? How are internal audit findings addressed, remedied, and documented?

Standard #4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

1. To what extent are the distinct roles and responsibilities of each constituent group within arenas of shared governance communicated and accepted by those involved?
2. To what extent are existing structures utilized for decision making? What are the criteria used to determine variances or differences in the established governance processes?
3. How have the institution's for-profit ventures been structured and managed so as to avoid possible conflict of interest among participating administrators, faculty, or board members?
4. In what ways and for what reasons have the institution's governance systems changed over the past five years? What has been the impact of these changes?
5. How effective is the Board in raising resources?
6. To what extent do students have the opportunity to provide input regarding decisions of the institution that will impact them? How is student input evaluated and incorporated for responsiveness?
7. How is the Board constituted, and how are members selected? What are the qualifications for membership, and how is it assessed? Is the membership of the Board reflective of the surrounding community? How are Board members oriented and kept up-to-date on institutional programs, objectives, and assessments?
8. What is the process by which college wide policies and procedures are developed, disseminated, and maintained? How is input from various College constituencies sought and implemented?
9. What language exists in the by-laws of governing bodies to support impartiality of decision making and prevention of conflict of interest? Has it been effective?
10. How and how often is the effectiveness of the institution's governance systems assessed, and how often are the results used to implement change?

Standard #5: Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

1. How is the president held accountable for leading the institution toward achieving its goals?
2. How are decision-making roles and responsibilities among the College's top administrators clearly defined, related to the mission, and communicated?
3. How are the College administrators identified as accountable for implementation of the College's operational and planning goals?
4. How is the process for selection of a new president determined? What are the criteria used to determine variances or differences in the process? How does the broader College community play a role in determining

- the skills and experience a president needs to accomplish its institutional goals?
5. What is the process for hiring administrative leaders and staff, and what criteria are used to determine that administrators and staff possess appropriate skills, degrees, and training to carry out the responsibilities for which they are charged?
 6. What opportunities exist for professional development for administrators and staff, and how are the results assessed?
 7. How are administrators and staff evaluated and assessed, and how are assessment results used for improvement?
 8. How are administrative decisions communicated to all College constituencies (faculty, students, administrators, and staff)? How is critical organizational information communicated among administrative units (Deans of Student Development, Continuing Education, Instructional Deans, etc.), departments, and disciplines?
 9. How is technology effectively utilized in facilitating administrative intra-organizational communications?
 10. How does the administrative structure allow for effective management and coordination among the various departments and disciplines, as well as across the College's three campuses and WD&CE?
 11. How do the College's governance process and collective bargaining agreements define lines of authority between administration and faculty?
 12. To what extent are administrative structures and services relative to College goals assessed for effectiveness?

Standard #6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support to academic and intellectual freedom.

1. What are the policies and procedures that govern student grievances, behavior, evaluation, and grade disputes? **(Cross-reference Standard 9)** How does the educational program address plagiarism and academic integrity? To what extent are these policies and procedures clearly articulated within and outside of the College?
2. What patterns, if any, are evident within student grievances over the past three years? What steps, if any, has the institution taken in response to these patterns?
3. How does Montgomery College demonstrate fair and impartial hiring, evaluation, and dismissal practices? What is the role of faculty in helping to develop fair and equitable hiring, evaluation, and dismissal policies and procedures?
4. How consistently does the institution follow through on its stated policies in communicating with students, faculty, and staff?
5. What evidence is there that the institution adheres to principles of academic freedom? When there have been challenges to academic freedom principles, how has the institution responded? What has been the outcome or resolution? **(Cross-reference Standard 10)**
6. How effective is the institution's mechanism for handling complaints from outside the institution?
7. Through what kinds of communication vehicles does the College make factual information, such as information resulting from accreditation and assessment activities, available to employees, students, and the public? How is this communication assessed for consistency and accuracy? Where is this information archived and how easy is it for the College community to access the information?
8. How does the College assess the integrity of its institutional policies, processes, and practices? How often are assessments conducted? How are recommendations implemented?

Standard #7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment plan and process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

1. What are the components of the College's existing assessment process for evaluating success in the following areas:
 - o college wide mission, goals, and objectives
 - o campus goals and objectives
 - o departmental goals and objectives (including academics and administration)
2. How were the current assessment activities developed and how are they conducted?
3. To what extent do existing assessment activities help us achieve the College's mission, goals, and objectives?
4. How does the College evaluate the usefulness, effectiveness, and sustainability of its current assessment practices?
5. How does the College's use of assessment information impact key College services related to supporting student success?
6. Which administrative services and processes at the College have improved or gained efficiencies as a result of assessment feedback?
7. How does the College disseminate and utilize assessment data on student learning to inform institutional assessment activities related to:
 - o planning
 - o resource allocation
 - o mission
 - o goals and objectives
8. What evidence does the College have that our assessment activities are meaningfully reflected in decisions regarding planning, budgeting, and resource allocation?
9. To what extent do assessment data influence the development and/or refinement of institutional strategic plans?

Standard #8: Student Admissions

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

1. How does the College ensure that a student's interests, goals, and abilities are in keeping with the College mission?
 - o What policies and services are in place?
 - o What are the College's recruiting goals? Who helped determine these goals?
 - o How are students' interests, goals, and abilities determined?
 - o What are the ways in which the College supports and promotes the match between these and the mission?
 - o Is accurate information available on outcomes, assessment and placement, academic programs, and support services, so that students can make informed decisions?
 - o How does the College know this is working?
2. To what extent do the admissions and enrollment policies, procedures, and practices support and reflect the College's mission, specifically that:
 - o Students are the center of our universe;
 - o We are welcoming, compassionate, and service-oriented to our diverse community;
 - o We operate in a creative, innovative, flexible, and responsive manner;
 - o We are accountable for key results centered around learning?
 - o What is the mission with respect to enrollment?
 - o How is that mission reflected in policies, procedures, and practices?
 - o How does the College know this is working?
3. How is enrollment and retention data used to identify and utilize strategies?
 - o To what extent is data tracked?

- How is it used to improve outreach and support?
- Is there an ongoing measure of student retention and success?
- To what extent are policies and services in place to support students who are not ready for college?
- Is there a disparity among student populations and/or ethnic groups? If yes, what policies/services are in place to address it?
- How does the College know they're working?

Standard #9: Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

1. What support services are available for students, including special populations (i.e. distance learning, honors, international, re-entry adults, tutoring, part-time, developmental, and disciplinary)?
 - How are these services communicated to students and faculty?
 - How do these services support and reflect the College's mission and goals?
2. How are the support needs of students identified? How are students connected with appropriate services in a timely way?
3. How does the College determine the use and effectiveness of support services, and how these services contribute to student learning?
4. To what extent are available support services adequately funded and staffed?
5. To what extent does the College provide student life/co-curricular programs and services?
 - Do programs and activities support the diverse needs, abilities, and cultures of the student body?
 - How is their impact on students assessed and used for program design and improvement?
6. To what extent are orientation-to-college programs available?
 - Are their design/format conducive to the success of all students?
 - How does the College know these programs are effective?
7. To what extent does academic advising contribute to student selection of programs and courses that support their educational goals? How does the College know?
8. Are record-keeping procedures in place to ensure a student's confidentiality and right to grievances? How are they communicated?
9. To what extent are student athletes supported academically and are they successful in meeting their educational goals?
10. What are the ways in which students are encouraged to engage in a full college life experience?

Standard #10: Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professional faculty.

1. How does Montgomery College assure students that the teaching faculty are qualified to serve in their respective instructional roles?
2. What are the internal guidelines for hiring competent teaching faculty? To what extent does Montgomery College follow internal guidelines for hiring teaching faculty?
3. How does Montgomery College determine, articulate, and assess minimum hiring criteria for each instructional position?
4. What is the process for developing, modifying, and assessing curricula? To what extent is the process clearly articulated, driven by, and inclusive of qualified faculty members from all representative campuses and disciplines?
5. What professional development programs are provided at Montgomery College to support the needs of faculty? How does Montgomery College encourage, support, and recognize professional development among the faculty? To what extent are the existing professional development programs at Montgomery College effective, and how are they assessed?
6. What are the policies and procedures that govern faculty promotion, retention, discipline, and

grievances? How are these policies assessed? To what extent are faculty involved in the development and assessment of such policies and procedures?

7. What patterns, if any, are evident within faculty or staff grievances over the past three years? What steps, if any, has the institution taken in response to these patterns?
8. What are the criteria for evaluating faculty? How are faculty involved in the development of policies and procedures for evaluation? How have faculty assessment results been utilized for improvement? To what extent does the evaluation and assessment process differ among full- and part-time faculty?
9. How does the faculty demonstrate effective and responsible academic freedom in the development and presentation of their curricula? To what extent does Montgomery College support academic freedom in the instructional process? **(Cross-reference Standard 6)**

Standard #11: Educational Offerings

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

1. To what extent do course offerings reflect the College's mission, goals, and objectives? **(Cross-reference Standard 1)**
2. How does the College know that its educational offerings are coherent, sequentially appropriate, and rigorous enough to ensure that students are able to succeed as transfer students and professionals?
3. How does the College assess student learning and academic program outcomes and use the results of such assessments to improve individual student and program effectiveness?
4. How well communicated and easily accessible are statements of learning outcomes at both the course and program levels? Do course syllabi incorporate learning outcomes?
5. How well do facilities, labs, instructional equipment, and information technology support student learning? **(Cross-reference Standard 3)**
6. What evidence is there that students are meeting Montgomery College's goals for student information literacy? How well do the library staff, administrators, and faculty promote student learning and information literacy?
7. How does the College ensure consistent outcomes and standards across campuses, satellite locations, and different delivery modes, including distance learning and accelerated courses? **(Cross-reference Standard 13)**
8. How dynamic and responsive to change and student and community needs are the College's courses, programs, and other extra- and co-curricular experiences? **(Cross-reference Standard 9)**

Standard #12: General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

1. How does Montgomery College assure that its programs offer a sufficient number of General Education courses that enable students to graduate with sound intellectual and academic skills?
2. How does the College integrate and assess General Education requirements? How are assessment outcomes used to improve curricula? How are General Education skills linked to the overall course offerings at the College?
3. To what extent is Montgomery College able to demonstrate that students integrate and apply the core knowledge and skills acquired in their General Education coursework to their major program?
4. How do the core components of the General Education program incorporate the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives in keeping with Montgomery College's mission?
5. How do we determine that Montgomery College graduates are able to:
 - o express themselves orally and in writing
 - o use quantitative and scientific reasoning

- possess the knowledge necessary to use technology and information tools appropriately
 - think critically?
6. How does Montgomery College clearly and accurately publish and disseminate its General Education requirements? To what extent do students, faculty, administrators, and staff understand and support the purpose of the General Education program?
 7. How do faculty, academic counselors, and support staff assess and advise students for entry into General Education courses? **(Cross-reference Standard 10)** To what extent are students appropriately advised to ensure successful completion of the General Education program? **(Cross-reference Standard 9)**
 8. What evidence exists that the College's General Education courses transfer to other institutions?

Standard #13: Related Educational Activities

Institutional programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

Basic Skills

1. How effective is the identification and placement of students who need college preparatory skills?
2. To what extent do pre-collegiate level courses help under-prepared students achieve college-level proficiency? How is student improvement evaluated, and how are findings used toward program improvement?

Certificate Programs

3. To what extent are certificate programs offered by the College:
 - consistent with the College's mission, goals, and objectives
 - consistent with appropriate national criteria
 - appropriately sequenced to ensure student success
 - provided with appropriate student support services
 - transferable to other institutions
 - designed to meet the needs of students and the community?
4. How are certificate programs assessed in terms of their effectiveness in meeting the criteria listed above?

Prior Learning

5. What evidence is there that credit for experiential and prior learning (including portfolios, A.P. courses, etc.) is appropriately assessed and matches the level, quality, and quantity of learning expected? How rigorously and effectively is credit for experiential and prior learning awarded?
6. How does Montgomery College publicize and define the procedures used to record evaluated prior learning by the awarding institution? To what extent are the policies and procedures consistently implemented?

Non-credit Offerings

7. To what extent are non-credit offerings designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures?
8. How are the needs of both internal and external constituencies determined and assessed within the College's non-credit programs?
9. To what extent do non-credit offerings provide access into credit programs?
10. How does the College assess the impact of non-credit offerings on the institution?

College Institute Program

11. How does the College periodically determine that institute programs offered at other locations meet the

- College's standards, mission, goals, and objectives?
12. How does the College assess the impact of institute programs on the institution?

Distance or Distributed Learning

13. How do distance learning offerings fulfill Montgomery College's mission, conform to institution-wide standards and expectations as well as legal and regulatory requirements, and/or compare to on-site offerings?
14. How do distance learning offerings, materials, and resources demonstrate program coherence, academic rigor, and a commitment to renewal and degree completion?
15. How available, accessible, and adequate are physical, technical, and learning resources for distance learning offerings? What evidence is there of ongoing training and support for faculty teaching distance learning courses?
16. How does the College assess the impact of distance learning courses on the institution?

Contractual Relationships and Affiliated Providers

17. How does Montgomery College protect its integrity and oversee, and assess activities carried out in its name by affiliated providers and other institutions or organizations?

Standard #14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional goals and that students at graduation have achieved appropriate higher education goals.

1. How are student learning expectations at the course and course sequence levels developed, communicated, and integrated?
2. How are students made aware of the learning outcomes expected at the program level (i.e., degree, certificate, and letter of recognition)?
3. How are students made aware of the general education learning outcomes?
4. What is the College's student learning outcomes assessment process?
5. What are the College's guidelines and procedures for assessing academic areas' effectiveness?
6. How does the College evaluate the usefulness, effectiveness, and sustainability of its current student learning assessment practices?
7. What types of direct (i.e. exams, portfolios, papers) and indirect (i.e. retention and graduation rates, surveys) assessments of student learning does the College administer?
8. How has the use of student learning assessment data improved student learning outcomes?
9. To what extent have assessment processes been utilized to measure programmatic impacts and to consider possible actions for improvement?
10. How have outcomes assessment been used to drive teaching and learning changes in the classroom?
11. How is change resulting from the outcomes assessment process implemented?
12. How have student learning outcomes measures been utilized in broader college wide planning efforts?
13. How are the results from student learning outcomes assessment incorporated into the institutional-level assessment to help drive institutional change?