

Institutional Assessment Committee Minutes

October 26, 2023

Committee Co-Chairs: Tanda Emanuel, Instructor/Program Coordinator, Electronic Health Records/Health, Division of Health Sciences; Carlee Ranalli, Dean, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Committee Members: Brandon Brereton, Jessica Miller, David Grimes, Erin Murray, Mike Schmidt, Taylor Rigsby, Laura Scafide, Alison Preston (optional)

Committee Members Present: Tanda Emanuel, Dr. Carlee Ranalli, Jessica Miller, David Grimes, Erin Murray, Mike Schmidt, Taylor Rigsby, Laura Scafide, Alison Preston

Others Present: Academic Standards Committee members.

- i. **Approval of Minutes** – October was a joint meeting with Academic Standards to discuss the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Ranalli at 2:32 pm and September minutes were approved by Taylor Rigsby and Jessica Miller.
- ii. **Community College Survey of Student Engagement Review (CCSSE)** – Dr. Ranalli started with the question from the PowerPoint slides, “What is student engagement with CCSSE?” She notes that student engagement is indicative of the time and energy that students are investing based on self-reports, and what they consider meaningful educational practices. It is also indicative of what HCC is doing in terms of practices and what are they seeing in students' behaviors that correlate with student learning and retention. This is a big-picture overview. The CCSSE instrument is meant to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional effectiveness. We use this tool for improvement because we can assess the quality of education, identify and learn based on the educational practices in literature, and use all that information to identify for continuous improvement.

The CCSSE took place in the spring, with a 20% response rate after data was cleaned up. In comparison, a sister college had over a 30% response rate. We will review what they did such as texting students and try to incorporate this method for the next survey issuance.

Dr. Ranalli pointed out exclusions to the survey. She noted that high school students under 18 were excluded from the survey. The survey is meant for credit students and does not include noncredit students. If students did not include information on enrollment status or did not do the survey properly, they were also excluded. David Grimes asked the question of why students under 18 were excluded. Dr. Ranalli pointed out that she is careful in collecting data from minors. She likes to have parental consent. She also thinks that they are a different population than traditional. She thinks a different

survey would be interesting. In terms of enrollment status, 61% of the students who responded to the survey were full-time students which skews the data because our student population is predominantly part-time. Dr. Ranalli pointed out that females were also more likely to fill out the survey which is representative by the fact that 64% females responded to the survey.

Students were asked about goals and aspirations. Dr. Ranalli pointed out that this is more likely full-time students; however, our student body is predominantly part-time. The survey noted that students are interested in obtaining Associate degrees, self-improvement, personal enjoyment and less likely to change careers, and less interested in completing certificate programs. It was noted that students are coming back for retraining.

Students surveyed indicated that they had external commitments; 30% indicated more than 30 hours they were working for pay, and 27.2% more than 30 hours caring for dependents. This data gives us an idea of external student demands.

It was noted that the CCSSE is organized around five factors/benchmarks: Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic challenge, Student/Faculty Interaction, and Support for Learners. Dr. Ranalli will share a copy of the results for reflection and so that a thorough review of the different types of questions in each benchmark can be done.

HCC did the CCSSE ten years ago and it was plotted against current results. A Trustee member asked if 10 years was a good cycle. Dr. Ranalli answered “no” and explained that she plans to do a cycle of five years. She also noted that the instrument was expensive to administer. It was explained that the average for each benchmark is 50%, anything below 50% is below the average, and above 50% is above the average. HCC has seen an increase in Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge and Support for Learners. Student/Faculty Interactions dipped below 50% and could be a result of COVID-19.

She shared comparative data on how HCC measures with other institutions in the state of Maryland that have taken the survey in the same time frame. Not all MACC colleges have taken the survey, but the six or so colleges were comparable to HCC. Comparative data shows that the other colleges hit 50% or exceeded it, whereas HCC had some opportunity for improvement in the data. Jessica Miller asked about the frequency with which other colleges take the CCSSE. Dr. Ranalli stated that some do it every other year. In terms of Student Engagement, part-time students are less engaged and in some other areas by quite a bit. In looking at Active and Collaborative Learning and Faculty/Student Interaction, Dr. Ranalli indicated that part-time students should be doing the same exercises as full-time students. The question was asked how many of the part-time students were online. For online students, Academic Challenge remained about the same, Student Effort about the same, lower on Faculty/Student interaction, slightly lower support for learners, Active and Collaborative learning definitely a difference there.

David Grimes asked how the survey questions were assessed. For example, was there one question for Active and Collaborative Learning or aggregated from multiple questions? Dr. Ranalli pointed out that it is aggregated and then they run stats to weight and put into a factor.

For Student Persistence and Retention which included items of working, caring for dependents, whether they feel academically prepared, and financial stressors was refreshing information because our students have the availability of scholarships, our students are a little lower on being stressed out about finances than other groups. Our students are supported financially.

Because Dr. Klauber is pushing for proactive advising and retention alerts that identify students based on the data and have someone contact them, it was interesting that 40.6% felt they did not need anyone to contact them. In reviewing Yes/No; 21.5% said “yes” someone has reached out to me; 37.9% said no. Dr. Ranalli indicated to the Board of Trustees that she wants to see the “No” shrink and the “Yes” get larger. It was noted that students feel that they are getting prompt feedback on their work and very few of the students indicated that they never get prompt feedback.

In the Student Support area which covered how important are some of the services at HCC, academic advising, planning, career counseling, peer/other tutoring, skills labs; Peer/other tutoring 73.8% indicated that they never used that service. It was noteworthy, that HCC Students, 78.7% indicated that they never skip class.

For Guided pathways and mental health, Dr. Klauber used some of the data for the Wellness Center and Dawn Schoenberger has also expressed interest in credit for prior learning. The survey data was enlightening for them. When asked, how many credits have you received for prior work experience or industry credentials; 78.6 students said none and 23.5% indicated they were getting information from their instructors. For mental health is a priority at this college, 76.8% of students feel that mental health is a priority at HCC. The majority of students, 97% said they did not need help with substance abuse issues, while 43.7% said they knew where to go to get help. The barrier to help was a lack of resources which included time, money, lack of transportation, all pointing to the rural nature of our campus.

Dr. Ranalli concluded, noting that there were implications of the data in comparing full-time vs part-time students, how we encourage engagement among those part-time students and how we get the number up. She reviewed and identified the great initiatives on campus. It was noted that HCC is putting resources in the right places. She also noted that working on the Title III grant will ensure our online instruction is of quality, getting students into First Year Experience courses, and getting assistance from Laura Scafide’s office. The data shows that these are really good initiatives. In five years if we are successful with the grant, we will see movement on some of these items. SLOA data can also help with the active and collaborative learning piece, so we will continue to work on the SLOA data. Dr. Klauber’s interest in a Wellness Center is a great initiative because

this resource will help students with wellness and mental health needs. The Guided pathways initiative that features credit for prior learning will help our students who have worked out in industry giving them some credit to help them get through their studies. She notes that her office will continue the assessment of advising and student support areas, looking at that data, and looking for opportunities for improvement. Faculty development will be another area of interest in order to continue to support faculty to help them be the best and improve upon faculty/student interaction. There will be a review of policies that might be barriers for or support for better student engagement.

Dr. Ranalli ended the meeting and stated that she would share the PowerPoint presentation with all present.

Adjournment: 3:20 pm.