

2010 - 2011

**Mohave Community
College**

**Office of the Dean of
Student Services**

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

The Student Success report intends to provide an overview of ongoing initiatives that lay the foundation for future improvements in student access, retention, completion, and transfer, at MCC. Included is information on assessment for college readiness, learning assistance, financial aid, advising, student retention, graduation and transfer and, enrollment management. Each of these areas plays an integral part in student success at MCC, and in the overall objective of marked improvement in student outcomes.

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Introduction

The Student Success report intends to provide an overview of ongoing initiatives that lay the foundation for future improvements in student access, retention, completion, and transfer, at MCC. Included is information on assessment for college readiness, learning assistance, financial aid and advising, student retention, graduation and enrollment management. Each of these areas plays an integral part in student success at MCC, and in the overall objective of marked improvement in student outcomes.

Complete to Compete

Many experts agree that the number of college educated and trained Americans will need to expand significantly in the coming years in order for the country to remain competitive in the global economy and maintain a vibrant democratic society. Furthermore, it has become clear that there is a direct correlation between learning and earning: it is becoming more and more difficult for an individual to earn a livable wage without some form of postsecondary education.

According to the Arizona Department of Commerce, by 2014, almost 80% of all jobs in Arizona will require some postsecondary education or training beyond high school; the state's most educated workers will be leaving the workforce and within the next ten years and roughly 167,000 jobs in Arizona requiring a Bachelor's degree will become vacant due to "Baby Boomer" retirements.¹ Postsecondary Education Opportunity speculates that even though the college-age population is skyrocketing, the state's college-going rate is not.

¹ Arizona Department of Commerce, Research Administration
Mohave Community College

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Significant disparities in educational attainment persist. It is predicted that less than a decade from now, over half of Arizona's high school graduates will be from racial and ethnic groups that historically have had relatively low educational attainment rates. In order for our citizens and region to prosper MCC understands that it must find ways to ramp up college access and completion without sacrificing educational quality. Moreover, with public financing strained to the breaking point we must do so in ways that are affordable to taxpayers, students and families in our service area.

Mohave Community College continues efforts to position itself to make vast improvements in the area of student success and completion. The focus of this report on student success describes how MCC is meeting compliance guidelines outlined in the National Governors Association's—Complete to Compete: Common College Completion initiative.

The Enrollment Management Data Review (Appendix One) is a comprehensive yearly report of data pertaining to enrollment management, student demographics, and student success that is relevant in developing strategies and assessing progress for enabling student success. It presents metrics that quantify the access to and completion of an academic program and the successful graduation and/or transfer to a baccalaureate campus and, progress metrics that measure student retention from semester-to semester or year-to year. These metrics are used to track student progression in a way that allows early intervention and support to increase the likelihood of success and transfer.

Access and Success

Assessment for College Readiness

The assessment screening diagnoses students' readiness for college courses, especially those that require minimum skill levels in reading, English composition or mathematics.

Mathematics assessment scores will be valid for two years from the date of the most recent assessment. Assessment screening and a follow-up session with an advisor provide students with complete information about their academic standing and the various MCC programs available. A random sampling of new students taking the reading, writing and math assessment yielded the following results.

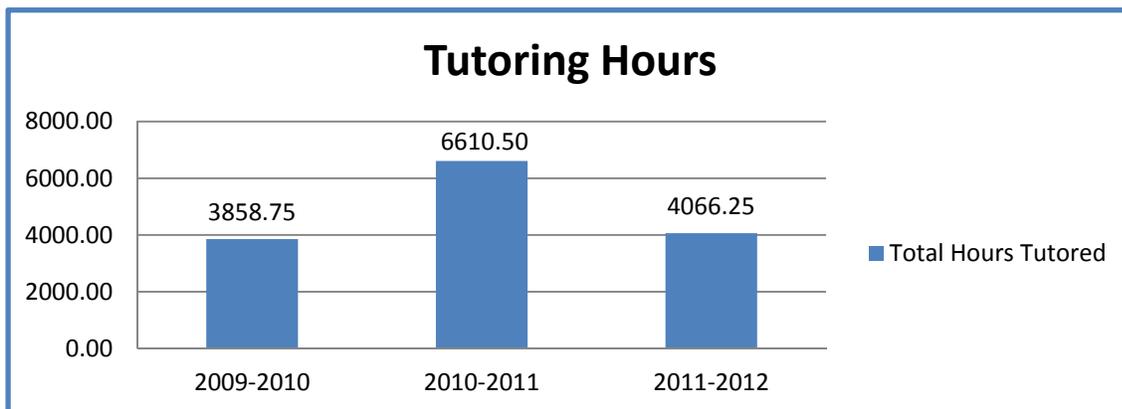
Minimum Score	Writing=70	Reading=74	College Math=46
Average	56	72	24

Students who do not meet minimum college-readiness scores arrive underprepared for college level work in math and English. Students who are required to enroll in transitional classes have significant hurdles to overcome to successfully meet their goals such as enhancing job skills, completing a program, or transferring to a four-year college. Student success initiatives include monitoring performance in basic skills, providing tutoring opportunities and developing learning communities. Learning communities have been formed and two instructors on two different campuses have teamed up to pilot the learning community concept for high-risk students.

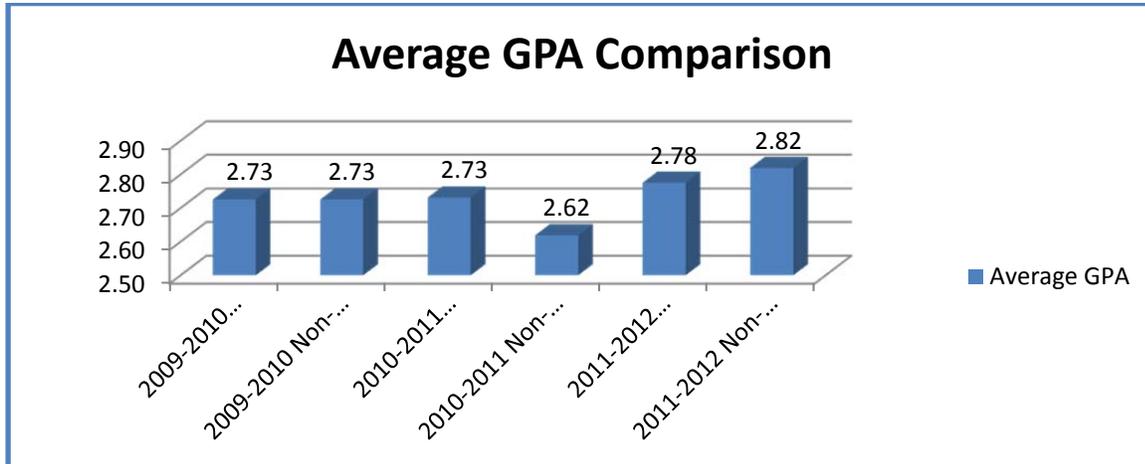
Title III has enhanced the implementation of its mission through initiating and participating in the assessment of and changes in teaching strategies, faculty development, and facilitating

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student centered and active learning approaches that are appropriate for the diverse student body we serve. The MCC Tutoring Program creates an environment that fosters student success by helping students develop learning strategies necessary to reach their academic potential. The program also teaches students how to apply these skills in college and in life. In addition, the MCC tutoring program has partnered with MCC faculty and staff to empower students to assume responsibility for their education, to be self-motivated and successful in their chosen field of study, and to function as a productive member of society. Learning Assistance Centers (LACs) continue to play a pivotal role in providing students with tutoring services and other support resources to achieve academic success. LACs generally provide math labs, reading labs, and writing labs, along with software and textbook resources for students outside of classroom time and laptop computers for student use in the center. The four [Learning Assistance Centers](#) (one on each of the four MCC campuses) are the result of the Title III grant and MCC's focus on student success. Tutors provide group tutoring in the centers and may also visit classrooms to explain to students how to get help. These classroom visits are focused on the developmental math and English classes.



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Financial Aid and Access

For the low income first generation college student financial aid is critical to college access and success, but finding out about it at the right time and taking full advantage of it can be particularly challenging. Grants, scholarships and student loans can go a long way towards covering college costs, and provide people in rural areas with adequate financial aid to attend and complete college.

MCC has presented and facilitated financial aid workshops on campus, in the high schools and at other locations in its service area. For a number of years the college has participated in Arizona College Goal Sunday: a statewide initiative that provides financial aid information and help from financial aid professionals and other qualified volunteers to students and families seeking college financial aid. The objective is to assist students and parents in completing and filing the FAFSA early in the application period when the greatest amount of financial aid is available. Students and families can get help by attending the annual in-person event (held in January or February) at each of the southern campuses. Financial aid and financial literacy

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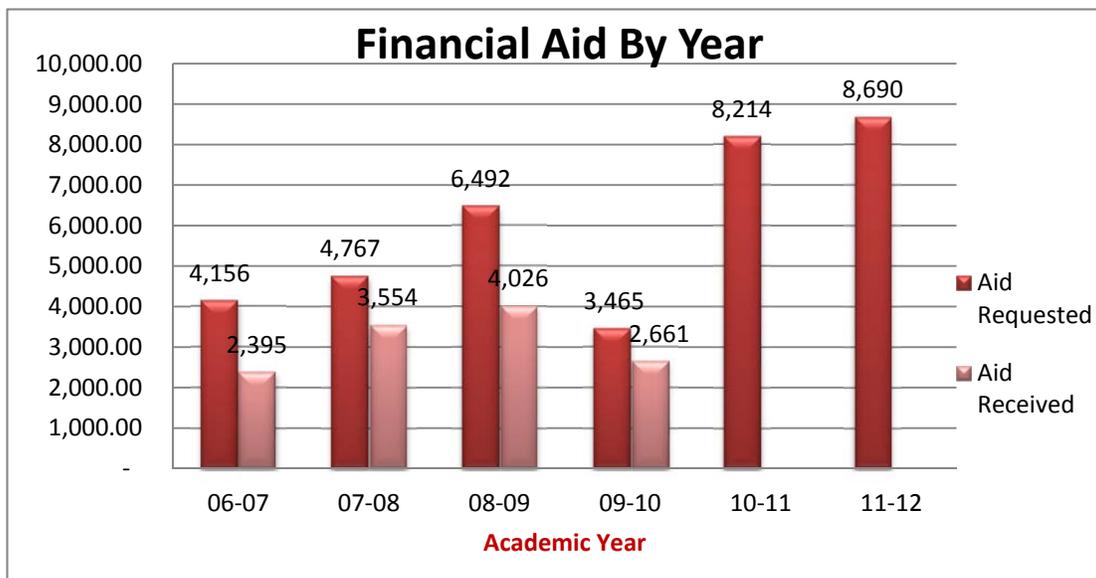
information has also become an important part of new student orientation and in the student success course curriculum.

Financial Aid and Student Success

It is well known that there is a direct relationship between financial aid and student success.

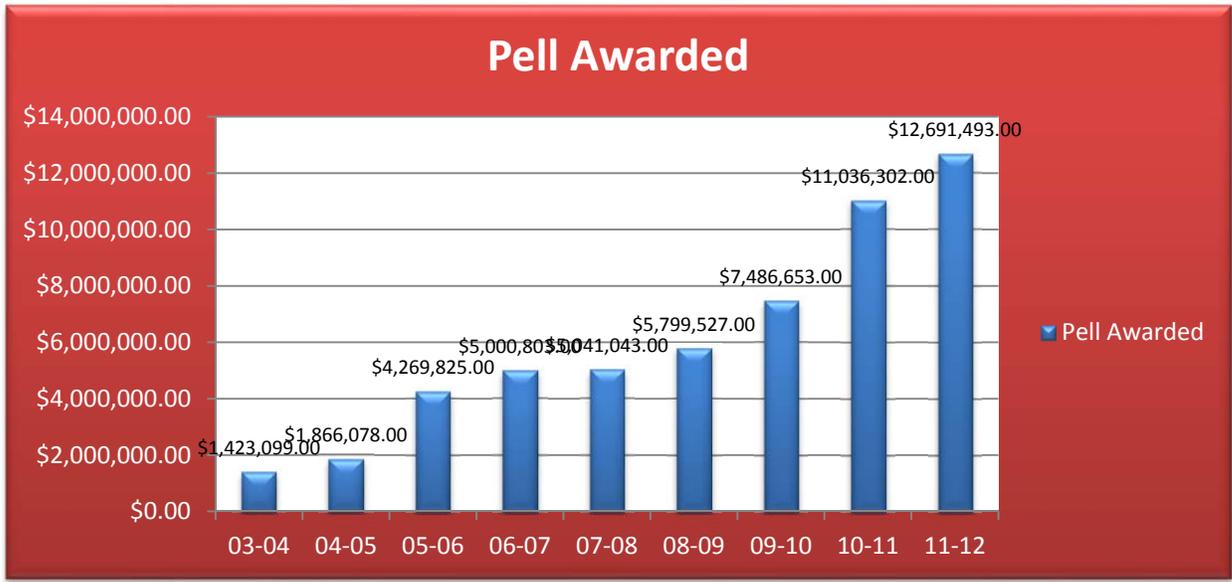
Researchers have discovered that grants and scholarships have a significant impact on student persistence especially among low-income first generation college students.

The financial aid program at MCC continues to grow with 8690 students applying for financial aid by April of 2011. This represents an increase of 476 applicants over the last year.



Students received nearly \$24million in 2011-2012. Pell Grants continue to be the most important foundation to MCC student’s financial aid portfolio as evidenced by the following charts.

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Scholarships also play an important part in student success providing extra incentives for retention and completion.

Approximately 51% of new students receive financial aid (FA), while 68% of returning students receive aid. As the disbursement of financial aid continues to grow at MCC, staff emphasis on Financial Aid and financial literacy to help students understand the impact of over-borrowing has become increasingly acute.

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Standards of satisfactory academic progress are designed to help students understand that they are equal partners with the college, the government and/or the scholarship donor in their success. Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is measured quantitatively and qualitatively to ensure academic progress in terms of grade point average and completion of courses. The Financial Aid Department calculates satisfactory academic progress at the end of each semester to confirm student's continued eligibility to receive aid. If a student fails to make qualitative or quantitative progress, financial aid is put on hold until an appeal is granted. The appeal process changed this year in that students who do not accomplish a satisfactory academic performance must now meet with an academic advisor who will determine, through mathematical calculation, the students' probability of success in the chosen program of study.

If an appeal is granted, the student is allowed to enroll for the next semester with FA, but the student must show satisfactory progress. If a student appeal is denied, the student is no longer eligible for FA, but may attend at a reduced load, by paying for their classes without federal funding. The reduction in load is designed to help the student succeed. MCC continually monitors their progress and their success.

Financial aid employees, as well as staff across the college are putting major emphasis on advising students regarding the proper load size and its relationship to academic success. Financial Aid videos have been produced with the assistance of the student services and admissions staff and are available via the MCC website. MCC's comprehensive student success strategies support the fact that there must be a culture change. The Financial Aid function was centralized during the study period to provide greater efficiency in processing at

the district office. As a result the campus staff have more time for financial aid counseling. Financial aid is completely integrated into the colleges' information system and now students can see their financial aid status and accept their awards online from any computer with internet access.

Dual Enrollment

Although there are many initiatives and programs designed to facilitate the transition to college and increase students' chances, Dual Enrollment continues to be an significant part of the colleges service to the community and encourages and allows high school students to take college courses to earn college credit while still in high school. Dual enrollment through a credit-based transition-to- college programs not only allows high school students to earn college credit but also prepares them for the academic rigors of college. Traditionally used to accelerate the progress of high-achieving college-bound, it facilitates college access and success for middle-and even lower-performing students.

The College has established Dual Enrollment agreements with seven local school districts. The agreements with Kingman Unified School District # 20, Colorado River Unified School District # 2, Lake Havasu Unified School District # 1, Colorado City Unified School District # 14, Littlefield Unified School District #9, Telesis Preparatory Academy, and Mohave Accelerated Schools serve almost 500 dual enrollment students each semester, and provide students with over 10,000 credit hours of course work each year, allowing them to get a head start on their college career.

Dual enrollment gives high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to work towards a degree or certificate earning up to 30 college credits while attending high school classes.

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Each of the campuses holds orientation sessions for students and parents. A team of MCC advising and academic staff are on hand to answer questions and information about the dual enrollment program. MCC admissions counselors maintain close relationships with dual enrollment students throughout their dual enrollment period. Recruitment efforts to enroll these students are ongoing with staff providing information about financial aid and enrollment after graduation. Each high school student interested in dual enrollment must take the college-readiness assessment to ensure they are ready to take college level classes. The results of COMPASS assessment testing of sophomores and juniors provide more realistic information to students about the skills that they will need to succeed. MCC staff also provides advice and guidance to the high school students who took the assessment test but did not meet the requirements for college level classes.

Retention

SOAR - Student Orientation, Advising and Registration and Retention

Orientation to College

New Student Orientation gives students an opportunity to learn about higher education, and about the many resources and support services available for college success. Topics include: student motivation and success behaviors, rights and responsibilities, college vocabulary and definitions, time management, campus tours, group advising and schedule building, college technology and course registration. New Student Orientation is mandatory for first time college students. The orientation class will be facilitated by an experienced orientation leader who is committed to helping new students make a smooth transition to college.

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Orientation leaders are always available to answer student questions, hear concerns and share student's excitement about MCC. New Student Orientation is not only meant to be educational; it's also meant to be fun. Our creative orientation leaders design innovative and entertaining activities for new students to learn more about each other while familiarizing themselves with MCC. The New Student Orientation class (ORT 101) is designed to support new students as they begin their journey at MCC. During the course of the program, we gradually introduce new students to life at the college, from academics to technology and, community resources and support services.

Academic Advising

Advising students is an area of high impact for students and staff, and it plays a pivotal role in the success and retention of students. Academic advising is an extension of quality teaching. What we value in students' learning—critical thinking and communication skills, research and analytical skills—can all be put into practice through academic advising. Just as the most effective classes are those in which the students are actively engaged, the best advising assumes both student and advisor share responsibility for the process.

MCC is always striving for improvements in this area, and this year is no different. Many recommendations were made to improve advising during the student services strategic planning sessions. Title III is assisting student services with developing a program of that utilizes several methods of advising each tailored to the individual student's needs.

Intentional advising assigns each campus professional advisor to two or three remedial classes. The advisor visits the class two or more times per semester to provide information

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on support and other services at the college. Intrusive advising is used when it becomes necessary to contact a student for whom an early alert has been filed and intervention is needed to help the student succeed. Developmental or appreciative advising is utilized during a regular advising session to help students develop a degree or career plan. The college believes it is important to get students into advising early because they find that students who are clear about their goals for education and careers are more likely to complete. The first time a student comes to college they are required to meet with an advisor and at least once each semester thereafter. The advisors distinguish degree seekers from course takers and work with the degree seekers to develop academic plans and help students keep on track.

During the study period the college began to shift from the philosophy of a “hand holding” approach to one “that empowers students to navigate themselves.” The college then began to rely heavily on technology to provide services—no only online registration and financial aid award acceptance but online advising and orientation. Each student services offices has a bank of computers for student use to access information o, complete an admissions application, make an appointment to see an advisor or schedule an assessment test.

Project Achievement

It is widely held in higher education that failure rates are higher for students who take online courses. Project Achievement targets student groups taking online classes who may be at-risk of failing to complete their educational goals. The target groups include students who are also enrolled in transitional courses, students on financial aid appeal, students in certain programs and students who are the first generation in their family to attend college.

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The project embraces an array of specifically-catered services and interventions such as tutoring, advising, orientations and workshops that focus on the groups needs and connects them with MCC staff who provide a personal contact and touch to their world at MCC.

Consistent and meaningful relationships with designated staff members are key to the success of this program. It begins with a mandatory hour-long orientation conducted by an advisor (before or immediately after open registration) where participants will meet each other, the advisor, tutor and any other essential parties to go over the specifics of the program and expectations.

Group advising is the next step and one advisor is designated as the point of contact for all of the participants' advising needs. The designated advisor schedules group advising times to check in with all participants and to provide direction. At this time, the advisor listens to group concerns about courses, etc. and follow-ups with appropriate additional services and ideas as necessary.

Tutoring is an integral part of this program. All participants are introduced to and set-up with one specific tutor to guide and assist the entire group, again, at designated times. The tutor is selected not only based on academic skill and knowledge, but also on personal skills and how they relate to students. If students in the project receive an Early Alert, the process is the same with faculty members submitting an early alert notification.

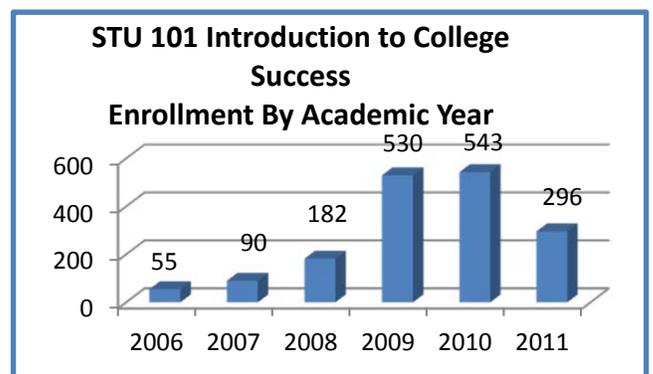
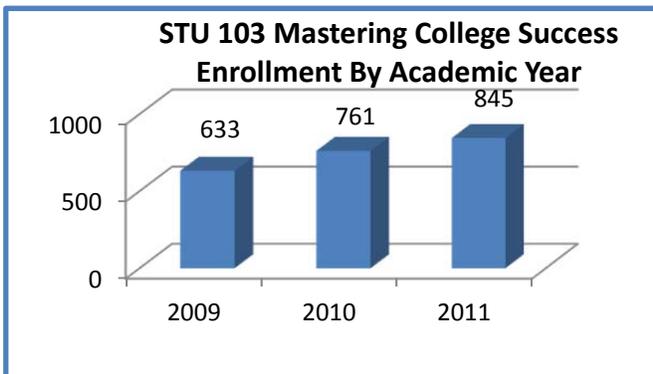
After the advisor receives the Early Alert, a follow-up with the student is made to provide additional resources and services as needed based on the cause for their distress. Instructors are also involved and are kept apprised of students that are part of the project and to include. At least two presentations or webinars throughout the semester are mandatory for all project participants. Subjects or guests vary depending on the group and the determined needs.

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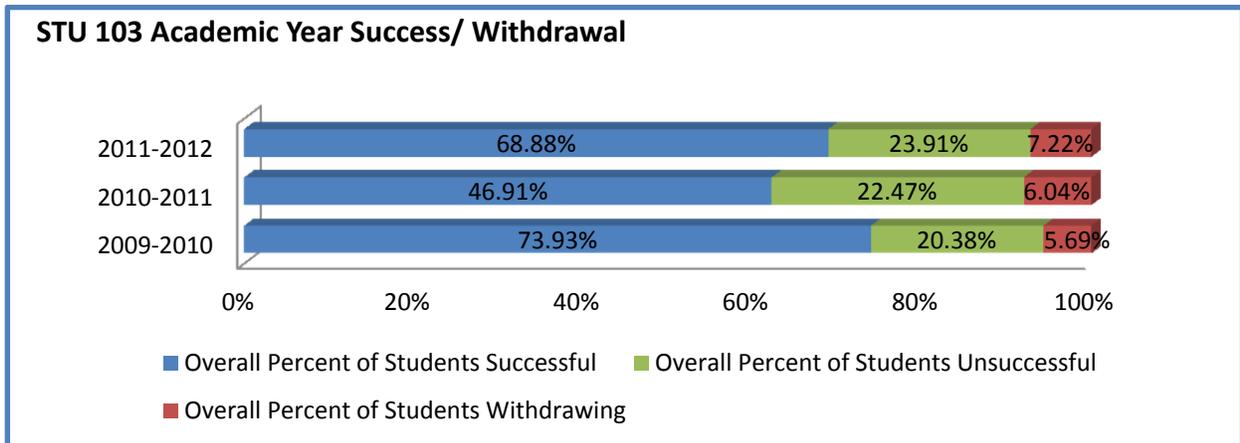
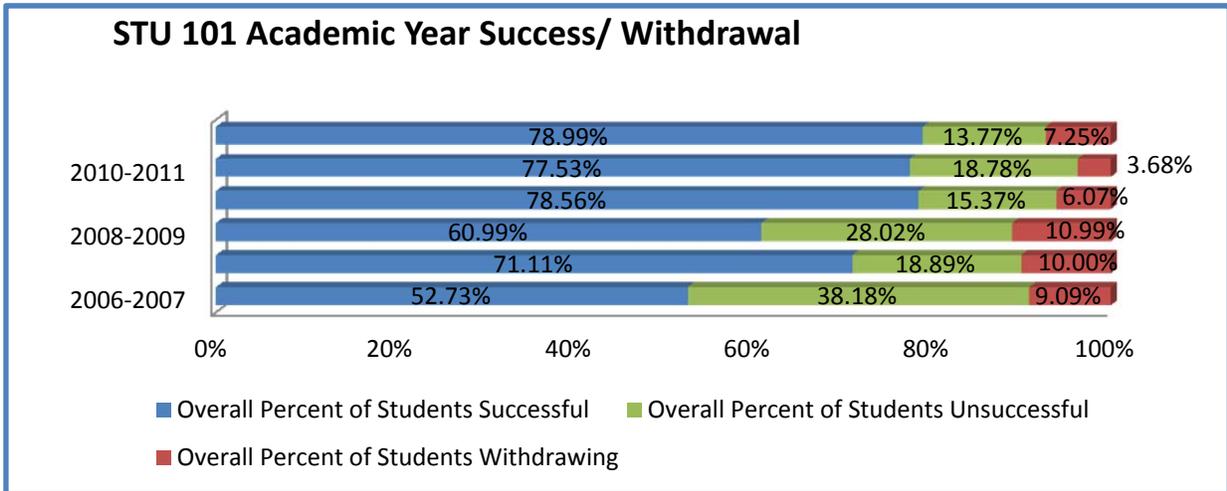
Included are stress management, career exploration, student leaders, motivational speakers and more.

Student Success Courses

Research indicates that students are more likely to persist and be successful in college when they establish (1) relationships with other students, (2) relationships with faculty, and (3) connections with the college itself. This course will facilitate all of these relationships. In addition, the course will assist students in developing an awareness of their goals, their behaviors, and their strengths as learners and will then provide effective strategies for attaining their goals, strengthening behaviors that lead to successful outcomes, and maximizing their learning potential. STU 103 AND STU 101 are designed to enhance the skills of entering freshmen to facilitate their ability to succeed in the college environment. Topics include student/instructor expectations, learning styles, time management, making use of college resources, listening/note taking/testing strategies and studying for success.



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Early Alert – Early Intervention

The influence of college faculty on student retention can be dramatic. Faculty usually has more frequent and continuous contact with students than any other institutional representative. Faculty influence can be even more dramatic for commuter and part-time students who may have little or no time for out-of-class interactions with other college personnel. The fact remains that faculty can heavily influence and structure students' out-of-class activities with respect to the college (e.g., reading assignments, library research, and

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utilization of campus resources) and thereby influence their contact with other institutional representatives and support personnel.

Early and continuing intervention can mean the difference between a successful student and one who might give up. Early alert is a program designed to identify, as early as possible in the semester, students who are at risk of not succeeding. Instructors look for known signs, such as non-attendance, lack of focus, late assignments, poor quiz results, and erratic behavior, to set the process in motion. The Early alert system is web-based so that instructors can use it from anywhere.

Once an instructor identifies any of the many early signs of a student at risk, the instructor flags the student. This action notifies the early alert specialist at the student's home campus to initiate the early intervention process. Intervention can range from a simple phone call to intrusive advising and/or referral to internal or external support services.

MCC has many resources available for students to help them improve performance. The college provides supplemental instruction, tutoring, math, reading, and writing labs, faculty one-on-one time, advising, and counseling services. Each service is available upon the request of any student in need. The college updates and posts on the website a comprehensive listing of external support services in the [Community Resource Guide](#). This guide was created to provide resources to assist students who may be at risk of not succeeding because of factors beyond academics. Although the Early alert – Early intervention program is designed to identify at risk students and proactively initiate all support services, these services are available to all MCC students as a part of the college's overarching student success initiative.

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Graduation and Transfer

Ninety-four percent of the graduates who completed the Graduate Survey indicated they had accomplished goals. Half of the students who completed the survey said they did not intend to transfer while 38% said that they did. Of those who reported a desire to transfer, 30% said they were going to NAU, 31% to ASU and 5% U of A and 34% out of state.

DEGREES AWARDED

Nursing	103
General Studies	34
Medical Assisting	31
Liberal Arts	24
Business Administration	21
Associate of Arts: General	17
Elementary Education	16
Dental Hygiene	15
Social & Behavioral Science Emphasis	13
Business Administration	13
Physical Therapist Assistant	11
Surgical Technology	10

CERTIFICATES

Medical Assisting: Insurance Coding	63
Residential HVAC	32
Commercial Refrigeration	32
Medical Assisting: Phlebotomy	29
Practical Nursing	26
Truck Driver Training	24
Business Foundations	18
Medical Assisting: General	17
Professional Applications	15
Accounting	13
Admin Office Management	12
General Management	10
Culinary Arts & Hospitality	10

Articulation and Transfer

Over the past year, MCC, ASU, and NAU have more actively pursued partnership programs to increase opportunities for MCC students to achieve a baccalaureate degree. As a result, several new innovative pathways have been created and others are under development.

Arizona State University	Criminal Justice & Criminology – BS; Psychology – BS & BA; Business – BA; Elementary Education - BAE	Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG): 2+2	ASU In-State Tuition: Tuition Commitment Program (max 5% increase for tuition cohort)
Arizona State University	Criminal Justice & Criminology – BS; Business and Communication - BA	Augmented On-Line Program: 2+2	Reduced tuition rate based upon PELL Grant funding level.
Arizona State University	Interdisciplinary Studies –	Augmented	Reduced tuition

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	BIS	On-Line Program: 75-45	rate based upon PELL Grant level
Northern Arizona University	Interdisciplinary Studies – BSIS & BAIS	90-30 Transfer Program: Dual Admission	Arizona In-State Tuition
Northern Arizona University	Numerous Degrees – BS & BA	MCC2NAU: Dual Admission	Arizona In-State Tuition; Merit Scholarships available for up to \$ 2000/yr
Northern Arizona University	Administration of Justice, Emergency Services Management, Technology Management – BA or BS	90-30 Transfer Program: Dual Admission	Reduced Tuition for Extended Campus Students
Northern Arizona University	RN to BSN Program	Up to 90 credit hours	
Northern Arizona University	Bachelor of Applied Science	75 hours of community college credit.	

Transfer Opportunities and Support

Students intending to transfer to another institution meet with a student services specialist to learn about the resources available and to facilitate transfer of MCC credits to the university. Among these resources are transfer guides developed by each university for their majors, the Course Equivalency Guide, which is used to determine transferability of MCC courses, and AZTransfer which is an online evaluation tool for transfer students. The number of MCC students who transfer to Arizona colleges and universities has steadily increased and initiatives that are underway to encourage degree completion at MCC first and then transfer to the university. MCC has greatly expanded the [transfer information](#) available online.

Enrollment Management

Design and Alignment of Student Services

The Student Services division conducted a program review and developed goals and objectives designed to promote student success. The design and re-structure of roles and responsibilities

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enabled the student services division to respond the challenges of providing student support services in a changing environment. While MCC has one-stop centers on all campuses Student Services Specialists trained in all aspects of Student Services functions created an environment where staff members began to work together and learn common answers to student questions and needs. This redesign resulted in lower traffic in offices, less wait-time and students given more attention to complicated problems. The centralization of financial aid processing to the district office resulted in more timely and efficient processing of financial aid awards.

Enrollment Management Services

Phase II of the student services re-design combined the Admissions/Recruitment, Enrollment Services and the Registrar's office resulting in The Office of Enrollment Management Services. The redesign and re-structure of roles and responsibilities enabled the student services division to more effectively respond to the needs of current and future students and a growing cohort of non-traditional and first-generation students,

Program Review

The primary goal of program review is to continuously improve service to students and student success. As a learning-centered college, everyone at MCC is continuously learning and working to develop innovative methodologies that empower students to succeed.

One aspect of this learning is to carefully study the current state of each academic program, measure how successful the program's students are, and set goals and objectives to guide program improvement efforts.

Program review is based on peer review and self-assessment. Program review has become the foundation upon which programs develop a rationale to advocate for their needs in achieving educational excellence. Program review reports are used to adjust the MCC

Strategic Plan and recommend adjustments to facilities, equipment, faculty, staff, and budget plans.

Conclusions

Over the past 12 months, MCC has made a concerted effort to improve student success across the college, but much work is still needed to reach satisfactory levels of retention and completion. Given the early stages of the life cycle for some of the initiatives and recent changes to existing programs, their success will not be known for some time, but MCC is collecting baseline data for later cohort statistical analysis.

This report, along with the comprehensive yearly data report that accompanies it, set the stage for MCC to take a leadership role in ensuring continuous improvements in student success and outcomes. The two provide supporting evidence of MCC's continued commitment to improve college completion rates, attainment and overall productivity in a new era of fiscal constraints coupled with demand for higher education.

As documented in the report, there are many student success initiatives under way at MCC, and many left to implement. MCC is poised and ready to do whatever it takes to ensure long term improvements in student outcomes.

Appendices –

Appendix One - Enrollment Management Data Report