



October 15, 2019

Mr. Ryan Purdy
President
Mid-Plains Community College
601 W. State Farm Road
North Platte, NE 69101

Dear President Purdy:

This letter is accompanied by the Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) Review form completed by a peer review panel. Mid-Plains Community College's QIP is approved.

Within the QIP Review form, you will find comments from the panel for your consideration as you proceed with your Quality Initiative. The panel reviewed the QIP for four areas:

- Sufficiency of initiative's scope and significance
- Clarity of initiative's purpose
- Evidence of commitment to and capacity for accomplishing the initiative
- Appropriateness of the timeline for the initiative

If you have questions about the panel's review, please contact either Kathy Bijak (kbijak@hlcommission.org) or Pat Newton-Curran (pnewton@hlcommission.org). For any questions about your Quality Initiative, contact Tom Bordenkircher, at tbordenkircher@hlcommission.org.

The Higher Learning Commission

Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal Review Form

Date of Review: 10/7/2019

Name of Institution: Mid-Plains Community College State: Nebraska

Institutional ID: 1897

Reviewers (names, titles, institutions): Dr. Thomas Hughes, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, Yavapai College; Mr. William Harting, Assistant Provost, Marian University

Review Categories and Findings

1. Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

- Potential for significant impact on the institution and its academic quality.
- Alignment with the institution's mission and vision.
- Connection with the institution's planning processes.
- Evidence of significance and relevance at this time.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates acceptable scope and significance.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate acceptable scope and significance.

Rationale and Comments: (Provide 2–3 statements justifying the finding and recommending minor modifications, if applicable. Provide any comments, such as highlighting strong points, raising minor concerns or cautions, or identifying questions.)

Mid-Plains Community College makes a compelling case for the relevance and significance of its Quality Initiative project. The College began exploring accreditation of its early college program with the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) in the fall of 2012. The time is right to build on the momentum gained from receiving approval from the Nebraska Association of Community and Tribal Colleges and the creation of an office of Early Entry and Program Development. The project will assist Mid-Plains with ensuring that the academic rigor of its dual credit courses aligns with rigor and expectations of college-only coursework.

Regarding the project's scope, it is evident that the College has taken the time to study the situation, so Mid-Plains can ensure consistent guidelines and rigor as outlined in NACEP's accreditation standards. By meeting the NACEP standards, and improving the expectations and experience for both students and faculty, the proposal demonstrates significance and relevance.

2. Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

- Clear purposes and goals reflective of the scope and significance of the initiative.

- Defined milestones and intended goals.
- Clear processes for evaluating progress.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates clarity of purpose.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate clarity of purpose.

Rationale and Comments:

The goals for the proposed initiative are clearly set forth: to improve dual credit students (and parents) and faculty engagement; improve professional development opportunities for dual faculty; improve student success by guaranteeing rigor and aligning dual course taking with students' educational goals.

Of minor concern, is the lack of detail on how engagement activities and claims of improved quality will occur and how will leadership know whether and how much they have improved? We encourage initiative leadership to begin developing metrics to assess the impact of NACEP accreditation.

3. Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

- Commitment of senior leadership.
- Commitment and involvement of key people and groups.
- Sufficiency of the human, financial, technological, and other resources.
- Defined plan for integrating the initiative into the ongoing work of the institution and sustaining its results.
- Clear understanding of and capacity to address potential obstacles.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates evidence of commitment and capacity.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate evidence of commitment and capacity.

Rationale and Comments:

The proposal has direct links to the College's mission and strategic plan. Also, Mid-Plains went to great lengths to solicit internal and external stakeholders input in developing their QI project. Externally, the College developed a Statement of Principles and Standards for Dual/Concurrent Enrollment credit that has been approved by the Nebraska Association of Community and Tribal Colleges.

The College has identified groups (NACEP Self-Study Team & PIC Team) and created a new office of Early Entry that will provide leadership and manage resources to implement and sustain the project. In addition, the project has the support of senior leadership and the Board of Governors.

Appropriate funding for the project appears to have been allocated, and the proposal included a table outlining project expenses by activity.

4. Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

- Consistency with intended purposes and goals.
- Alignment with the implementation of other institutional priorities.
- Reasonable implementation plan for the time period.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates an appropriate timeline.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate an appropriate timeline.

Rationale and Comments:

The NACEP accreditation timeline is pre-determined by the third-party accreditor. Nonetheless, the schedule is consistent with a QI and the intended purpose and goals of the project. A description of QI activities and related timelines was provided in the proposal.

General Observations and Recommended Modifications

Panel members may provide considerations and suggested modifications that the institution should note related to its proposed Quality Initiative.

The strength in the proposal is the identification of a project as one needed to meet the College's mission and service area needs. In addition, Mid-Plains thoroughness in gathering internal and external support for the Quality Initiative is commendable. We believe the College will find that the changes initiated by this project will improve student engagement and success for Mid-Plain's growing early college student population. With interest, we will watch to see the outcomes of this project and wish the College our best in its endeavors.

Conclusion

- Approve the proposed Quality Initiative with or without recommended minor modifications. No further review required.
- Request resubmission of the proposed Quality Initiative.

Rationale and Expectations if Requesting Resubmission

Timeline and Process for Resubmission

(HLC staff will add this section if the recommendation is for resubmission.)