

# 2016 INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT HARFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## 1. Mission

Harford Community College (HCC) continues to embrace, follow, and strive to achieve the goals in the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Trustees in March of 2013. The HCC mission is:

*Harford Community College provides accessible, innovative learner-centered educational opportunities. As an open-access institution, the College promotes graduation, transfer, individual goal attainment, and career and workforce development. The College fosters lifelong learning, global awareness, and social and cultural enrichment.*

## 2. Institutional Assessment

### QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS

***Maryland Ready: 2013-2017 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education Goal 1*** (*Enhance the array of postsecondary education institutions and programs, and more effectively fulfill the evolving educational needs of its students*) motivates HCC to work toward excellence in student success, and the College continually strives to improve new and existing programs with an emphasis on student achievement. Goal 1 of the HCC Strategic Plan - *Recognizing the need for more students to achieve their goals, the College will pursue excellence in teaching, learning, and assessment* – serves as the basis for HCC’s focus on student learning and success and supports the ***Maryland Ready*** goals. HCC continues to exceed graduates’ expectations as evidenced by a recent survey of graduates showing that 96.5% of respondents are satisfied with their educational goal achievement (indicator 1). The College continues to focus on retention strategies to improve student success. HCC is currently exceeding benchmark for fall-to-fall retention of college ready students (indicator 3b) and maintains consistent performance of developmental student fall-to-fall retention (indicator 3a). The campus has implemented several accelerated or cooperative course offerings to keep students progressing toward their educational goals, exceeding benchmark for developmental completers after four years for two years in a row (indicator 4). The College’s focus this year has been on identifying indicators that signal early warning and signs of progress difficulties, bringing all areas of campus together to develop lines of communication and consistent processes. The Student Engagement, Retention, and Completion Committee (SERC), a cross-functional team charged with improving these critical student outcomes, has worked to bring ideas and solutions from across campus into one effective plan. Because of campus-wide efforts like this, HCC’s persist rates remain stable. Graduation-transfer rates are declining slightly (indicator 6), as the trend of students transferring prior to completion continues across the state. HCC is proud that its successful-persist rates after four years are at or nearing benchmark for all categories (indicator 5).

As an example of the College’s work to improve student success in attaining educational goals, licensure/certification exam pass rates exceed established benchmarks in all areas for the fourth year in a row (indicator 7). However, these programs go beyond preparation for passing

certification exams in established certification programs. In the Allied Health arena, employment readiness workshops are conducted 3 times per year, offering resume building, interviewing skills, and professionalism. The paralegal certification program also facilitates a career workshop, “The Paralegal Profession: from College to Career,” in all semesters aimed at preparing students for employment in their field post-completion. In collaboration with faculty in the Cybersecurity program, HCC arranged for a representative from the National Security Agency to come to campus to discuss and potentially recruit HCC students into their cooperative education program.

HCC continues to evaluate how well the College supports the community and students as they pursue academic goals. Expenditures by Function (indicator 10) distribution reflects HCC’s commitment to supporting students, with a slight increase in funds allocated to Academic Support, Student Services, and Other – which includes some upgrades in technology and student resources at HCC. The Enrollment Services and Student Development offices have embarked on a collaborative first semester and assigned advising model, intended to get students on the right track from the beginning, and keep them progressing toward the completion of their academic goals. To facilitate this process, the campus has invested in the DegreeWorks system to assist advisors and students in creating and managing academic plans, thus improving communication across campus. This program was launched in the spring of 2015. Since the program began, the Admissions Office has advised 2,142 new first time and dual-enrolled students. In addition, 4,399 new students who began their educational careers at other institutions were also admitted and advised on educational plans. The campus also worked with the HCC Foundation *Grants for Innovation* program to purchase Success Navigator, a non-cognitive assessment tool, for students to utilize at their convenience via laptops provided in the Learning Center.

## **ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY INDICATORS**

In support of *Maryland Ready Goal 2* (Achieve a system of postsecondary education that advances the educational goals of all by promoting and supporting access, affordability, and completion) a goal in the College’s Strategic Plan states that the College will “Strengthen [its] partnership with local schools to increase the readiness of high school graduates for college.” HCC is working to strengthen and expand enrollment (indicators 11a, 11b, and 11c). The Enrollment Services department implemented the College’s first Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan to stabilize and increase enrollment and re-enrollment over the next three years, through 2018. The fall 2015 new student enrollment goal of 1,710 students was met and surpassed by 2.4%, ending with a final enrollment of 1,752 new students. HCC welcomed a five-year high of high school student enrollment in FY 2016, with 535 high school students enrolled at HCC. This represents a 31.8% increase over the past 3 years (indicator 15). The campus also experienced a slight increase in market share of first-time, full time freshmen over fall 2014 (indicator 12); the market share of part-time undergraduates remains stable (indicator 13). HCC continues to seek opportunities to partner with county high schools, increasing high school iPlan sessions to 13 Harford County Public School (HCPS) high schools, one county private high school, and the HCPS Alternative Education School. The existing enrollment process supports first year student success by offering prospective students three methods to enroll at HCC: the High-School iPlan, the Group iPlan, and the Self-Paced iPlan. In FY2016, the campus held 25 High School iPlan sessions for 401 registered students, and another 18 Group

iPlan sessions for 183 additional students. Students who registered for an iPlan but did not attend are being followed up by admissions specialists to invite them into a summer self-paced iPlan or to meet with a specialist individually. Each county high schools had at least one application/test day, with most having multiple days in the fall semester.

Helping students gain access to their educational goals has allowed the campus to achieve a 4 year high of total awards in FY2016, sending 1,059 students off with a career degree, transfer degree, or certificate (indicator 16). This represents a 19.6% increase over FY2012, and exceeds the established benchmark. Transfer degrees awarded increased over 25% from FY2012, also demonstrating the trend toward students seeking access to a 4 year institution beyond the community college experience. New in 2015, HCC developed *On Course* student success workshops geared toward the promotion of independent learning and goal attainment. Workshops provided strategies for creating success in college and life. Each workshop included effective study behaviors, with a focus on non-cognitive strategies in areas such as personal responsibility, self-motivation and management, confidence, and an attitude of lifelong learning.

HCC has seen an enrollment decline in continuing education areas. Community education and lifelong learning annual course enrollments dropped almost 20% from FY 2012 (indicator 18b). Unduplicated head count dipped 25%. Responding to the changing needs of the market, increased emphasis has been directed toward community programming such as youth programs. Community Education and Training (CET) is addressing declining enrollments through target marketing of youth and adults through aggressive efforts in community outreach, rebranding of offerings and a strong overhaul of class offerings. This approach proved successful in the Driver Education area, with enrollments up 12% over summer 2016 sessions. Foreign language offerings have been rebranded for the “traveler” and new media programs in Podcasting and Blogging were created to reach the young adult market. Changing the approach to course offering, last year CET also increased options in professional development with a focus on adult learners who need to better their employment opportunities. These areas are up in both headcount and annual enrollment.

Adult basic skills and literacy courses (indicator 19a, 19b) have seen a decline in both enrollment and headcount reflecting a statewide trend of declining enrollments in adult education programs. The decline relates to course restructuring to streamline student progression and completion. Prior to FY 2015, classes were six weeks long. Students enrolled in two sessions in the fall, three in the spring, and two in the summer. Now, classes are twelve weeks long and students only enroll in one section per term. To compound this issue, the State has changed the high school drop-out age from 16 to 17 (and will increase to 18 in the near future) which also could be contributing to the decline in the number of students enrolling. Many of the students for these classes were drawn from this pool of adolescents who dropped out of high school. To increase enrollment, HCC is partnering with the Judy Center at Magnolia Elementary School to offer ABE/GED classes to parents and caregivers of students enrolled in the Judy Center. The College is also exploring opportunities to bring ABE/GED instruction back to the Working to Achieve Growth and Employment (WAGE) Connection of Harford County. The classes have not been held there for several years due to funding reductions. Alternate funding sources for the classes have been identified and are being put in place.

***Maryland Ready Goal 2: Access, Affordability, and Completion*** reinforces the importance of limiting tuition and fee increases and finding ways to preserve access to higher education. HCC continues to strive for affordability in a climate of flat funding from state and county sources. Tuition and Fees as a Percentage of Tuition and Fees at Maryland Public Four-Year Institutions at HCC remains among the more affordable compared to other two year institutions in the state (indicator 17). The College's goal is to stay below the 47% threshold while maintaining a balanced budget.

This year, the financial aid office partnered with Aberdeen Proving Ground Federal Credit Union (APGFCU) to provide a financial literacy program for students on campus including a Free Credit Report Day where students received credit reports and financial management counseling. Nearly 80 students and their families participated in this event. Providing students with multiple financial options and stronger financial literacy equips them with the tools necessary for success in school and beyond their completion goals. The Financial Aid office also offered a well-attended *You Can Afford College* event in which students—regardless of their intended college choice--their families, and community members receive information and one-on-one assistance to complete the FAFSA. Held each February, the event drew 142 attendees in 2016. Efforts to assist in retention include meetings and correspondence to students who are on financial aid warning and providing additional information via *Financial Aid TV* to teach students strategies for becoming successful students.

## **DIVERSITY INDICATORS**

HCC has a history of promoting diversity and creating an environment that is open and inclusive for students, visitors, and employees. ***Maryland Ready Goal 3*** (*Maryland will ensure equitable opportunity for academic success and cultural competency for Maryland's population*) aligns with the College's Strategic Plan which includes the value of diversity ("We embrace differences, respect intellectual and academic freedom, promote critical discourse, and encourage socio-cultural and global awareness") and objectives that relate to eradicating the attainment gap. Although the College experienced a drop in overall enrollment beginning in fall 2014, the number of underrepresented students as a percentage of total enrollment has continued to increase. HCC's minority credit student enrollment, at 26.0% as of fall 2015 (indicator 20a), is higher than the 20.6% service area minority population. Continuing education is also holding steady and nearing the newly established benchmark of 16.5% minority enrollment compared to service area population (indicator 20b). The Admissions Office has dedicated recruitment efforts in high schools in areas of the county which have the highest underrepresented populations in the county. The College enrolled 33.8% of the 2015 HCPS graduating class and 25% of those were minority students.

Beyond providing access for minority populations to campus, success and goal completion is addressed via structured outreach and enrichment programs for student success. HCC developed strategies to address the eradication of the attainment gap including implementation of the My College Success Network (MCSN) and Soar2Success (S2S). Established in July 2014, these programs are a network of services, events, staff and faculty geared toward empowering and supporting African American students. While MCSN is open to all students, newly enrolled

African American students are specifically invited to participate. Under the new assigned advising model, all newly enrolled African American students enrolled from 2014 through spring 2016 were assigned to a dedicated full-time Student Success Advisor. The Advisor provides academic, career, and transfer planning services to students in all majors. Students within the network who require up to 3 transitional courses, are low income, or are first generation college students are invited to participate in academic coaching, an additional layer of support. Two academic coaches provide intensive, ongoing support to these students. Past reporting showed inconsistent successful-persister rates after four years and graduation transfer rates after four years, both experiencing up-and-down trending over the last 4 reporting periods (indicators 23, 24). Research behind the MCSN demonstrates that early success and intervention leads to a pathway to educational success and goal attainment, thus considerable efforts are made in intrusive advising, mentoring, and success strategies for campus and beyond. Program participation and outcome results continue to indicate that the MCSN program is beneficial to students. Of the 144 students invited for fall 2015, 84% (121) students participated in the program and were retained for spring 2016 at a rate of 86%, exceeding the fall to spring retention goal of 70%.

The most promising aspect of MCSN is the academic coaching program, along with emphasis on understanding and maintaining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid. This is an important content item considering data from 2010-2013 indicate that approximately 70% of new African American students received some form of financial aid. In fall 2014, the academic coaching cohort had an average GPA of 2.26 compared to a 2.12 GPA of a similar cohort of students that did not participate in the program. In spring 2015, the trend continued with the coaching students earning a GPA of 2.06 and the comparison group earning a 1.89 GPA. Fall 2015 numbers show the same trend, academic coaching students received a 2.19 GPA compared to a 1.99 GPA for the comparison group.

Of particular focus in the 2016 academic year was the retention of students of color in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and computing programs. Best practices in teaching and learning have been implemented over the past year through the First Year Experience (FYE) across the STEM curriculum and through active learning strategies in mathematics courses. The impact of these efforts will be measured and published in early fall.

FY2016 saw the implementation of HCC's 2015-2017 Cultural Diversity Plan, emphasizing the value of inclusiveness as a priority for employees and students. Implemented in fall 2015, the Plan grew from previous Plans for Cultural Diversity and aligned two specific strategic goals as priority on campus; 1) Eradicate the attainment gaps based on income, race, gender, and ethnicity, and 2) Recruit and retain highly qualified employees.

In addition to these attainment efforts aimed at eradicating the attainment gap, the College also has worked to ensure a diverse workforce while retaining highly qualified employees. The College has set a goal of increasing the percentage of minority candidates for employment by 5% per year through 2020, with a goal of 12.6% for full-time faculty (indicator 21) and 20% for administrators and professional staff (indicator 22). Several initiatives have been implemented to achieve this goal, including targeted advertising. Human resources works closely with search committee chairs to ensure a diverse pool of candidates and finalists for employment

consideration to ensure fairness, equity, and commitment to the College's principle of diversity. In addition, the percentage of the College's internal promotions filled by non-white employees has increased over the past five years from 6% in FY 2012 to 11% in FY 2016.

## **INNOVATION**

Online course enrollments continue to increase in all areas. Credit enrollments in online courses has reached a 4-year high of 9,122 enrollments, an increase of 22.7% from FY2012 (indicator 26a). After a sharp dip in enrollments in FY 2014, continuing education online enrollments have sharply rebounded as there has been a concerted effort to add new opportunities and choices for online learning.

Harford continuously strives to be an innovator in curriculum development and course delivery. For example, hands-on interaction with area organizations and employers are valued and pursued by many areas. Job preparation and success are a priority and evidenced by events such as the Workplace Excellence Series. The series of 10 modules includes Reasonability (managing your mindset in the workplace), Respectability (thriving in the multi-generational workplace), Suitability (fitting into the culture of a workplace), and Dependability (maximizing your time in the workplace). All are geared toward asking the student to think as if they were the employer and were developed in collaboration with area employers. Each student leaves with a resume, a cover letter, practice interviews, and job search time. The spring session in May of 2016 started with 194 students, with over 50% of those completing all modules in the program.

## **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND VITALITY INDICATORS**

HCC is a vital community partner and is invested in the economic success and business growth and development within Harford County, fully supporting *Maryland Ready Goal 5 (Maryland will stimulate economic growth, innovation, and vitality by supporting a knowledge-based economy, especially through increasing education and training and promoting the advancement and commercialization of research.)* HCC's commitment to promoting lifelong learning is strong. Thus, the College emphasizes preparation for professional success and productivity throughout its programs. This translates to students who excel in the workforce beyond their experience on campus. The 2014 alumni survey demonstrates the success of such efforts and the success of students with nearly 90% responding that they are employed full-time in their field of study (indicator 27). The survey also shows that close to 86% of respondents were satisfied with their level of job preparation received at HCC (indicator 28).

Enrollment in continuing education workforce development courses continues to slide; however, workforce training courses ending in government or professional certification is at a 4-yr high since 2012, with annual course enrollments up over 48% (indicator 30b). This signals a clear trend toward employees needing higher levels of training at the time of hire, as well as a continuing demand for certification and professional training than experienced previously. HCC is looking into ways to better communicate with area employers and to keep abreast of the newest training modalities available, keeping students on the cutting edge of industry knowledge and training.

Not only are graduates satisfied, but employers are satisfied with services for their employees. In FY 2015, 100% of contracted businesses said they were satisfied or very satisfied on feedback surveys. This accomplishment can be attributed to HCC's emphasis on good communication with client businesses and a drive to understand the needs of the community and proficiency in best practices within many disciplines and industries.

## **DATA USE AND DISTRIBUTION**

HCC continues to work collaboratively with benchmarking data such as the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA). Harford is one of three Maryland community colleges to participate in this evolving national endeavor and looks forward to the opportunity to make comparisons on effectiveness and student success as more and more schools participate in the process.

As the campus institutionalizes the use of external benchmarking data such as VFA, HCC has also embraced the use of data and information to support decision-making and create opportunities for continuous improvement. In the Enrollment Services department, in collaboration with Institutional Research (IR) and the Mathematics department, modeling has been developed to better inform the campus about students who do not return to campus from semester to semester. Based on several demographic, academic, and student engagement factors, the model generates a retention "score" telling the campus which students are very likely to re-enroll, which students are "on the fence" for various reasons, and which students are not likely to return to campus. Advisors and other trained staff reach out to the students in the middle two quartiles of retention scores to try and resolve issues that are inhibiting them from returning to campus. Students receive financial aid counseling, academic counseling, and any other type of assistance that the campus is in a position to provide. This has resulted in several successful semesters of helping struggling students to return and pursue their academic goals. Utilizing the SEM model for reaching the 554 spring 2015 students not registered for fall 2015, the process was able to facilitate 70 students to eventually register for fall 2015 and 25 more of those students were able to resolve barriers and register for spring 2016.

The success of the SEM retention modeling has led other departments to use data in creative ways such as predictive modeling. The Student Services department has begun building a model with the intention of better equipping advisors and academic counselors with data that can effectively target student needs earlier. The Advising model is a two-part process beginning with analysis of student application data and test scores. This modeling will examine pre-college variables to look for risk factors, enabling the identification of early opportunities for intervention.

The Student Engagement, Retention, Completion committee has been re-energized in FY 2016 to engage in efforts that specifically relate to student success and retention, particularly in areas that can make a positive impact on HCC Strategic Plan goals specifically using PAR indicators that support *Maryland Ready* goals. After a year of study and collaboration across campus divisions, the group has identified specific indicators and has championed the implementation of an early warning system to assist faculty and staff in identifying students who may be struggling and empower them to engage with the student to point them toward appropriate assistance. Although

ambitious, when implemented, this process will greatly improve communication and the ability to identify and assist students at HCC.

### **Harford Community College Response to Commission Questions:**

*Regarding indicator 25a, Fall-to-fall retention of Pell Grant recipients*

**Commission Assessment:** *The College is to be commended for surpassing the benchmark set for fall-to-fall retention of Pell Grant recipients. Please discuss what factors, beyond the financial aid awards discussed in the College's 2015 Performance Accountability Report, may have contributed to exceeding this goal and whether the College expects this trend to continue in the future:*

Campus advising and financial aid professionals have spent significant time and energy working with individual students to inform them about requirements related to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and in following up individually with students who are in danger of losing aid due to the SAP requirements. Advisors meet with students who are appealing SAP requirements in order to retain these struggling students. Additionally, the My College Success Network (MCSN) academic advising and coaching model means that struggling students receive highly individualized attention as staff work to help students improve and thus retain their financial aid.

*Regarding indicator 31, number of business organizations provided training and services under contract; indicator 32a and 32b, enrollment in contract training courses*

**Commission Assessment:** *The number of contracts decreased 36.8% from 2011 to 2014 and concomitantly the enrollments in these courses decreased over the same period of time. Please discuss the factors underlying this decrease and whether the College expects this trend to continue:*

Contract training in workforce development courses have declined over the past few reporting periods. This decline is attributed to several factors, notably increased competition from outside training vendors, the decline in the overall economy providing for less corporate training dollars available, and companies conducting internal training only. In order to reach more businesses and receive more contract training partnerships, HCC has strategically planned and implemented an individual "meet and greet" with 62 companies within the County that are either expanding, are currently producing a product, or have only been in the County for two years or less. This personal approach has already yielded new contracts in the leadership, manufacturing, and hospitality areas. This approach will continue each semester as the goal is to reach and retain 50 business contracts annually.

### **3. Community Outreach and Impact**

HCC has taken a wide variety of opportunities to partner with and engage its community, and the campus offers many enrichment and entertainment options for people who reside in the County and beyond. In FY 2016, staff participated and volunteered at over 20 events within the

community including fairs, expos, Chamber of Commerce activities, and family community days.

The campus goes to great effort to create opportunities for varied programming and partners with corporate and community groups to bring exciting events to HCC. The arts are supported on campus throughout the year with plays, musicals, ballet, and concerts for all interests and ages. A year-long partnership with National Geographic Live Speaker Series resulted in two excellent educational events that brought science and technology front and center in the community. HCC also coordinated the Futures 11 conference for rising high school juniors. The conference hosted 500 students and included workshops and networking events that focused on jobs and post-secondary education relevant to high school juniors. The campus coordinated and implemented the College and Career Fair at Aberdeen Proving Ground Federal Credit Union (APGFCU) Arena, hosting over 3,000 attendees, over 110 college/university representatives, 6 military representatives, financial institutions, and 34 career vendors—leveraging the long-standing partnership between HCC, Harford County Public Schools, and the Greater Edgewood Excellence in Education Foundation to become the premier College and Career fair in the area.

HCC continues to maximize Towson University in Northeast Maryland (TUNE) opportunities. In addition to the 7 currently established programs and articulation pathways serving almost 450 area students, FY 2016 will see the start of a new Nursing articulation pathway. TUNE, HCC, and Cecil College were pleased to announce the Associate-to-Bachelor's (ATB) Nursing Dual Enrollment Program. Recruitment for this program began in the spring for this new exciting accelerated learning program, with classes scheduled to begin in the fall 2016 term.

#### **4. Accountability Indicators**

See attached HCC 2016 Accountability Indicators Table.