

Assurance Argument

Maricopa Community Colleges-Estrella Mountain Community College - AZ

5/10/2016

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) has a mission statement that is broadly understood within the college and guides Estrella Mountain's operations.

Process

[EMCC's mission statement](#) was developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the college. Since Estrella Mountain is a learning college, values include shared governance and the representation of voices from across employee groups. In 2010, EMCC completed a two-year comprehensive review and enhancement of the mission; at that time, [employees](#) were joined by [community members](#) to ensure that the mission reflected Estrella Mountain's learning-centered philosophy and supported the [Maricopa County Community College District \(MCCCD\) mission](#).

Estrella Mountain's mission statement was presented to and approved by the Maricopa County Community College Governing Board in fall 2010. In spring 2011, EMCC's mission statement was widely publicized to employees, students and community members. EMCC's mission statement can be found on the college website, in the online Academic Catalogue, in the [Student Life & Leadership Information Handbook](#) and on digital sites and print media, including displays throughout the campus.

Consistency with Mission

Academic Programs

Estrella Mountain's academic programs are consistent with the college's stated mission, with *Developmental Education, General Education, Transfer Education, Workforce Development* and *Community Education* as identified purposes.

Since EMCC is an open-access public institution of higher education, the college has dedicated resources, space and personnel to meet the foundational academic needs of students who test into developmental education courses and enhance the skills required for students to be successful in a

diverse world.

Developmental education courses are designed to prepare students for success in college-level courses. Dissatisfied with the success rate in developmental education courses, EMCC formed a Developmental Education Committee (DEC) in fall 2010 to closely analyze student success and progress in developmental education courses and create strategies to increase success rates. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Encouraging more residential faculty members to teach developmental education classes
- Offering developmental education classes in various formats (online, hybrid, face-to-face, fast-track)
- Remodeling a building to centralize all tutoring services and co-locate faculty offices for residential faculty engaged in developmental education instruction
- Creating a Faculty Coordinator position to oversee the strategies developed by the DEC members
- Establishing English, Math and Reading Developers for developmental education to enhance developmental education instruction

Estrella Mountain has seen [success rates in developmental education courses increase](#) from 58% in 2009 to 77% in 2014. Ongoing, continuous improvement efforts focus on increasing success rates through accelerated learning in English, cooperative learning in Math and contextualized learning in Reading. Moreover, DEC members are focused on increasing student awareness of the significance of placement exams and preparing students to take placement tests. This is being done currently through the development of an informative video, of outreach with online placement test preparation modules and information for the website.

General Education aligns with Estrella Mountain's academic programs, including the college's STEM initiatives, Fine and Performing Arts programming and Honors program. The intent of the General Education program, which is to develop the attitudes and skills required of students in a diverse world, is reflected in the MCCCDC Curriculum Committee's General Education Statement. Adopted in 2002, the General Education Statement appears in EMCC's Academic Catalogue:

The general education core of the program of study for an Associate degree or a certificate helps students develop a greater understanding of themselves, their relationship with others and the richly diverse world in which they live. The general education experience provides students with opportunities to explore broad areas of commonly held knowledge and prepares them to contribute to society through personal, social and professional interactions with others. General education fosters students' personal development by opening them to new directions, perspectives and processes.

MCCCDC's Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) is a 35-38 semester-credit General Education certificate. MCCCDC students who plan to transfer to any of Arizona's three public universities can fulfill the lower-division general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees by completing an AGEC. The district's AGEC transfers as a block of credits that apply to graduation requirements for the AGEC-designated university major. AGEC credit, awarded for prior learning or for course work completion, was designed to apply to specific university majors and three AGEC blocks fulfill university requirements:

- Arizona General Education Curriculum in Liberal Arts (AGEC A)
- Arizona General Education Curriculum in Business (AGEC B)
- Arizona General Education Curriculum in Science (AGEC S)

Developed by faculty, Estrella Mountain's college [statement regarding General Education](#), first published in the Academic Catalogue in 2012, is as follows:

At Estrella Mountain, students experience a collaborative and stimulating environment which stresses a solid foundation of general education. Each facet of the Estrella Mountain experience is designed to provide students with the necessary information, knowledge, abilities, intellectual concepts and perspectives they need to achieve their academic and personal goals.

To assess Estrella Mountain's General Education program, college faculty identified seven [General Education Abilities](#):

- Communication
- Writing/Composition
- Information Literacy
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Critical Inquiry
- Social, Civic and Global Responsibility
- Technological Literacy

The Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAAC) assesses the General Education Abilities according to the [General Education Abilities Assessment Cycle](#), which involves collecting data, evaluating the data and making improvements on a cyclical basis. Student mastery of the general education abilities are measured using Bloom's Taxonomy. Faculty and staff who meet for the bi-annual Assessment Happens workshops learn about and assess the data, discuss changes for improvement and decide which improvements to implement.

[Transfer Education](#) aligns with EMCC's academic programs by creating opportunities for students to take 100 and 200 level courses that transfer to four-year institutions. MCCC'D's transfer agreements include the three Arizona public universities (Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona) and more than forty higher education institutions. Transfer partnerships benefit students by maximizing community college credits, providing dedicated advising and offering the following [financial incentives](#):

- Tuition and transfer scholarships
- Waiver of application fees
- Textbook waivers
- Special tuition incentives for military personnel

A purpose of Estrella Mountain's mission is to academically prepare students to enter the workforce through an institute experience. EMCC has the following nine institutes.

- Allied Health
- Business
- Culinary
- Energy
- Multimedia
- Networking Technologies
- Nursing
- Public Safety
- Teacher Education

[Institutes](#) are designed to provide career pathways and personalized support for students with faculty guidance and tailored advisement. Students can earn a Certificate of Completion, Industry Certification or an Associate of Applied Science.

[Community Education](#) is consistent with EMCC's mission of lifelong learning. Estrella Mountain's community education serves a wide variety of local residents, ranging in age from six to sixty. Diverse program offerings provide opportunities for community members to learn about computers, culinary, health and wellness, languages and the performing arts. EMCC's "Kid's College" teaches multiple age children through hands-on learning and offers a variety of classes, including cooking, science and reading. The learning opportunities are available in flexible and convenient non-credit courses designed to upgrade skills for personal and professional development and to provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

Student Support Services

EMCC's Academic Success Center, Library and Computer Commons exist to support learning throughout the college and are co-located in one central campus building. The Academic Success Center centralizes all tutoring, including the Math Success Center; the Science Success Center; the Writing Success Center and the Reading, Languages and Occupational Success Center. Students can access in-person tutoring for various disciplines through the Academic Success Center and utilize online tutoring through the Online Writing Center and Smarthinking. Students can receive tutoring for Computer Information Systems and assistance with Business-Personal Computers course assignments such as Java. The Computer Commons offers help with EMCC's Learning Management System, Canvas, and assistance is available from skilled technicians at each of the 212 computer stations available in the Computer Commons.

EMCC's mission to provide Learner Support Services is also illustrated by the variety of student service areas that work diligently to support learners throughout their college experience.

Counseling: The Division of Counseling supports a learning environment that encourages career, academic, and personal growth for EMCC students and communities. Personal counseling is available to address issues in order for students to be successful in their academic pursuits.

Library: The Division of Information Resources promotes dynamic lifelong learning experiences for students and members of the West Valley community. Residential Library faculty and skilled Library staff members provide these experiences by meeting student information resource needs, teaching information literacy skills and supporting teaching and learning through an interactive Library website featuring 24/7 help through "Ask a Librarian" and online databases. Instructors in any discipline can request a tailored research session with a Library faculty member in the Library's instructional classroom or in their regular classroom.

Veterans Services: For purposes of certifying Veterans' educational benefits, EMCC's Veterans Services Center acts as a liaison between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and eligible Veteran students, active duty military students and students who are military dependents. Veterans new to Estrella Mountain are offered a "New Veterans Orientation" and a "Strategies for College Success" course (CPD 150), designed specifically for Veteran students. With the recent implementation of a Veterans student club, campus activities for Veterans have expanded to include a variety of celebrations, panel discussions and scholarship opportunities. In spring 2010, Estrella Mountain Community College was formally recognized as a Veteran-friendly institution by *G.I. Jobs* magazine.

Athletics: EMCC Athletics provides student athletes the opportunity to compete in the Arizona Community College Athletic Conference in Golf or Cross Country. This program places a strong emphasis on academic achievement as well as leadership and social development.

Fitness and Wellness: The Fitness Wellness/Physical Education program at Estrella Mountain supports healthy behaviors among students, employees, and the community that lead to lifelong personal, academic, and occupational success. Fitness and Wellness offers credit physical education classes, non-credit fitness programs, wellness programs, as well as intramural and recreational sports.

Career Services: The EMCC Career and Transfer Center provides free services, programs, and resources in career exploration and development. Students can receive assistance with career assessments, résumés and cover letters, mock interviews and job search techniques, as well as transfer requirements and connections with university representatives.

Testing Services: Estrella Mountain's Testing Center offers Placement Testing to determine initial course placement in English, reading and mathematics courses. Placement testing is required for new students. Testing Services also offers the nursing entrance exam, English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) testing and proctored testing for students attending other colleges or universities.

Student Advisement: The Advisement Center provides students with the information, tools and guidance needed to create educational plans that reflect their career and life goals. Advisors assist students in the developmental process of becoming self-sufficient learners in pursuit of their educational and career goals.

Admissions and Records: Personnel within the Admissions area assist students in completing Student Information forms, Student Information Release Authorization, and Declaration of Citizenship or Status forms. Student requests for transcripts and verification of student program of study/degree path are also processed within Admissions and Records.

Financial Aid: The Financial Aid Office accurately and efficiently processes financial aid for students. By interacting with the Financial Aid Office, students learn about the availability of financial aid resources, ways to access those resources, financial aid requirements and ways to navigate the financial aid process.

[Disability Resource Center:](#) Disability Resources and Services (DRS) provides resources, services and academic adjustments to ensure that each student with qualifying documentation achieves success in her or his educational goals. EMCC's compliance with federal and state laws, requiring the college provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities, is facilitated through the DRS office.

Student Life and Leadership: The Office of Student Life and Leadership provides an environment that fosters the social, academic and professional development of students. Within the Student Union, students have access to student clubs and to services such as the Student Food Pantry, discount bus passes and childcare assistance vouchers. The Student Life and Leadership Office also offers leadership opportunities, community involvement, co-curricular activities, competitive sports and intramural experiences for students.

Enrollment Profile

Estrella Mountain Community College's mission features two purposes that reflect the college's enrollment profile: *Civic Responsibility* and *Global Engagement*. In fall 2015, EMCC's demographics were as follows:

Ethnicity: 48.1% Hispanic, 32.5% White, 9.2% Black, 4.6% Asian and 1.6% American Indian (4.0% Other) Gender: 57.8% female, 40.6% male (1.6% undeclared)

As a designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), which also qualifies as a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), EMCC respects the diversity of its students and offers experiences that speak to the various aspects of identity.

[Heritage and History Month Art Exhibition Program](#): Estrella Mountain contracts with an art curator to install art exhibitions specifically for heritage and history months. The curator arranges for the artist to visit campus for a reception, followed by an art walk and talk.

[Student Clubs](#): The variety of student clubs at EMCC demonstrates campus diversity. The Asian Pacific Islander Club reaches out to those who want to learn and/or be part of an organization that promotes awareness in the areas of race, politics, culture and self for Asian Pacific Islander minorities. The Black Student Union stimulates education by providing awareness of, recognition of and appreciation toward contributions by the Black American culture to the United States of America and the world. The Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance establishes a broad constituency to work in pursuit of feminist ideals, including social, political and economic equality for women as well as men, girls and boys. The Male Empowerment Network stimulates a strong interest in the retention and successful degree completion of minority students. The Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan promotes and supports higher education for Chicano/Hispanic students. P.R.I.D.E. (Practicing Respect, Individuality, Diversity and Equality) works to create a safe space within the EMCC community for LGBTQ students and allies.

Events: Facilitated by employees and community partnerships, EMCC offers numerous annual events. [One Billion Rising](#) promotes an end to violence against women. [Deaf Deaf World](#) helps hearing students and employees experience everyday life activities through sign language. During the heritage months for Hispanics and African Americans, there are annual luncheons held to celebrate the lives and legacies of [Cesar Chavez](#) and [Dr. Martin Luther King](#), respectively. The Humanequin Project explores diverse perspectives on global and local feminist issues. The speaker series for [Women's History Month](#) features discussions to challenge patriarchal ideas of gender. MEChA hosts [Dia de Los Muertos](#), which celebrates the lives of those who have passed and incorporates the decorating of Day of the Dead masks.

Diversity Awards: As part of the MCCCCD annual recognitions, EMCC participates in diversity celebrations. Recent Diversity Award of Excellence winners included [Deaf Deaf World \(2015\)](#) and [Americans with Disabilities Act Task Force \(2014\)](#)—recently renamed the Empower Committee. Both of these groups addressed physical access limitations on the EMCC campus, gave a voice to individuals with disabilities and created a more inclusive college environment for students. The study completed by the Empower committee resulted in a partnership with Estrella Mountain's Facilities Division in order to make necessary adjustments for greater physical access required throughout the campus. In addition, Estrella Mountain received [INSIGHT Into Diversity's](#) 2015 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award.

Alignment of Planning and Budgeting Priorities

[Strategic planning](#) at Estrella Mountain Community College fulfills the college's mission. Long Term Plans for 5, 10 and 20 years revolve around supporting learners along their educational journey. From the [Campus Master Plan](#) and the [Financial Resource Plan](#) to the [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#) and [Technology and Learning Plan](#), the college strategically positions itself to provide a stable and sustainable environment for lifelong learning. The Strategic Plan guides the priorities of the

college so that Estrella Mountain can fulfill both MCCCCD priorities and its unique college mission. The Strategic Plan consists of four Core Planning Areas that speak to the mission directly: Access to Learning, Pathways to Success, Effective Learning and Teaching and Organizational Integrity. The core planning areas allow Estrella Mountain to provide innovative and diverse opportunities for learners to reach their academic and personal goals.

[Budgeting](#) for EMCC priorities reflects EMCC's core value of learning. Through the Financial Resource Plan, Estrella Mountain regularly examines financial resource allocations to identify possible adjustments within the budget to direct financial resources toward proven strategies shown to positively affect student learning, persistence and completion. Such budget evaluations enable the college to respond to the diverse needs of West Valley communities. With a future-oriented concern for ensuring educational quality, EMCC continuously seeks new funding sources and applies for Title V and STEM grants to help support program development, student success initiatives, and ultimately, the fulfillment of the EMCC mission.

Sources

- Crit 1A 2015-2016 Budget
- Crit 1A ADA Task Force
- Crit 1A Campus Master Plan 2004
- Crit 1A Cesar Chavez Luncheon
- Crit 1A Community Education
- Crit 1A Deaf Deaf World
- Crit 1A Developmental Education Metrics 2013-2014
- Crit 1A Dia de los Muertos
- Crit 1A Disability Resources
- Crit 1A Enrollment Management Plan 2015-19
- Crit 1A Exhibition Program
- Crit 1A Financial Resource Plan 2009-14
- Crit 1A Gen Ed Abilities
- Crit 1A Gen Ed Abilities Assessment Cycle
- Crit 1A Gen Ed Statement
- Crit 1A Gov Board Key Metrics EMCC
- Crit 1A INSIGHT Into Diversity HEED Award
- Crit 1A Institutes
- Crit 1A MCCCCD Mission Vision Values
- Crit 1A Mission Input Community
- Crit 1A Mission Input Employees
- Crit 1A MLK Luncheon
- Crit 1A One Billion Rising
- Crit 1A Strategic Planning
- Crit 1A Student Clubs Organizations
- Crit 1A Student Life Leadership Information Handbook
- Crit 1A Technology and Learning Plan 2015-18
- Crit 1A Transfer Partner Financial Incentive Data
- Crit 1A Vision Mission Values
- Crit 1A Welcome EMCC Veterans Services Center
- Crit 1A Welcome to Your Library
- Crit 1A Women's History Month

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College's mission is articulated publicly, understood broadly and, most importantly, guides the operations of the college.

Clearly Articulated Mission

The EMCC mission is publicly articulated through the Academic Catalogue, the Student Life and Leadership Information Handbook, the [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#), the [Annual Report](#), the college website and campus displays.

The mission statement is clearly articulated and supported through EMCC's vision, purposes and values, all of which are accessible through the college's website and reinforce Estrella Mountain's commitment to being a learning-centered institution of higher education. Estrella Mountain's vision, mission and core values are supported through long-term plans, such as the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, the Strategic Plan Core Planning Areas and the [Divisional Plans](#).

Current Mission Document

Estrella Mountain Community College completed a two-year [comprehensive review](#) of the vision, mission and core values statements, which culminated in [approval](#) from the MCCCD Governing Board in fall 2010. The documents were publicly articulated in spring 2011 through meeting announcements and posters across campus, as well as on the EMCC website. The mission's dedication to providing Developmental Education, General Education and Transfer Education addresses not only foundational and college-level instruction but also scholarship, research and application of research through the [Student Conference](#), the [Honors Expo](#) and courses that incorporate research. The mission of General Education and Transfer Education includes an exploration of the arts and creating opportunities for self-development through writing courses as well as fine and performing arts. Clinical experience (the basis of Estrella Mountain's Nursing Program) and field experience (the capstone of EMCC's Social Work program) are embedded in Skill Center programs and [Occupational Education](#) courses. Public Service is addressed through EMCC's Student Life and Leadership programs as well as through a robust Service Learning and Internship program, the Culinary Institute and the [Teacher Education Institute](#). EMCC's mission also supports the economic development of the surrounding West Valley Communities through the Workforce Development and Community Education. Building competitive, workforce-ready students is evidenced by EMCC's Networking

Technology Certificates of Completion and Public Safety Institute's Emergency Medical Technology Certificate of Completion. EMCC's mission of Civic Responsibility and Global Engagement is addressed through classroom activities and out-of-classroom learning experiences that engage students through the variety of cultures represented both in the West Valley and [globally](#).

Nature, Scope and Intended Constituents

EMCC's mission identifies the nature of the institution as a learning college, one focused on responding to the diverse learning needs of West Valley communities through a variety of programs and services. The scope of EMCC's programs and services is broad enough to address both educational and personal goals of students and the surrounding communities. Estrella Mountain provides higher education programs and services to intended constituents; learners who indicate a workforce path are supported through EMCC's Workforce Development, whereas learners who wish to transfer into a university are aided through EMCC's Transfer Education. EMCC facilitates the span of lifelong learning by offering experiences to children through the [Kid's College](#) and to older adults through the [Medicare, All You Need to Know](#) program and Community Education.

Sources

- Crit 1B 11.23.10 Governing Board Minutes
- Crit 1B 11.23.10 Presentation of Mission Vision Values to Governing Board
- Crit 1B Community Education Medicare
- Crit 1B EDU Service
- Crit 1B EMCC Annual Report 2014-15
- Crit 1B Field Experience Occ Ed
- Crit 1B Honors Program
- Crit 1B Kids College Fun with Art
- Crit 1B Occ Ed Division Plan 2015-2018
- Crit 1B One Billion Rising
- Crit 1B Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- Crit 1B Student Conf Program

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

The Estrella Mountain Community College service area is located in the southwestern part of Maricopa County, just west of Phoenix. Estrella Mountain currently serves the communities of Avondale, Buckeye, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Luke Air Force Base, Tolleson, parts of western Phoenix and the surrounding unincorporated areas. These areas represent a unique and diverse mix of residents from both rural and suburban areas. As an open-access public institution of higher education, Estrella Mountain responds to the diverse needs of the West Valley by providing opportunities for all learners to meet educational and personal goals.

Role in Multicultural Society

EMCC addresses its role in a multicultural society through its mission, purposes and core values. The mission states that EMCC responds to the diverse needs of West Valley communities. The purposes cover a wide range of learning needs including workforce development, community education, developmental education and transfer education. Two purposes, Civic Responsibility and Global Engagement, specifically address how EMCC supports learning by generating awareness of [local needs](#) and [local solutions to global issues](#). Moreover, values of learning and engagement are emphasized through EMCC's five core values, one of which is Diversity. EMCC values learning and engagement with diversity by:

- Considering the contributions and worldviews of others
- Promoting an inclusive campus culture that supports social awareness
- Committing to comprehensive inter-cultural learning and awareness

Together, Estrella Mountain's mission, purposes and core values guide employees to create programs, events, exhibitions and clubs that provide multicultural learning experiences for students and community members.

Diversity across Processes and Programs

Through the mission, purposes and core values, EMCC's processes and activities exemplify an attention to human diversity with the constituencies served. [EMCC's Diversity Team](#) speaks to the [Diversity Core Value](#). This team encourages a culture of respect and inclusion and acknowledges diversity as the expression and recognition of the human experience. Two activities exemplify the way in which the Diversity Team fosters diversity:

- Facilities Appreciation: The Facilities Appreciation Breakfast and Dinner events demonstrate appreciation for employees in Facilities who work morning and evening shifts. Senior Leadership, employee group presidents, faculty and staff serve food to and express their

appreciation of employees who care for the campus, maintain cleanliness of learning spaces and provide campus navigation to students and community members.

- [Inclusiveness in the Hiring Process](#): Developed in response to the 2011 Core Values Survey, which indicated that employees felt that hiring committees lacked representation from various employee groups, a collaboration between the college's Human Resources office and the Diversity Team created Estrella Mountain's Inclusiveness in the Hiring Process. Interested employees volunteer to serve on a hiring committee and, once a core hiring committee is assembled, the hiring manager contacts the volunteer to join the committee.

EMCC's mission affirms that college programs, events, [exhibitions](#) and clubs respond to the diverse learning needs of the West Valley communities and strengthen students' and community members' experiences with inclusivity through the examination and celebration of diversity. Estrella Mountain's [International and Intercultural Education Program \(IIE\)](#) assembles events that support diversity as a strength. The program also assembles activities that foster students', employees' and community members' collaborative learning. Sponsored activities include One Billion Rising, a global campaign with an activist call to end violence against women and girls as well as [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) events, which recognize and celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of those living in America whose family members and ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, etc.

Each academic year, Estrella Mountain organizes a significant number of events to focus attention on human diversity as appropriate within the mission and for the constituencies served. As a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), a designation that also qualifies EMCC as a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), Estrella Mountain recognizes various heritage and history months through events that promote learning and inclusivity, including:

- [Hispanic Heritage Month](#): Caesar Chavez Luncheon, film and discussion series, Day of the Dead activity, speakers, music, food, art talk and walk
- [Native American Heritage Month](#): Dance, music, storytelling, food, film and discussion series, speakers, art talk and walk
- [Black History Month](#): Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon, film and discussion series, community celebration, speakers, food, art talk and walk, Black History Conference
- [Women's History Month](#): Women's Leadership Group Luncheon, speakers, Mask Making workshop, film and discussion series, art talk and walk, Women's Conference

Estrella Mountain also offers annual events to recognize activism and promote positive engagement with particular constituencies, including:

- [Love Your Body Week](#): takes a critical look at traditional views of body image in American society and ways to counter those views with an inclusive and accepting perspective
- [Veterans Week Celebration](#): shows appreciation for the sacrifices made by Veterans on the country's behalf and recognizes Veterans' contributions as valuable members of the campus community
- [Disability Awareness Week](#): brings visibility to the various abilities individuals have and how the EMCC community can work together to make the campus as accessible as possible
- [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#): calls on students, employees and community members to help those in threatening environments and assist individuals who are harmed by connecting them with local support systems and the police

EMCC supports a variety of clubs and organizations and encourages students to join service learning and events to raise awareness of diversity, appreciate the importance of inclusivity and connect with West Valley communities. EMCC's Student Life and Leadership supports many student clubs,

including:

- [Asian Pacific Islander Club](#)
- [Black Student Union](#)
- [Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance](#)
- [International Student Leadership Organization](#)
- [Male Empowerment Network](#)
- [Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan](#)
- [P.R.I.D.E. \(LGBTQ: Practicing Respect, Individuality, Diversity, and Equality\)](#)
- [Veterans Club](#)

EMCC's art talks and walks have dedicated funds to contract an art curator who schedules, installs, facilitates and de-installs art exhibitions for heritage and history months. Artists are scheduled to visit the campus, discuss and respond to questions about her/his work with the audience (students, employees and community members) and lead the audience on a tour of her/his [campus exhibition](#).

Sources

- Crit 1C Art Walk WHM
- Crit 1C Asian Pacific Islander
- Crit 1C Black History Month
- Crit 1C Black Student Union
- Crit 1C Disability Awareness Week
- Crit 1C Diversity Core Value
- Crit 1C Diversity Team
- Crit 1C Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Crit 1C Exhibition Series
- Crit 1C Feminist Majority
- Crit 1C Food Pantry
- Crit 1C Hispanic Heritage Month
- Crit 1C IIE Assessment
- Crit 1C Inclusive Hiring
- Crit 1C International Student Leadership
- Crit 1C Love Your Body Week
- Crit 1C Male Empowerment
- Crit 1C MEChA
- Crit 1C Native American Heritage Month
- Crit 1C One Billion Rising
- Crit 1C PRIDE
- Crit 1C Veterans Appreciation Week
- Crit 1C Veterans Club
- Crit 1C Women's History Month

1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

Estrella Mountain is committed to the public good and demonstrates its commitment through service to West Valley communities as its mission and capacity allow.

Public Obligation

EMCC is obligated to provide a variety of learning opportunities for the surrounding West Valley communities. In recent years, EMCC's student population has increased. EMCC's Annual Reports document [12,994 credit students in 2014-2015](#), which represents an increase of nearly 500 students from three years prior (12,508 [credit students in 2011-2012](#)). As student enrollment continues to grow, the demand for educational opportunities for students increases and diversifies.

As a [learning college](#) and a learning-centered organization, Estrella Mountain deeply values teaching, learning and caring. Providing the most comprehensive learning experience possible, EMCC places learning first and, when faced with a decision, employees ask themselves two questions: *How does this improve learning?* and *How do I know?* The questions provide the foundation for EMCC's continual assessment process for [programs, policies and practices](#). Estrella Mountain's mission purposes outline the broad scope of learning opportunities that it is obligated to provide the public in its educational role. EMCC's Learner Support Services assist the vast and various needs of the student population, including Developmental Education, General and Transfer Education, Workforce Development and Community Education. Estrella Mountain serves the public by offering a [variety of educational pathways](#); Certificates of Completion, Academic Certificates and Associate Degrees are offered to meet the public needs for higher education. Through Civic Responsibility and Global Engagement, Estrella Mountain promotes awareness of local and global issues through learning via [community service, extracurricular events and curricular activities](#).

Concerned with the economic and workforce development needs of West Valley communities, EMCC offers instruction that prepares students to competitively enter the workforce. The Maricopa Skill Center was opened in 1999 and renamed the SouthWest Skill Center (SWSC) in 2000, officially becoming an EMCC division in 2015. The EMCC Skill Center offers the following [workforce programs](#) through clock-hour or non-credit classes:

- Emergency Medical Technology
- Medical Assistant
- Medical Billing and Coding

- Phlebotomy
- Medical Interpreter – Spanish

The short-term certificate programs allow students to quickly enter the [workforce](#).

Incorporating funds from the voter-approved 2004 bond for campus capital improvements and expansion, the [Performing Arts Center \(PAC\)](#) was built. Its grand opening in November 2015 brought fine and performing arts learning experiences to Estrella Mountain's students and surrounding communities. Professional and student performances are free for students and available at a low cost to the public. College courses in Acting, Dancing, Music, Storytelling and Art in the Media Technical Laboratory are available through the PAC. Students can enhance their readiness for the performance industry by taking Technical Theater classes wherein they produce shows, build sets, run lighting and sound boards and work the front and back of the house. The Performing Arts Center will continue to increase its offerings of college classes and community programs to help meet the demand for fine and performing arts education and experiences.

EMCC's [Community Education](#) program offers non-credit classes designed to upgrade skills for personal development, professional development or simply for fun. Classes include Electric Guitar Making, Planning for a Comfortable Financial Future, CPR and Children's Book Illustration. [Kids College](#), a service of the Community Education Program, provides family-friendly workshops with various topics including Babysitting, Theatre, Fire Academy and Robots. The Community Education Program provides a variety of learning opportunities for the surrounding West Valley communities and constituents.

Other [partnerships](#) include the City of Avondale and Estrella Mountain Community College Transit Center, which brings five additional bus lines to the campus. Additionally, EMCC partnered with the City of Avondale to construct a joint-use public safety facility, which consists of a fire station, a police substation, as well as Estrella Mountain Community College classrooms and public safety offices.

Educational Responsibilities

Estrella Mountain's educational responsibilities to the West Valley communities are a priority for the college. EMCC is invested in the educational pathway from elementary school through college and from college to career. Estrella Mountain hosts and is a member of the [West Valley Think Tank \(WVTT\)](#), which consists of elementary, middle and high school leadership who meet regularly to identify strategies and tactics to help students successfully move along their academic journey. WVTT sponsored learning experiences for middle and high school teachers who work with college instructors to create a seamless pathway between Math and Language Arts. As students move from middle school to high school to community college, the curricula align for optimal transition.

Estrella Mountain involves [Advisory Boards](#) to consult on curriculum that will help students competitively move from the college classroom to the workforce. The [Teacher Education Advisory Board](#) features Estrella Mountain faculty and administrators, industry executives, representatives from Arizona State University, officials from the Arizona Department of Education, high school leadership, elementary school leadership and student representatives from the EMCC Future Teachers Club. The Speech Language Pathology Advisory Board includes Estrella Mountain faculty and administrators, industry executives, representatives from Arizona State University and officials from the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Placing educational responsibilities first, Estrella Mountain partners with the Western Maricopa

Educational Center (West-MEC) and Arizona Public Services Palo Verde Nuclear Generating station to create the [West-MEC Southwest Energy Partners Campus](#). Located in Buckeye, the campus offers educational and career pathways for high school, college and returning learners in a hands-on environment. Estrella Mountain provides the curriculum to create a direct pathway for high school students to fast-track their college completion and career pathway in the areas of Industrial Manufacturing, Emerging Technologies and Power Plant Technology. This unique partnership garnered the Western Maricopa Coalition (WESTMARC) Excellence in Innovation Best of the West Award in 2015 which has led to the pursuit of becoming an HLC approved location in 2016.

[Sustainability](#) is a core value of EMCC, and the college is dedicated to the following:

- Understanding how our actions impact the local and global community
- Reducing negative effects on the environment through proactive and sustainable practices
- Applying practices that encourage environmental, economic and social responsibility

Through educating students, employees and community members about sustainability, Estrella Mountain hopes to create an awareness that fosters environmental stewardship. Some major accomplishments include:

- Created an Environmental Club for students
- Completed Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventory
- Received a Bronze STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) Rating
- Hosted Campus Sustainability Day
- Hosted Earth Week
- Awarded the EMCC Innovation of the Year for Burrowing Owls Project (Sustainability Team)
- Expanded Burrowing Owl habitats, including active release
- Participated in the first annual field trip to Tonto Creek Environmental Camp (Environmental Club students)
- Awarded Arizona Recycling Coalition's School of the Year recycling award
- Partnered with Chow Locally to bring this community supported agriculture program to EMCC for students, employees and community members
- Installed water filtration refill stations campus-wide
- Installed solar panels for workforce development training
- Utilized rainwater harvesting systems, heat reducing architecture and recycled building materials in Estrella Hall as well as Mariposa Hall
- Constructed a Platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) awarded classroom building (Mariposa Hall) and future construction as LEED qualified projects
- Committed to Energy Star campus appliances, hands-free faucets throughout campus

External Constituencies and Communities of Interest

A key to Estrella Mountain's success is the organizational commitment to understanding the needs of the external and internal constituencies. Identified by the college as key stakeholders, external constituencies of Estrella Mountain include civic organizations, community and business partners, other educational institutions and local governments. Estrella Mountain learns from these constituencies using methods such as environmental scanning, community advisory councils and student forums.

To strengthen community relationships, Estrella Mountain established a [President's Community Advisory Council](#) comprised of key community, business and education partners. Through [bi-annual](#)

[meetings](#), college leadership works with West Valley community members to gain insight and counsel regarding trends, educational opportunities, strategic directions and collaborative program opportunities. The Community Advisory Council provides a forum for community members to become personally involved with and connected to the college. Through the publication of an Annual Report, EMCC communicates to members the experiences of Estrella Mountain students, the college's institutional directions and priorities and the college's progress along its learning college journey.

The student voice is a significant component when gathering feedback. Communication with students is ongoing and dynamic. In order to obtain candid and relevant feedback from students, student forums are held throughout the academic year. These forums are designed to give students an open platform to express concerns, opinions and ideas about various issues affecting them. Facilitated by Student Ambassadors, topics have included financial aid, advisement/transfer, tuition increases, administrative updates, accreditation and college master planning. The forums also allow for the free flow of communication between administrators, faculty, staff and students. Students are invited to discuss their [concerns and interests](#) with the Estrella Mountain President, Vice Presidents and Deans as well as Division Chairs through a series of forums referred to as "[Coffee Talks](#)" in the Student Union throughout the academic year. Students are also represented at Leadership Council.

Sources

- Crit 1D Advisory Boards
- Crit 1D AR 2011-12 Enrollment
- Crit 1D AR 2014-15 Enrollment
- Crit 1D Coffee Talk Issues Response
- Crit 1D Coffee Talks
- Crit 1D Community Education
- Crit 1D Degree Certificate Options
- Crit 1D EMCC Program Review Templates
- Crit 1D EMCC West-MEC APS Partnership
- Crit 1D Kids College
- Crit 1D Learning College
- Crit 1D Partnerships
- Crit 1D Performing Arts Center
- Crit 1D President Community Advisory Council
- Crit 1D Presidents Advisory Council Agenda
- Crit 1D Service Internship Report
- Crit 1D SouthWest Skill Center Programs
- Crit 1D Sustainability
- Crit 1D SWSC Certificates Awarded
- Crit 1D Teacher Ed Advisory Board Minutes
- Crit 1D WTT Math Summit

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

Estrella Mountain Community College's mission statement was developed to drive the practices, culture and climate of the college across all locations. It was presented to and approved by the Governing Board in 2010 and widely publicized to employees, students and community members in 2011. The mission statement is clearly articulated and supported through EMCC's vision, purposes and values, all of which are accessible through the college's website and reinforce Estrella Mountain's commitment to being a learning-centered institution of higher education. In addition, EMCC's academic programs are consistent with the college's stated mission.

EMCC is an open-access public institution of higher education, one with a mission to respond to the diverse needs of learners within the surrounding communities. The mission reflects EMCC's learning college identity, providing opportunities for all learners in these communities to meet educational and personal goals.

Estrella Mountain responds in various ways to the needs of students and communities that the college serves. Estrella Mountain partnered with Chandler-Gilbert, Northland Pioneer, Pima and Yavapai community colleges to receive a Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant in the amount of \$13.5 million. Funds from the grant help Estrella Mountain purchase capital equipment for training labs, hire program staff and faculty, develop and redesign curricula to meet industry employment needs and provide resources for strategic planning and partnership development. In addition, Industry partners, such as Arizona Public Service Company and the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station work with EMCC to create sustainable energy workforce pathways to train students for in-demand careers.

Estrella Mountain serves the public by offering a variety of educational pathways and support services to ensure success as defined by its students.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College abides by the Administrative Regulations set forth by Maricopa Governance, a leadership model and accountability framework adopted by the MCCCCD's Governing Board in 1996. Regulations are available online at the MCCCCD website and include:

- [Governance Policies](#), which address Outcomes, Chancellor Limitations, Board-Staff Relations and Governance Process
- [Administrative Regulations](#), which are rules adopted by the Chancellor for managing the district and addressing the areas of Fiscal Management, Students, Instruction, Auxiliary Services, Board Resources, Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action and additional guidelines and procedures

Operates with Integrity

MCCCCD's Governing Board exercises responsibility to the public, ensuring the organization operates legally, responsibly and with fiscal honesty. In 2006, MCCCCD's Chancellor appointed a Community Member Blue Ribbon Panel on Internal Controls to consider internal controls over select business operations. The added accountability included new Acknowledgements and Disclosures (e.g., Travel Acknowledgement, Enrollment, FERPA, etc.). Travel requirements across the 10-college district have been standardized. Additionally, the panel recommended that the district's Audit and Finance Committee consistently review internal controls for continuous [process improvements](#).

Integrity, one of EMCC's five core values, is affirmed through the institution's Management Model. To ensure transparency and compliance in the college's strategic goals and Fiscal Management Model, the [budget development process](#) is both inclusive and collaborative. EMCC's Budget Development Steering Team (BDST) analyzes and ranks budget proposals submitted by academic, occupational, student affairs and administrative units. Using [rubrics](#) to ensure inter-rater reliability and promote equality in evaluations, proposals are ranked according to demonstrated relationships between the proposal, the learning college paradigm and the College's institutional priorities (e.g., one category is Impact on Learning/Stewardship of Resources).

Academic integrity is central to EMCC's learning environment. The annually updated [Instructional Plan](#) is used to set priorities and direction for quality programs and instruction. The Academic Issues Team (AIT) makes recommendations and decisions to introduce and sunset programs.

The Estrella Mountain [Community College Research Review Committee](#) (CRRC) operates under the purview of the district-wide [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#), which reviews research protocols conducted at the campus. MCCCDC's IRB reviews all proposed research involving human subjects to ensure subjects are treated ethically and their rights and welfare are protected. MCCCDC's IRB is authorized to do the following: "approve or disapprove all human subjects research conducted by individuals within the organization; suspend or terminate research not conducted in accordance with the regulations, statutes and principles or IRB requirements, or that has been associated with unexpected, serious harm to subjects." ([Administrative Regulation 3.8](#) MCCCDC Institutional Review Board)

[MCCCDC's common pages of the Academic Catalogue](#) include the Student Code of Conduct and Students Rights and Responsibilities. Honesty and integrity are specifically addressed in the academic misconduct and plagiarism policies; a regulation regarding hazing and hazing prevention are included. Policies and processes for student complaints are established:

1. Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly in an academic process may invoke the policy and process per MCCCDC [Administration Regulation 2.3.5](#): "A student who feels that he or she has been treated unfairly or unjustly by a faculty member with regard to an academic process, such as grading, testing, or assignments, has the right to appeal according to the approved procedures. The appeal process for grades must be initiated no later than sixty (60) calendar days from the date the grade was issued." The Instructional Complaint process is a four-step process following a specific timeline. A record of all Instructional Complaints is housed with the Instructional Deans.
2. Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly in any non-academic process may invoke the policy and process per MCCCDC [Administration Regulation 2.3.12](#): "A student who feels that he or she has been treated unfairly or unjustly by any employee with regard to a non-instructional process, such as a student or administrative service, has the right to file a formal and written complaint according to the approved procedures." The Non-instructional Complaint process is a five-step process following a specific timeline. A record of all Non-instructional Complaints is retained by the Dean of Student Services.
3. Discrimination and Title IV complaints are addressed directly by Estrella Mountain's Vice President of Student Affairs.

In financial, academic, personnel and auxiliary functions, Estrella Mountain Community College understands and abides by applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations, including the following:

1. Title IX
2. Americans with Disabilities Act
3. Age Discrimination in Employment Act
4. Civil Rights Act
5. Clery Act
6. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
7. Family Medical Leave Act
8. Federal Financial Aid Regulations – Institutional eligibility under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended
9. FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
10. HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
11. Occupational Safety and Health Administration Laws
12. Arizona State Statutes related to immigration
13. Veteran's Benefits regulations

MCCCD Governing Board Policies and the MCCCD's Administrative Regulations are the framework within which EMCC employees perform their duties. Employees are required to complete the online Acknowledgements and Disclosures, which both educate and validate that employees understand the policies and regulations. Additionally, all full-time and part-time board approved employees, including One-Year-Only, One-Semester-Only, Specially Funded and Skill Center employees, are required to complete four training modules: (1) Legal Issues: Public Sector Employment; (2) MCCCD Public Stewardship; (3) Preventing Sex Discrimination and Harassment; and (4) Information Security and Privacy.

Moreover, all Adjunct Faculty and RPS (part-time) staff must complete the following: (1) Acknowledgement for Adjunct and RPS (part-time employees); (2) Preventing Sex Discrimination and Harassment; and (3) Information Security and Privacy.

Depending on an employee's role within the Maricopa County Community College District, an employee may also be required to complete the following: (1) MCCCD Employee FERPA Compliance; (2) Leadership Foundations Program; and (3) Hiring Knowledge Checks. Emphasizing the importance of lifelong learning to ensure professional and personal growth, employees are automatically enrolled in MCCCD 101 Foundations Course, which is highly recommended, but not required, for employment compliance. Finally, at each college within the district, new residential faculty are required to take the one-semester New Faculty Orientation course, which introduces them to resources for teaching and learning as well as college and district practices, policies and regulations.

Fair and Ethical Policies

Improvements have been made to standardize responses to issues such as disciplinary action and to strengthen internal oversight originated from the work of the [Community Member Blue Ribbon Panel on Internal Controls](#). Changes in the ethics, internal controls and accountability policies were unanimously [approved](#) by the MCCCD Governing Board in 2007. As a college within MCCCD, Estrella Mountain Community College abides by and adheres to the stringent requirements.

MCCCD's Governing Board [Governance Policy D-15, 4.10](#) includes the Board's Code of Conduct and mandatory public stewardship and institutional ethics training required for each Board Member. Policy D-15, 4.10 states Board Members "must demonstrate unconflicted loyalty to the interests of the entire community of Maricopa County." Other aspects of the Code of Conduct include avoiding conflicts of interest in terms of Board Members' fiduciary responsibility to the district and Board members' adherence to the Governing Board's policies.

A consolidated One Maricopa Staff Policy Manual covers six of the eight employee groups [Management, Administrative and Technological Staff (MAT); Professional Staff Association (PSA); Maintenance and Operations (M&O); Public Safety; Crafts; SouthWest Skill Center]. There are separate policy manuals for [Residential Faculty](#) and [Adjunct Faculty](#). These policy manuals are maintained by the MCCCD Human Resources Department and are posted online. EMCC also has a [College Plan](#), which outlines processes and responsibilities of Residential Faculty members.

Personnel issues, such as mediation between employees when conflict affects productivity and service, are handled by the college's Human Resources office and, whenever necessary, referred to the district office. The District Office of Public Stewardship provides an employee ombudsperson service whereby employees may seek informal, neutral and confidential guidance on college/district-related concerns. Employment-related issues that are subject to established employee grievance

processes are vetted through the grievance process and established mechanisms. The District's Office of General Counsel provides legal counsel to the Maricopa County Community College District with the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) office housed within the MCCCDC's Human Resources and legal department to ensure adherence to these laws.

Sources

- Crit 2A 2006 Community Member Blue Ribbon Panel Report
- Crit 2A Adjunct Handbook
- Crit 2A BDST Budget Narrative Rubric
- Crit 2A Budget Development Process
- Crit 2A Catalogue Common Pages
- Crit 2A College Plan
- Crit 2A CRRC & IRB Process and Forms
- Crit 2A Gov Board Minutes 2007 - Approval Internal Controls
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 66)
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 71)
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 156)
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 227)
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 468)
- Crit 2A Instructional Plan
- Crit 2A IRB
- Crit 2A Maricopa Governance
- Crit 2A Staff Policy Manual

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

By following MCCCDC Administrative Regulations and complying with federal and state laws, EMCC ensures comprehensive accountability to students and the public.

The college's [Academic Catalogue](#), webpage, social media presence and collateral materials are vetted through the department of Institutional Advancement, which ensures messaging and branding are in alignment with the Campus Identity Guidelines and MCCCDC's policies.

The online directory lists employee names, titles and contact information, including references to the organizational chart and structure. Links to employee emails facilitate direct contact from the directory. Employees may include a brief professional biography and picture on their [respective page](#).

The Academic Catalogue lists course offerings and requirements for developmental education, training, occupational and academic courses and programs. The college website has a specific page titled "[Explore Estrella](#)," where students and the public may find alphabetized information about programs and areas of study by interest and degree. An overall description of the program along with available certificates and degrees is included on each program page. In addition to providing links to related college programs, university transfer options and career and employment considerations are listed. For ease of use, each program page has two standard hotlinks: a 'contact us' button for connecting to an academic advisor and the 'class search' for finding course offerings.

The college website includes a page titled "[Tuition and Fees](#)," which provides information for tuition and fees by academic year. The tuition rate per credit hour is posted by residency classifications with current information: County Resident (\$84), Out-of-County Resident (\$366), and Out-of-State Resident (\$325). Course fees vary by course, however, a \$15 Registration Fee per student/per semester/per college is standard. Course fees are found in the online Class Schedule, with each specific course fee listed in the notes section of the course. For example, the \$20 course fee for ART 111 Drawing I is posted in the EMCC Class Schedule, and this is readily accessed through the Online Class Search.

Admission requirements and costs to students are addressed in detail in [MCCCDC's Administrative Regulation 2.2](#) and the college's webpage. The following disclaimers are standard:

- "All tuition and fees are subject to change by the MCCCDC Governing Board. If tuition and fees are increased, students are responsible for any additional charges due to changes."
- "Book costs are based on an estimation and subject to change by bookstore."

The [Disclosures](#) page of the EMCC's website includes information about gainful employment, athletic and general disclosure data as well as which certificate programs may be eligible for Title IV financial aid. The page lists college information and details, including:

1. Accreditation

- Estrella Mountain Community College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association
 - Some of Estrella Mountain's programs are also accredited and/or approved by the National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) and by the AZ Board of Nursing (AZBN)
2. Campus Security Report
 3. Diversity of Enrollment
 4. Diversity of Pell Recipients
 5. Retention Rates
 6. Graduation and Transfer Rates
 7. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 8. Net Price Calculator
 9. Gainful Employment
 10. Equity in Athletics
 11. Disability Resources and Services
 12. Academic Programs
 13. MCCCCD Consumer Information
 14. Misrepresentation

Sources

- Crit 2B Administrative Regulations Admission Registration 2.2.1 to 2.2.12 2015
- Crit 2B Directory Listing
- Crit 2B Disclosures
- Crit 2B Explore Estrella
- Crit 2B Tuition and Fees

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

The Maricopa County Community College District Governing Board provides oversight to best serve the 10 community colleges, two skill centers and the Corporate College of Maricopa County. The Governing Board is accountable to its constituencies, which are as follows: the people of Maricopa County, students, private and public sector employers, universities and primary and secondary schools. The MCCCDC Governing Board currently consists of seven persons who are elected in staggered years to two or four-year terms. Five positions are elected from geographical districts within Maricopa County, and two positions are At-Large, representing the entire county while serving two-year terms.

Governing Board Priorities

[Arizona Revised Statute 15-1444](#) consists of the general powers and duties of district governing boards. According to ARS 15-1444, the MCCCDC Governing Board adopts policies in a public forum to offer programs that meet the educational needs of the population served by Estrella Mountain Community College. In addition, as a result of the 2002 [Maricopa Ethics and Values Initiative](#), the Governing Board adopted the [Maricopa County Community Colleges Guiding Principles](#). The Governing Board's [Broadest Outcome Statement](#) declares that Maricopa County Community Colleges exist to serve diverse communities by maximizing available resources to provide "effective, innovative, learner-centered, flexible and affordable lifelong educational opportunities." To that end, the Governing Board developed and adopted the following Outcomes:

- [1.1 University Transfer Education and General Education](#)
- [1.2 Workforce and Economic Development](#)
- [1.3 Developmental Education](#)
- [1.4 Community Development and Civic and Global Engagement](#)

MCCCDC developed [Metrics](#) to measure each Outcome. The [mission, vision and purposes of Estrella Mountain Community College](#) align with the Governing Board Objectives to provide access to higher education and an excellent higher education experience for the West Valley community.

Decision-Making Deliberations

The [president](#) of EMCC participates in both Executive Sessions and General Board Meetings, the latter of which are open to the public. At the [General Board Meetings](#), which are on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, the Governing Board provides college presidents time to share a college's interests and needs. Governing Board decisions regarding college needs are completed during Executive Sessions, not during the general meeting. The Governing Board brings decisions to the following General Meeting.

A digital television channel, [MCTV](#), provides live broadcast capabilities to Maricopa County households for Governing Board meetings. The general meetings, which are open to the public, are recorded and broadcast via MCTV. [Public notices](#) of Governing Board meetings are posted outside the Governing Board Room at MCCC's Support Services Center (a building which is open to the public) as well as emailed to all employees. Agendas for Governing Board meetings, past and present, are available on the MCCC website. Additionally, the permanent Agenda item of the [Citizens Interim](#) provides an avenue for members of the public to address the Governing Board, presenting concerns and expressing ideas.

Preserving Independence

The Governing Board developed and implemented both the [Maricopa Integrated Risk Assessment \(MIRA\)](#) and the Maricopa Values and Ethics Initiative to ensure effective and efficient business is conducted in a safe manner, with accountability and transparency in both areas: resources and people. The [Code of Conduct](#), which requires training for Governing Board members and focuses on public stewardship and institutional ethics, was also adopted. Finally, the Governing Board must adhere to Administrative Regulation 1.18 regarding fiscal management, titled [Gifts, Gratuities and Unrelated Compensation](#). This regulation presents the restrictions for acceptance of gifts, gratuities and unrelated compensation from any vendor, individual, group of individuals, institution or corporation that is doing or seeks to do business with the Maricopa County Community College District.

Delegation

[Governing Board Policy 3.1 Unity of Control](#) delegates management and control of the Maricopa County Community College District to the [Chancellor](#) as chief executive officer. The Chancellor is the Governing Board's official connection to MCCC's operations. The Governing Board directs the Chancellor through written policies that prescribe outcomes to be achieved. The Governing Board also describes organizational situations and actions to be avoided per [Governing Board Policy 3.3 Delegation to the Chancellor](#). The president of Estrella Mountain Community College works with the Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, Vice Chancellors and other MCCC presidents to administer district directives. The president of EMCC is responsible for the day-to-day management of the college. Through subordinate instructional and operational administrators, the college president directs all activities of EMCC. The Residential Faculty Policies are approved and adopted by the Chancellor of MCCC and apply to all residential faculty members per 1.1.4 in the [Residential Faculty Policy Manual \(RFP\)](#). In the RFP, section 3.1: Instructional Rights/Academic Freedom attributes the oversight of academic matters to residential faculty, such as the determination of grades and other evaluations of student performance. According to the RFP, section 1.2 Definitions, [Instructional Councils](#) consist of discipline/service area residential faculty members who are responsible for the oversight of curriculum according to the Roles and Responsibilities detailed within the Curriculum Procedures Handbook.

Sources

- Crit 2C ARS 15-1444 2015
- Crit 2C Broadest Outcome Statement
- Crit 2C CD and C and GE Outcome
- Crit 2C Chancellors Role
- Crit 2C Citizens Interim
- Crit 2C Code of Conduct
- Crit 2C College President
- Crit 2C DE Outcome
- Crit 2C Delegation to Chancellor
- Crit 2C EM Vision Mission Values
- Crit 2C General Meetings
- Crit 2C Gifts Gratuities and Unrelated Compensation
- Crit 2C Guiding Principles
- Crit 2C Instructional Councils Responsibility
- Crit 2C Maricopa Integrated Risk Assessment
- Crit 2C Maricopa Values & Ethics Initiative
- Crit 2C MCTV
- Crit 2C Notice of Public Meeting
- Crit 2C Outcomes and Metrics
- Crit 2C Unity of Control
- Crit 2C UTE and GE Outcome
- Crit 2C W and ED Outcome

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. As a [learning college](#), EMCC demonstrates commitment to teaching and learning in all aspects of the college. This is exemplified in [EMCC's values](#), notably Diversity, Innovation and Collaboration.

Teaching and Learning

[MCCCD's Residential Faculty Policy \(RFP\) manual, section 3.1](#), outlines Instructional Rights and Academic Freedom extended to faculty members. Faculty are entitled to instructional freedom in discussing aspects of their discipline with students, and are responsible for the relevancy of that discussion to the discipline. In addition, faculty have the right and responsibility to determine grades and other student performance assessments. Outside of class, as citizens or public employees, faculty are free from institutional censorship or discipline, and should represent themselves as not speaking for the institution and conduct themselves as scholars and representatives of higher education. For a healthy system of shared governance, faculty are entitled to speak freely on all matters of institutional governance. Finally, faculty are entitled to freedom in research and the publication of results, consistent with [section 3.2 Intellectual Property Rights](#) of the Residential Faculty Policy Manual.

MCCCD supports the following [programs](#) for faculty professional growth: (1) Salary Advancement (academic course work or professional development activities); (2) Sabbatical Leaves/Professional Leaves; (3) Registration fees; (4) Travel fees; (5) Summer Projects; and (6) Education and Leadership Activities.

EMCC adheres to [Administrative Regulation 2.3.11 Academic Misconduct](#), which includes academic consequences for the use of abusive or profane language and disruptive behavior. In doing so, Estrella Mountain intends to create and maintain a learning space where all students may freely, yet respectfully, voice, explain and support their various perspectives on issues related to the discipline being taught. The regulation includes plagiarism as an academic misconduct issue; students may not represent another person's or entity's work as his/her own without being subject to academic consequences. Plagiarism is subject to the academic consequences posted after the definitions section of the regulation. Administrative Regulation 2.3.11 Academic Misconduct is available on the MCCCD website and EMCC's Students Rights and Responsibilities webpage.

As a learning college, EMCC sponsors a team of employees to attend the [Annual League for Innovation in Community College Learning Summit](#), from which team members gather innovative practices and learn from research that has led to student success. To foster innovation, the college established funds for [Innovation and Learning Grants](#), which all employees may apply for to support [new initiatives](#). Believing all students should have experience presenting their own research, the college hosts an annual [MCCCD Student Conference](#) and [Honors Expo](#). Both events showcase student research and students are held to the same research standards as faculty. Research projects that involve human subjects are submitted to EMCC's College Research Review Committee (CRRC). The

CRRC is an extension of the MCCCCD Institutional Review Board and is limited to reviewing protocols conducted by [students](#) and [staff](#) on the EMCC campus. Studies that involve external researchers or include multiple Maricopa Colleges are processed through the MCCCCD's [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#). These processes ensure that human subjects are treated ethically and subject's rights and welfare are adequately protected. All studies that involve more than minimal risk require a review by the full MCCCCD IRB.

Aesthetic and imaginative learning opportunities are supported through many avenues, including EMCC's Fine Arts Exhibition Program, written publications and the Performing Arts Center.

The Fine Arts Exhibition Program showcases work by emerging local/regional artists and includes numerous exhibits: a [national photography exhibit](#), an art faculty exhibit, [monthly exhibitions scheduled to coincide with and celebrate history/heritage months](#), and annually hosted [Juried Student Art Show](#) and the [Tolleson Union High School District Student Show](#) to support freedom of expression. There are Fine Art exhibition cases in the Performing Arts Center, Estrella Hall and Komatke Hall.

The Performing Arts Center (PAC) opened its doors to EMCC students for fall 2015 classes. A main entrance gallery provides exhibit space for local, national, student and faculty art shows. With a main performance stage seating almost 300, the PAC also consists of individualized learning areas, including a dedicated Black Box, a Dance Studio, a Media Technical Laboratory, a Costume Shop and a Music Studio, where students can create and rehearse performances for the Main Stage.

Sources

- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs
- Crit 2A Governance Admin Regs (page number 161)
- Crit 2D Art Exhibit Black History Month
- Crit 2D EM Learning College
- Crit 2D EM Vision Mission Values
- Crit 2D Example IRB Request Employee
- Crit 2D Example IRB Request Student
- Crit 2D Faculty Professional Growth Programs
- Crit 2D Honors Expo
- Crit 2D Innovation and Learning Grant
- Crit 2D Innovation and Learning Grant Awards
- Crit 2D Institutional Review Board
- Crit 2D Juried Student Art Show
- Crit 2D Learning College Summit
- Crit 2D Mariposa Literary Review
- Crit 2D Photography Exhibit
- Crit 2D RFP 2015
- Crit 2D RFP 2015 (page number 17)
- Crit 2D Student Conference Program
- Crit 2D TUHS Artist Show

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College provides effective oversight and support to the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students. Mentoring programs at the student, faculty and staff level provide opportunities for assessment and development. Review boards and committees ensure ethical conduct in research. Originality comparison software, such as Turnitin, assists faculty with recognizing plagiarism and monitoring students' scholarly practices. Workshops and departments, like EMCC's Library and Writing Center, assist students in using materials ethically to create original work. Frequent assessments, such as common assignments at division and college-wide levels, monitor the development of students' [information literacy](#).

Oversight and Support Service

In order to ensure the ethical treatment of study participants, the Maricopa County Community College District [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) meets monthly to review proposals by faculty, staff and students who are conducting research using human subjects for data collection purposes. The IRB is composed of representatives from the 10 Maricopa County Community Colleges and the MCCCCD Office. In addition, EMCC has a [College Research Review Committee \(CRRC\)](#), which is an extension of the full MCCCCD IRB. The CRRC consists of one faculty chair and a member from the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) who serves as an alternate chair. Two to three additional faculty members are part of the committee and provide assistance in reviewing student and employee protocols. The chair and alternate chair are members of the district IRB and report, in this capacity, to the Vice President of Learning. While additional faculty members on the CRRC assist in reviewing protocols, the chair or alternate chair must review every campus protocol.

EMCC hosts the [MCCCCD annual Student Conference](#), which engages student participants in rigorous undergraduate research. Working closely with a mentor to ensure quality research, students prepare a final presentation in a visual presentation, exhibition or performance format. Much like a national conference, students submit their research presentation for selection; proposals are reviewed by a committee comprised of faculty and must be accepted to present at the conference. Students from all disciplines are encouraged to participate. The 2015 Conference Schedule attests to the diversity of research conducted and selected; topics included racial bias in the courtroom, gender reassignment surgery and health insurance, happiness and birth order and how labor and delivery methods affect the satisfaction of mothers.

As EMCC relies on adjunct faculty, the college supports and promotes adjunct faculty learning and professional development. Faculty mentors provide adjunct faculty with support and oversight regarding the scholarly process. EMCC's [Adjunct Faculty Mentor Program \(AFMP\)](#) encourages

adjuncts to set specific goals for professional and career development, including the use of effective teaching strategies and assessment. During the [program](#), adjunct faculty members [attend workshops](#), meet regularly with mentors and receive symbiotic feedback on classroom observations.

A mentor program is also established for new residential faculty members who participate through the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) process. The IDP and PAR are part of the 2014-2015 Residential Faculty Policy Manual (section 3.6). Working with 20 residential faculty mentors, 24 probationary faculty members participated in the program. The PAR Committee, comprised of nine residential faculty members and the Vice President of Learning, [reviewed](#) probationary faculty IDPs and made recommendations regarding renewal.

Faculty can utilize resources to ensure the integrity of academic work submitted by students. Located within the Learning Management System, Canvas, Turnitin's Originality Report provides a review of students' written work, matching student work to material on the Internet and Turnitin's database of student submissions, thus allowing faculty to identify instances of plagiarism. EMCC's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers workshops to train faculty on the software and provides suggestions on how to use resources in the classroom. The CTL also provides [video tutorials](#) on its website regarding how to use Turnitin.

Ethical Use of Information Resources

Estrella Mountain's [Social Media Policy](#) website outlines the policies related to use of information via social media and includes a link to the Maricopa County Community College District's Administrative Regulation 4.4 Technology Resource Standards, which limits personal usage of public technology resources.

MCCCD's administrative regulation on [Academic Misconduct](#) defines cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, with consequences for unethical behavior clearly outlined. Faculty are encouraged to include [Administrative Regulation 2.3.11 Academic Misconduct](#) in their syllabi. Students can access information about Academic Misconduct and Academic Consequences on EMCC's [Students Rights and Responsibilities](#) webpage, on the MCCCD website Administrative Regulations page and in the [EMCC Academic Catalogue](#).

Three definitions are contained within Administrative Regulation 2.3.11:

1. Academic Misconduct: Conduct associated with the learning process that is inconsistent with published course competencies/objectives and/or academic standards. Examples are cheating and plagiarism, excessive absences, use of abusive or profane language and disruptive behavior.
2. Cheating: Any form of dishonesty in an academic exercise. Examples are using unauthorized assistance, acquiring or using academic material without permission and the fabricating of data, facts or information.
3. Plagiarism: A form of cheating in which a student falsely represents another person's work as his/her own. Examples are using a paraphrase or direct quote from someone else's work (published or unpublished) without complete and clear acknowledgement, using materials prepared by someone else and claiming them as his/her own, and using information from the Internet without identifying it appropriately.

Using the guidelines of Academic Consequences, a student found to have committed academic misconduct may be sanctioned by a faculty member in several ways: (1) Warning, (2) Grade Adjustment, (3) Discretionary assignments and (4) Course Failure. Both the Academic Misconduct and the Academic Consequences offer students guidance as to the ethical use of information.

[Information Literacy](#) is one of the seven general education abilities identified and defined by EMCC faculty as important for all students. Information Literacy is defined as a student's ability to "find, retrieve, analyze and use information." In 2014, library faculty gathered student papers from a variety of subjects, specifically analyzing students' ability to frame a research question, access sources, evaluate sources and create original work. [Data](#) was collected from 32 class sections from a total of 488 students. The 2014 cohort data showed the majority of the population sample scored at a satisfactory or higher level with regard to:

- framing a research question (97%)
- accessing sources (86%)
- evaluating sources (87%)
- creating an original work (90%)

Continued improvement and learning about areas of students' ability to research, evaluate and cite information resources remain a faculty focus.

EMCC's Library plays an active and significant role in educating the student body about the importance of integrity in research and scholarly practice. In 2013/2014, EMCC library faculty [conducted workshops](#) on effective research for 167 classes, reaching 3,877 students. Similarly, the Library provides assistance through the [24/7 Ask a Librarian](#) online chat service as well as in person and over the phone at the reference desk.

The EMCC Writing Success Center provides tutoring support and workshops free of charge for students. During the 2014/2015 academic school year, presentations on avoiding plagiarism and citing sources were provided to 13 non-composition classes, including physics and sociology. In addition, [video tutorials](#) were piloted in 2014 to assist students in understanding how to avoid plagiarism by using online citation tools.

Academic honesty and integrity applies to students and employees. MCCCCD requires employees to complete annual online Acknowledgements and Disclosures related to such policies. Students may access academic honesty and integrity information via the EMCC Academic Catalogue, including Academic Misconduct and Academic Consequences for that misconduct. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to reference the Administrative Regulation on Academic Misconduct within their syllabi. Additionally, Appendix H in the Residential Faculty Policies Manual contains a Professional Code of Ethics that all residential faculty members are expected to follow. The code offers guidance in terms of academic honesty and integrity for professors in relation to their role as teachers, colleagues, members of an academic institution and members of their community.

Sources

- Crit 2E Academic Misconduct
- Crit 2E Adjunct Faculty Mentor Program
- Crit 2E Adjunct Faculty Mentoring Program Assessment
- Crit 2E Adjunct Faculty Mentorship
- Crit 2E Ask a Librarian
- Crit 2E College Research Review Committee
- Crit 2E EMCC PAR Rubric
- Crit 2E Info Lit Assessment Report
- Crit 2E Information Literacy

- Crit 2E Information Literacy Assessment
- Crit 2E IRB
- Crit 2E Library Instruction
- Crit 2E MCCC Student Conference at EMCC
- Crit 2E Social Media Policy
- Crit 2E Students Rights and Responsibilities
- Crit 2E TurnItIn Videos
- Crit 2E Writing Videos

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

Estrella Mountain Community College establishes and follows rigorous standards to ensure that it operates and conducts all academic matters with honesty and integrity. A solid district foundation contributes to EMCC's standards, which are enhanced by the college's principle-based core values. MCCC'D's Governing Board exercises responsibility to the public by ensuring that the organization operates legally, responsibly and with fiscal honesty. To ensure transparency and compliance, the budget development processes are inclusive and collaborative endeavors, and are reinforced by a Community Blue Ribbon Panel as well as examined by the district's Audit and Finance Committee.

EMCC is committed to providing an exceptional teaching and learning environment. Policies and regulations are in place to provide faculty and staff with practices necessary to support the college's mission and vision. MCCC'D Governing Board Policies and the MCCC'D's Administrative Regulations form the basis from which EMCC employees perform their duties. MCCC'D requires employees to complete annual online Acknowledgements and Disclosures related to academic honesty and integrity policies.

EMCC is dedicated to providing a quality education to students in an honorable and responsible manner. Both the college and the district have implemented procedures in order to measure and ensure that students are treated with fairness. Students may access academic honesty and integrity information via the EMCC Academic Catalogue. In addition, policies as well as investigation management processes have been established to address student complaints.

Estrella Mountain Community College provides effective oversight and support to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice. Review boards and committees make certain that research is conducted ethically by faculty, staff and students. Faculty uses a variety of methods to monitor and ensure students' scholarly practices.

Though Estrella Mountain is a young institution by district standards, it upholds the foundations set by MCCC'D to be a college of integrity.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

Appropriate Courses and Programs

Estrella Mountain Community College's courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

MCCCD Official Course Competencies are reviewed and updated by Instructional Councils (IC). The ICs ensure the quality of the district's academic programs and the transferability of courses as well as manage the district's common course bank and shared instructional programs. For example, the competencies for [ENG101 First-Year Composition](#) were updated by the English Instructional Council with the transfer articulation agreed upon in 2010 by the Articulation Task Force and ready for students by the 2011 fall semester. The Arizona Transfer System partners for MCCCD are Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and University of Arizona. Additionally, numerous private and out-of-state transfer partners, including Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona and Empire State College (SUNY) in Saratoga Springs, NY accept transfer credits from EMCC/MCCCD.

During academic year 2012-2013, EMCC completed an annual review utilizing program completion, enrollment and data trends to evaluate instructional programs, enabling EMCC to ensure programs and certificates were supported with required classes and could be completed by students. In relation to an Associate in Applied Science (AAS), the review determined the college awarded 36 degrees for Nursing but no awards in the Retail Management program. Estrella Mountain examined Retail Management and elected to [sunset the AAS in Retail Management](#) but retain the Certificate of Completion.

Beginning in fiscal year 2013-2014, MCCCD conducted a review of all programs/disciplines through an initiative titled "[Maricopa Priorities](#)." Maricopa Priorities successfully pursued the following action goals:

- Examine and assess all current instructional and support programs and services
- Explore the origins of instructional and support programs, including how the programs evolved over time
- Determine how instructional and support programs served the community’s changing educational needs
- Evaluate if instructional and support programs are positioned to meet current and future educational requirements of Maricopa County communities

As a result of the initiative, EMCC focused efforts on a comprehensive assessment and analysis of all academic disciplines and programs, then compiled the data and [recommended changes](#) to MCCC. Retained courses and programs were deemed to be current with the level of performance required from students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. Some courses and programs were eliminated accordingly.

EMCC courses articulate for university transfer. The latest data indicate new transfers to Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University or the University of Arizona are transferring significant numbers of credit hours. In the academic year 2014-2015 two thirds (66%) of new transfer students from EMCC successfully transferred 32 or more credits. The complete breakdown is shown below:

| Percent of New Transfer Students | # of transfer credit hours |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 23% | 12-23 |
| 11% | 24-31 |
| 20% | 32-47 |
| 23% | 48-63 |
| 23% | 64+ |

EMCC students also perform well after they transfer. Overall, the EMCC cumulative first year GPA is 2.95 compared to national median of 2.92 reported by the [National Community College Benchmark Project](#) (NCCBP). EMCC also monitors GPA performance by college major at three state universities, which, enroll the vast majority of EMCC transfer students. The performance of new transfer students first year cumulative GPA by major ranges from 2.1 to 3.5 for majors with at least 5 or more students. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness shares this [report](#) with faculty leaders conducting Program Reviews.

EMCC has a comprehensive Program Review Process. Academic Programs, including the divisions of [Arts, Composition and Languages](#) (ACL) and [Science](#), are reviewed on an annual basis. A complete list of 2014-2015 [Academic Program Reviews](#) is provided. The Program Review completed by the Division of Science highlighted how faculty from BIO 156/181 and CHM130 collaborated with the Division of Nursing to support students in the Nursing Program who were required to complete chemistry and biology prerequisite classes. The faculty collaboration combined with the Nursing students’ success rates ascertained a best practice, [CHM130](#) should precede BIO156/181, and the information was shared with Advisors in Student Services to facilitate more successful academic planning. The ACL Program Review revealed that the division faced several challenges and determined that the lack of residential Dance, English and Theater faculty is inhibiting program growth and more faculty in these disciplines need to be requested through the Faculty Staffing

process. Moreover, the Art Program needed additional studio space to accommodate enrollment growth.

Many of the certificates awarded to students originate through institutes within Occupational Education, which aligns program curriculum to industry certifications when possible. A list of [Occupational Program Reviews](#) conducted in 2014-2015 is available for review. Within the Networking Technology Institute, students who complete the Linux sequence can also earn an [Associate in Applied Science in Linux Networking Administration](#) and take the exam for Red Hat Certification. Since Red Hat Linux is the largest Linux Network Operating System in the United States, the institute model helps prepare EMCC students to enter the workforce with industry-recognized credentials.

EMCC partners with community businesses to ensure occupational education programs are developed, assessed and improved upon to meet industry standards and needs. Estrella Mountain has key relationships with technology hardware and software vendors, including Dell, IBM, Intel, HP and Oracle. EMCC leverages the positive relationships with members of the institution's Advisory Boards, including the Teacher Education Advisory Board and the Speech Language Pathology Advisory Board, for continuous consultation regarding curriculum and career opportunities.

Learning Goals

Estrella Mountain Community College articulates and differentiates learning goals for Associate degrees and for certificate programs.

In FY 2014-2015 Estrella Mountain conferred the following degrees:

- Associate in Arts (515)
- Associate in Business (88)
- Associate in General Science (103)
- Associate in Science (97)
- Associate in Applied Science (290)

During FY 2014-2015, EMCC also conferred 704 Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) Transfer Certificates and 369 Certificates of Completion.

Instructional disciplines have [Instructional Councils](#) that work to “coordinate the origination, development and revision of the district’s educational offerings, thereby helping to ensure faculty leadership in the curriculum process and ownership of a quality product.” In addition, the ICs “play an essential role in the transferability of MCCCCD courses and in the acquisition and retention of AGECE General Studies designations.” The ICs coordinate with the [AZTransfer Steering Committee](#) to facilitate transfer agreements; representatives from state universities and community colleges meet annually to discuss changes to learning goals or required prerequisite courses. By following IC/ATF processes and procedures, EMCC ensures that courses such as those offered by the [SouthWest Skill Center](#) (SWSC) have articulated and differentiated content. EMCC ensures that SWSC learning goals are appropriate in stand-alone courses or that prerequisites are established for subsequent coursework.

The SWSC offers the following clock-hour certificate programs: Distribution Logistics and [Emergency Medical Technology](#), Industrial Electronics, Medical Assistant, Medical Billing and Coding, [Medical Interpreter-Spanish](#), [Phlebotomy](#) and Precision Manufacturing. Many of the programs prepare students for immediate transition into the workforce. The coursework also [prepares](#)

[students](#) for industry-recognized certification exams, such as the National Registry of EMT's Certification Examination, which enhances employment potential. For certificate programs, annual updates are completed with full Program Reviews conducted every three years, such as the [Culinary Program](#). Comprised of industry professionals, certificate programs have advisory committees that provide updated learning goals to reflect current workplace skills needed within the industry.

EMCC does not offer graduate, post-baccalaureate or post-graduate programs.

Consistent Program Quality and Learning Goals

Estrella Mountain Community College's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and at all locations:

- Main campus, the Buckeye Educational Center, online and dual enrollment
- Inter-Governmental Agreements and Educational Service Agreements
 - Western Maricopa Education Center and the Cities of Avondale, Goodyear, Buckeye, as well as the Buckeye Valley Rural Fire District: Fire Science and Emergency Medical Technology
 - Western Maricopa Education Center, Arizona Public Service Electric Company, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, and the City of Buckeye: Industrial Manufacturing and Emerging Technologies, Power Plant Technology, as well as Information Technology and Cyber Security

EMCC works with MCCCDC through a discipline's IC to ensure consistent program quality and learning goals are present for all course offerings. A discipline's IC is responsible for approving the development of courses offered in MCCCDC. Course development includes the creation of MCCCDC Course Competencies, including the basic knowledge and skills that must be accomplished in that course. Course competencies are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they are consistent and appropriate.

Online and hybrid courses are held to the same educational standards as face-to-face courses, with additional E-Learning requirements for faculty:

- To teach an online or hybrid course, an instructor must complete the course "Preparing to Teach in Canvas," an online class that provides training for E-Learning best practices
- To develop an online or hybrid course, an instructor must follow the EMCC [E-Learning course development process](#). The process to develop a course includes:
 - Completing the course "Preparing to Teach in Canvas"
 - Applying to develop a course in either an online or hybrid modality
 - Designing the course through a mentored experience facilitated by the E-Learning Coordinator (instructional designer) and colleagues who have developed courses previously
 - Piloting the course for the first semester the course is offered

The E-Learning Committee meets monthly to discuss and problem-solve issues with modes of delivery in Canvas, EMCC's Learning Management System (LMS). The committee works collaboratively to recommend general [guidelines](#) to enhance the development, delivery, management and assessment of E-Learning courses and programs. The E-Learning Committee works with administration, academic divisions, and institutional committees to address issues and concerns related to all aspects of E-Learning. A [Program Review of E-Learning for 2015-2016](#) was just completed to identify strengths and challenges. The E-Learning Committee will provide guidance to

Estrella Mountain Community College in the creation of a collaborative approach to addressing the identified opportunities for improvement.

Dual Enrollment courses provide an opportunity for qualified high school students to take college courses at their respective high schools. These classes, which allow high school students to earn both high school and college credit, are held to the same standards as any Estrella Mountain course. For high schools to offer dual enrollment classes, inter-governmental agreements (IGAs) have been completed between MCCCCD/EMCC and the following high school districts: Agua Fria Union, Buckeye Union, Glendale Union, Peoria Unified, Tolleson Union and Wickenburg Unified. The [IGAs](#) outline the obligations of both EMCC and the high school district. Dual Enrollment instructors must meet the [same faculty qualifications](#) as any faculty member teaching at Estrella Mountain. These qualifications are set by MCCCCD and are as follows:

Minimum Requirements for Academic Areas

The Academic Teaching Fields require the following from an accredited college or university:

- Master's degree in the teaching field, or
- Master's degree in any teaching field with 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching field
- EDU 250 - Teaching and Learning in the Community College (or equivalent) must be completed within two years of date of hire

Minimum Requirements for Occupational Areas

The Occupational Teaching Fields require the following from an accredited college or university:

- The same qualifications as those listed for Academic Teaching Fields, or
- Bachelor degree plus 3 years work experience in field to be taught, or
- Associate degree or 64 semester hours and 5 years work experience in the field to be taught, or 5 years work experience in the field to be taught.
- EDU 250 - Teaching and Learning in the Community College or equivalent must be completed within two years of date of hire

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) guidelines published in October 2015 require all community college academic faculty to have at least a Master's Degree and 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield of the discipline that they are teaching.

In order to teach a dual enrollment course, an instructor must apply to the appropriate EMCC Division Chair, establish his or her qualifications and submit a syllabus for review by the Division Chair. This syllabus must meet the appropriate MCCCCD Course Competencies.

The Faculty Advisory Committee for Dual Enrollment meets at least once a semester to review processes, questions and concerns regarding course levels and the educational experience of Dual Enrollment students.

Sources

- Crit 3A Academic Program Review SharePoint List
- Crit 3A Annual Update Cul
- Crit 3A ATF About

- Crit 3A CHM130
- Crit 3A DE Hiring
- Crit 3A Elearn Dev Proc
- Crit 3A Elearn Principles
- Crit 3A E-Learning Program Review 2015-16
- Crit 3A EMT Projects
- Crit 3A ENG101 Competencies
- Crit 3A Fin Prog Rev ACL
- Crit 3A Fin Prog Rev Sci
- Crit 3A IC Purpose
- Crit 3A IGA TUHSD
- Crit 3A Linux Networking Administration-AAS
- Crit 3A Maricopa Priorities Recommendations EMCC
- Crit 3A MP JRN_Recommendation
- Crit 3A NCCBP Results
- Crit 3A New Transfer 1st Year GPA by AZ Univ
- Crit 3A Occupational Program Review SharePoint List
- Crit 3A Priorities Mission
- Crit 3A Sunset AAS Retail Management
- Crit 3A SWSC Articulation
- Crit 3A SWSC EMT
- Crit 3A SWSC Learning Outcomes
- Crit 3A SWSC MIP
- Crit 3A SWSC PHB

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

Estrella Mountain's learning college journey demonstrates how the acquisition, application and integration of broad learning and skills combined with intellectual inquiry are integral to the institution's educational programs.

General Education Program

The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of Estrella Mountain Community College.

The general education program at Estrella Mountain is defined by the EMCC General Education Statement:

At Estrella Mountain, students experience a collaborative and stimulating environment that stresses a solid foundation of general education. Each facet of the Estrella Mountain experience is designed to provide students with the necessary information, knowledge, abilities, intellectual concepts and perspectives they need to achieve their academic and personal goals. Estrella Mountain's curricular patterns enhance critical thinking and communication skills. They reflect an emphasis on the study of composition, literacy and critical inquiry, numeracy, humanities, fine and performing arts, the social and behavioral sciences and the natural sciences as well as cultural diversity, global engagement, civic responsibility and historical awareness. Recognizing the importance of breadth and depth of knowledge, the ability to apply that knowledge and a view of learning as a lifetime activity, faculty and staff are committed to providing all students with an engaging learning environment in which everyone experiences growth.

The General Education Abilities that EMCC assesses are Communication, Composition/Writing; Information Literacy; Quantitative Reasoning; Critical Inquiry; Social, Civic and Global

Responsibility and Technological Literacy. College-wide assessments of each are given according to an annual assessment cycle. Results are analyzed by the Student Academic Achievement Committee and then shared and discussed with college faculty and staff in an open meeting. Faculty and staff then work with their respective Divisions to implement strategies for addressing the challenges that students face.

EMCC's General Education Statement is in the 2015-2016 EMCC Academic Catalogue, and aligns with the MCCCDC's General Education Statement which, in part, is as follows:

The general education core of the program of study for an associate degree or a certificate helps students develop a greater understanding of themselves, of their relationship with others and of the richly diverse world in which they live. The general education experience provides students with opportunities to explore broad areas of commonly held knowledge, and prepares them to contribute to society through personal, social and professional interactions with others. General education fosters students' personal development by opening them to new directions, perspectives and processes.

The general education program at Estrella Mountain aligns with MCCCDC and is appropriate to EMCC's Mission, which is as follows:

Estrella Mountain is an innovative higher learning organization responding to the diverse needs of West Valley communities. Learners have an opportunity to successfully accomplish their educational and personal goals through the following college purposes:

- Developmental Education
- General Education
- Transfer Education
- Learner Support Services
- Workforce Development
- Community Education
- Civic Responsibility
- Global Engagement

EMCC offers a wide range of courses, from Communication to Math, Humanities to Science and History to Chicano/a Studies. Maricopa Community Colleges at Estrella Mountain offer the following general education designations that may fulfill program or degree requirements:

- Literacy and Critical Inquiry
- Mathematics
- Computer/Statistics/Quantitative Applications
- Humanities, Fine Arts and Design
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Cultural Diversity in the United States
- Global Awareness
- Historical Awareness

EMCC offers the following degrees supported through the offering of numerous and diverse general education course offerings:

Degrees

- 8 University Transfer Pathway Degrees (e.g. Associate in Arts in Elementary Education)
- 1 General Studies Degree (Associate in General Studies)
- 21 Associate in Applied Science Degrees (e.g. Associate in Applied Science, Nursing)

To assess the student abilities that courses within these degree programs develop, EMCC developed a General Education Abilities Matrix, which examines the following abilities according to Bloom's Taxonomy: Communication; Composition/Writing; Information Literacy; Quantitative Reasoning; Critical Inquiry; Social, Civic, and Global Responsibility and Technological Literacy.

Articulated Framework

EMCC articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of undergraduate general education requirements. General education at EMCC is grounded in a learning college philosophy and practice and imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students as well as develops skills and attitudes that EMCC believes every college-educated person should possess. Experiencing these general education awareness areas allows students to develop as academics and as citizens in a diverse world. The education students receive at Estrella Mountain enables them to think critically, communicate effectively and consider various perspectives to inform their own worldviews as discerning citizens while on their unique paths toward civic engagement.

Estrella Mountain features an online College Catalogue, which is the official source of curriculum information. The college's Advisement webpages offer check sheets for Transfer Pathway Degrees. EMCC Advisement also features the courses that meet the general studies requirements of the transfer degrees, Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) requirements, and provides the link (www.aztransfer.com) to the website, which features the courses students can take at EMCC to fulfill their general education requirements. AGEC-A is for students who want to study liberal arts; AGEC-B is for students who want to study business; AGEC-S is for students who want to study math and science when they transfer to the university. These courses transfer as a block to Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and University of Arizona. The courses fulfill one or more of the following general education areas:

- Literacy & Critical Inquiry
- Mathematics
- Computer/Statistics/Quantitative Applications
- Humanities, Fine Arts & Design
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Cultural Diversity in the United States
- Global Awareness
- Historical Awareness

EMCC began its journey to enhance students' general education experience in spring 2007 when the college committed to [becoming a learning college](#). EMCC transitioned from a culture driven by full-time student equivalent (FTSE) funding growth to a culture that values learning as the fundamental consideration for decision-making processes. Former Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Bryan Tippet, captured the essence of Estrella Mountain's transition to a [learning college](#): "Many institutions of higher education are focused on only teaching, but Estrella Mountain Community College is focused on teaching, learning and caring; and to that end, every decision that is made should improve learning for all." EMCC is not only invested in continuously assessing student learning outcomes but also in improving retention, persistence and completion rates.

EMCC aligns resources to strategies that have the greatest impact on learning. For example, the college sends a team of individuals from various employee groups to the annual Learning College Summit and has done so for the past six years. Upon returning to the college, Learning College Summit Reunions are conducted during which the team identifies initiatives to improve learning at EMCC. All EMCC employees are invited to join the reunions and participate in the initiatives. Three initiatives, which were ultimately institutionalized, were the Learning and Innovation Grants (available to all employees to help kick start new initiatives), the [expansion](#) of the Center of Teaching and Learning (CTL) (to include the professional development of all employees), and the Student Success Fair (designed to increase student comprehension of the tasks, deadlines and requirements for college goal setting, success, and completion).

EMCC's [Instructional Plan](#) sets priorities and the direction for quality programs and instruction. The plan covers a 10-year period (currently the cycle is 2011-2020) and is reviewed annually. The plan includes long-term goals for instructional programs, professional development of instructional faculty and college processes to introduce and sunset programs.

Individual academic divisions communicate to ensure courses integrate the skills and attitudes identified by the college as essential for students to develop. For example, the Arts and Composition Division has established specific [learning outcomes](#) for fundamental writing courses. English faculty include the outcomes in their syllabi and use learning outcomes in their courses; students are made aware of the importance of the inquiry approaches, knowledge development and skills acquisition in which they are taking part. Additionally, the Arts and Composition Division created specific [learning outcomes](#) for composition courses. An example of how measuring learning outcomes enhances pedagogy can be found in the discipline of economics. The residential faculty member led a team of adjunct faculty members in assessing student learning outcomes for ECN211. Results of this activity helped determine and implement an [improvement plan](#) based on the assessment. Similarly, Occupational Education disciplines, such as Culinary, develop student learning outcomes, create assessments of those outcomes, analyze the assessment results, and then create and implement an improvement plan accordingly. This is evident with the [Culinary learning outcomes](#). The Division of Arts and Composition's residential English faculty move through this assessment cycle regularly, and they have created outcomes, such as the [ENG101 learning outcomes](#), for all levels of English.

Within the Maricopa district, [general education transfer courses](#) are vetted through the Arizona Transfer Steering Committee via Articulation Task Forces. Courses for programs or certifications must meet criteria set by industry standards, which are communicated through program advisory boards. Because of the wide array of degrees, programs and courses offered by EMCC, and because some programs must meet third-party accreditation standards, the general education standards cannot be consistent across all programs. In areas that do not require specific general education courses, students can select courses from an approved list to meet requirements.

District-wide competencies are provided by the Center for Curriculum and Transfer Articulation (CCTA) on the MCCC website. The online 2015-2016 EMCC Course Catalogue directs students to the CCTA, which has a disclaimer noting that courses are subject to change. The [CCTA website](#) allows students to search for programs and courses, find course descriptions and identify the competencies for every course.

In addition to discipline-specific competencies provided by the district, EMCC faculty have developed and implemented a [matrix of General Education \(GE\) abilities](#) across all disciplines. The structure of the matrix is based on Bloom's taxonomy of learning with the intent that instructors be aware of incorporating curriculum aimed at higher levels of thinking. The matrix is updated as needed by the Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAAC). The matrix is useful as a template from

which faculty can develop rubrics for student work, and has been implemented in several assessments concerning GE learning outcomes. The GE matrix supports faculty's intent for students to experience higher levels of thinking, readying them for not just academia but life experiences as well.

EMCC faculty members identified seven (7) general education abilities for all general education students, and are committed to enhancing students' abilities while attending EMCC. These general education abilities consist of the following:

- Communication
- Composition/Writing
- Information Literacy
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Critical Inquiry
- Social, Civic and Global Responsibility
- Technological Literacy

Student mastery of the general education abilities is measured using Bloom's Taxonomy, a gauge for measuring cognitive processes. Per the faculty-approved general education assessment cycle, EMCC selects one of the seven education abilities each semester and assesses the ability throughout all participating courses using Bloom's Taxonomy.

Launched in Fall 2012, the [Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System \(CATS\)](#) documents assessments, data collected, analysis of data and changes to how curriculum is implemented as a result of the data analysis. This is referred to as "closing the loop" and represents EMCC's consistent implementation of the action research cycle. The purpose of the system is to provide a platform that encourages EMCC faculty and staff to share and learn best practices in pedagogy and assessment with the goal of continuously improving student learning. For example, a Residential Spanish Faculty member discovered through an assessment that students in SPA102: Elementary Spanish II performed better on a timed chapter exam after she incorporated as preparation the timed, game-based classroom response system Kahoot! Students who prepared for the exam through Kahoot! scored an average of 84.5% on the exam. Prior to this change in the delivery of curriculum, students were preparing for the exam through in-class group work and homework and scored an average of 79.8% on the exam. This CATS submission and a multitude of others in various disciplines and courses are available for faculty to review, rate, discuss and modify to fit their own needs and implement in their courses.

General Education Engages Students

Every degree program offered by EMCC engages students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information, mastering modes of inquiry or creative work and developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

The assessment is cyclical, occurs every 3 - 4 years and is disseminated back to faculty through college-wide discussions and division-level presentations, offering faculty and staff the opportunity to use the information to affect positive changes in their respective instructional and service approaches. Information concerning these assessments is found at the [SAAC website](#), and results demonstrate EMCC's desire to provide students with appropriate skills/abilities needed in their future jobs and careers.

Several examples demonstrate students' abilities to collect, analyze and communicate information. Business students seeking the Accounting CCL or AAS are required to complete ACC121: Income Tax Preparation. Students enrolled in ACC 121 during the fall semester learn how to prepare 1040 tax

returns. Through partnership with the IRS, students practice tax preparation in the IRS federal training database. Data from tax forms completed in previous years are provided to the students in this course. The students analyze the data in terms of personal income tax regulations and then complete the appropriate income tax form(s). Each spring semester, these same students have the opportunity to participate in the Business Institute Accounting Internship in partnership with United Way Valley of the Sun's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. As interns, students transition to collecting data from community members with a net income of \$52,000 or less to prepare their 1040 income tax form for submission to the state and federal governments. In addition, some students use the knowledge and experience to start seasonal, personal income tax preparation businesses. The [course competencies for ACC121](#) -Income Tax Preparation are evidenced.

Mastering the modes of inquiry or creative work is demonstrated in engineering students' participation in the Rube Goldberg Competition where they construct devices, and physics students build speakers and cell phones. For a Rube Goldberg project, students are configured into teams and assigned a complex task; students must not only determine the best method to complete the task but also accomplish the build by ensuring each team member shares in the tasks. Students investigate research and use trial-and-error testing to complete the task within the constrained time schedule. A Rube Goldberg machine must be creative enough to include many steps that ultimately complete the required task. Rube Goldberg machines must also be built within the competition's theme, thus providing an avenue for students' creativity to shine. Themes have included NASCAR, Toys, Pulleys and Carnival; during fall semesters teams build machines with a Halloween theme while teams in the spring create a Saint Patrick's Day themed machine. [Competencies for ECE 102](#), Engineering Analysis Tools and Techniques, support the creation of such machines.

Developing skills adaptable to changing environments is evidenced in CIS105: Survey of Computer Information Systems, which covers concepts and skills needed to effectively engage with technology in the workplace. Small research papers, focused on green computing and social and ethical impacts of computing and technology, engage students; students conduct individual research, construct reports and communicate the information through presentations created within the software. [CIS105](#) is regularly updated to include the latest MS Office software applications so students build skills applicable in the workplace. Since computing is a fast-changing discipline, competencies are broad enough to adapt to shifting trends. Course competencies include: "Identify terminology and the uses of technology in business and society including limitations," "Identify positive social and ethical behaviors when using technology and the consequences of misuse," "Describe how technology is used in the departments of a business and in various career paths" and "Use word processing, spreadsheet, database and presentation software."

The SWSC uses several variations of authentic assessment. The *Technology Use Projects* (TUP), embedded in the SWSC Emergency Medical Technology Program, requires students to videotape a scenario depicting a medical condition. Students formulate the circumstances, signs and symptoms, patient assessment and treatment protocol. The video is presented as a post on *YouTube*. The second part of the assessment is to create a blog wherein students describe their project and include written material, graphics and video to express their ideas. SWSC Emergency Medical Technology Program students are assessed using a matrix and the blog. The interaction between students and course content enriches the learning environment and encourages students to develop technology skills. Since students are responsible for researching blog site options, creating accounts and communicating access, the EMT Program discusses fair use and copyright issues, citation requirements and veracity issues. Additionally, TUP facilitates discussions regarding social media's impact, and its effect on Emergency Medical Services.

The Medical Spanish Interpreter program also creates vignettes, which are videotaped and evaluated

by the instructor and peers. Critiques are structured to focus on communication skills, situational awareness, cultural awareness and tactful presentation. Students in the Medical Interpreter-Spanish program, Phlebotomy and Medical Assistant programs attend externship courses consisting of 40 clock hours, 120 clock hours, and 160 clock hours respectively. Through these externships, students apply critical thinking and demonstrate learned skills. The [rubric](#) used in the SWSC EMT Program illustrates how students use technology to demonstrate learning.

Human and Cultural Diversity

The education offered by Estrella Mountain Community College recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

One of the five (5) core values of EMCC is diversity. As stated in the [Academic Catalogue](#) and on the Estrella Mountain website, the core value of diversity is defined or described as:

- Considering the contributions and worldviews of others
- Promoting an inclusive campus culture that supports social awareness
- Committing to comprehensive inter-cultural learning and awareness

EMCC's Diversity Team, which has a webpage on the EMCC website, features the EMCC Diversity Team's Value Statement:

The EMCC Diversity Team values diversity as the expression and recognition of the human experience encouraging a culture of respect and inclusion. Acknowledging, understanding and celebrating the unique backgrounds, identities and perspectives of each individual creates a shared experience that engages individuals helping to build an enriched learning community with respect to the college's Core Values.

Two recent initiatives stemmed from the Diversity Team: Inclusiveness in the hiring process and Facilities Appreciation Day. Inclusiveness in the Hiring Process partners with EMCC's Human Resources office to offer any employee the opportunity to serve on a hiring committee for professional development purposes. Facilities Appreciation Day acknowledges the help that facilities staff members provide to students in terms of finding classes and providing assistance on campus while also celebrating the work they do in keeping the campus beautiful so students want to take classes at Estrella Mountain.

The EMCC Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) has an annual Award of Excellence, which is given to employees who represent diverse identities in positive and productive ways:

- Empowerment Committee (2014): Addressed the physical access limitations on the EMCC campus and helped create a more inclusive environment for students and employees.
- Deaf Deaf World (2015): Helped build awareness of the Deaf community and fostered an inclusive and accessible campus culture by enabling the hearing participants and Deaf instructors and volunteers to interact with each other.
- "I Am Human" Campaign to End Derogatory Language (2016): Helped build awareness of the use of derogatory and degrading language on and off campus to foster environments that uplift instead of dehumanize others.

Additionally, in November 2015 EMCC was awarded the [Higher Education Excellence in Diversity \(HEED\) award](#). The award recognizes post-secondary education institutions that demonstrate outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

MCCCD's Diversity Advisory Council reviews policies and procedures, identifies training opportunities, monitors campus culture and climate and disseminates information through a variety of formats to promote a shared understanding of diversity and inclusivity. [Maricopa Diversity Events](#) are featured in the 2015-2016 calendar.

Estrella Mountain offers opportunities for students to learn about diversity and social awareness issues through classes such as Survey of American Indian Issues and Women in Other Cultures. Since diversity is a core value of EMCC, it is embedded in traditional general education courses. Additionally, faculty at EMCC often embed campus diversity activities into their courses, require students attend events and complete related assignments for credit. Although not a complete list of [Diversity Events](#), examples of diversity activities include:

- Domestic Violence Awareness Month events
- Love Your Body Week
- Phoenix AIDS Walk
- One Billion Rising
- "I am Human" Campaign to End Derogatory Language
- Hispanic Heritage Month events
- Black History Month events
- Women's History Month events

Faculty and staff apply for EMCC International and Intercultural Education funding and, if awarded, assess the learning outcomes established for the event through a survey distributed after the event. For example, a Residential Sociology Faculty member submitted her assessment of the One Billion Rising event based upon the learning outcomes established prior to the event and then surveyed after the event. She submitted this [assessment](#) to Estrella Mountain's Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System in order to share the results with faculty and staff. The professor learned that having experienced the event, over 80% of participants found that their awareness of global issues and understanding of diversity increased.

EMCC's commitment to diversity is evidenced in the educational experiences students have with diverse perspectives and awareness of various identities.

Estrella Mountain has a vibrant Heritage/History Month Exhibition Program. By contracting with an experienced curator, artists are compensated to exhibit and discuss their work at the college, which creates educational experiences for students, employees and community members. For Black History Month 2015, artist Rhonda Shakur led an art walk, and informally discussing her work with art classes and interested students, employees and community members. She also gave a formal presentation followed by a question and answer period.

Contribution of Faculty and Students

Faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and Estrella Mountain Community College's mission.

Estrella Mountain's mission states a dedication to "meeting the diverse needs of learners," and the college partially fulfills the obligation through scholarship opportunities, which vary from creative writing and artistic expression to traditional scholarship and scientific exploration.

The MCCCD [Student Conference](#) at Estrella Mountain provides students with the experience of presenting their own work in a formal conference environment. Students work with a faculty mentor

and submit their proposals for acceptance; if accepted, students may present in an oral or poster presentation, depending on the category to which they applied. Conference objectives specify that students will demonstrate:

- Critical and creative thinking by developing an original work for presentation
- Communication mastery through presentation of their original work
- Team work by collaborating with a mentor in the development of this project

The conference theme for 2015 was “The Pursuit of Happiness,” which featured presentations such as “Gender’s Place within Coping Strategy Selection” and “Self-growth on the Autistic Spectrum: A Personal Analysis.”

The [Honors Research Expo](#) is an annual fall event supported by faculty in which Honors students showcase their exploration of learning via projects they conducted during the semester. [Presentations](#) are judged; each year the top three presenters travel to the Western Regional Honors Conference and present their work. During Spring 2015, an EMCC student won 2nd place at the Western Regional Conference. The [Honors Program](#) contributes significantly to student educational experiences.

EMCC's Beta Alpha Xi, a chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, has achieved an outstanding Five Star Ranking since forming in 1995. Beta Alpha Xi's [2015 Honors in Action Project](#) was titled "Undocumented College Students' History, Policy and Personal Narratives: Where Do We Go From Here?" and presented in a panel and seminar format during Hispanic Heritage Month.

Students are encouraged by and work with faculty to create pieces of literature and/or art and submit compositions for publication. The [Mariposa Literary Review](#), published in the spring semester, provides a competitive venue for student work in the following categories: poetry, one-act play, fiction, creative non-fiction, original artwork and photography, all of which are examples of the creative expression of EMCC students.

During the spring semester, EMCC produces a juried [Student Art Show](#), which provides students the opportunity to submit pieces of art in the following categories: painting, drawing, sculpture, mixed media, photography, digital photography/illustration and video. Submissions are considered for exhibition and juried by Estrella Mountain residential and adjunct Art Faculty. The top 20 pieces at EMCC are submitted to the MCCC CD Art Exhibition, which showcases student work from across the 10 colleges. The 2015 Juried Student Art Show was exhibited at the Avondale City Hall Library Gallery located in Avondale, Arizona.

Within individual classes, Estrella Mountain affords students the opportunity to become published authors. For example, students in the independent study section MAT298 performed analyses on data previously collected from observing [binary stars](#). Students published their work and presented at the Society for Astronomical Sciences Conference in 2012. PSY290 (Research Methods) requires students conduct research projects that lead to publication in a student research journal published by EMCC Psychology Faculty. Focusing on learning and animal conservation, EMCC’s residential Biology faculty brought conservation agency, Wild at Heart, to Estrella Mountain to build new owl habitats for [rescued owls](#) by repurposing EMCC land. Involving both Honors and Biology students, genetic testing was conducted to determine the gender of the owls. The students will be listed as authors on any future research papers as well as the reports of the genetic studies. Additional research questions are under investigation, including:

- What is the optimal perch height for owls?
- Using owl cameras, what is the behavior of the owls raising chicks?

The learning experience is supported by the [Sustainability Committee](#) and the [Environmental Student Club](#). These are but a few of the many opportunities that exist at EMCC for faculty and students to contribute to the academic community.

Sources

- Crit 3B ACC121 Competencies
- Crit 3B Burr Owls
- Crit 3B CATS
- Crit 3B CIS105 Honors Syllabus Sp16
- Crit 3B Civic Eng Soc Resp
- Crit 3B CTL Expanded Programs
- Crit 3B Culinary SLO
- Crit 3B District Curriculum Website
- Crit 3B Diversity Calendar 2015-2016
- Crit 3B Double-star
- Crit 3B ECE102 Competencies
- Crit 3B ECN211 SLO Improvement
- Crit 3B ENG081 and 091 Learning Outcomes
- Crit 3B ENG101 and 102 Learning Outcomes
- Crit 3B ENG101 SLO Common Assignment Fall 2015
- Crit 3B Env Club
- Crit 3B GE Abilities Matrix
- Crit 3B Gen Ed Transfer Pathways
- Crit 3B Honors in Action 2015
- Crit 3B Honors News
- Crit 3B Honors Res Exp Prog 1
- Crit 3B Honors Res Exp Prog 2
- Crit 3B Insight Into Diversity 2015 HEED Recipients
- Crit 3B Instructional Plan
- Crit 3B Learning College Webpage
- Crit 3B Learning College White Paper
- Crit 3B Mariposa Lit Rev
- Crit 3B One Billion Rising CATS
- Crit 3B SAAC
- Crit 3B Student Art Show
- Crit 3B Student Conf Program
- Crit 3B Sustainability
- Crit 3B SWSC Rubric

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College recognizes the importance of Residential and Adjunct Faculty in the creation and delivery of effective educational opportunities for its students.

Faculty Numbers and Continuity

EMCC serves the needs of more than 500,000 residents in the Southwest Valley of the Phoenix, Arizona metropolitan area with 90 full-time and 455 part-time faculty/instructors teaching credit students. At present approximately 68% of EMCC courses are taught by adjunct faculty. However, by 2022, MCCCDC has committed to work with EMCC to increase the full-time to adjunct faculty ratio to 60% full-time faculty and 40% part-time faculty. The infusion of new full-time faculty will strengthen EMCC's ability to support faculty's instructional and non-classroom roles. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) data confirms the correlation between faculty and student success; improvements in student retention and completion occur as faculty and student engagement increases inside and outside of the classroom.

Estrella Mountain adheres to the MCCCDC's established [minimum qualifications requirements for the hiring of all faculty](#). [Faculty hiring qualifications](#) are outlined on the Maricopa County Community College District website. Residential Faculty positions are advertised locally and nationally through print and electronic resources to attract a diverse pool of applicants. EMCC works with the HLC accrediting body to maintain updated faculty credential documentation according to HLC guidelines for both occupational and academic faculty. Hiring advertisements include information about classroom responsibilities as well as non-classroom duties. EMCC includes statements about the learning college commitments in faculty and staff job postings.

Spring 2016 Estrella Mountain Community College Residential Faculty by Division

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Service Faculty: | 11 total |
| Information Resources | 6 |
| Counseling | 5 |
| Instructional Faculty: | 75 total |
| Science | 10 |
| Math, Physics and Engineering | 14 |
| Arts and Composition | 11 |
| Behavioral Sciences and Cultural Studies | 11 |
| Modern Language | 5 |
| Nursing | 4 |
| Occupational Education | 14 |
| Instructional Computing | 6 |

Data from the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) show the student-to-faculty ratio for EMCC is 19.83 (2014 Report Year) versus a median of 17.7 for other NCCBP colleges. These data suggest that EMCC effectively maintains a sufficient student-to-faculty ratio.

Divisions submit faculty staffing proposals to the [Faculty Staffing Committee](#), which evaluates areas where faculty are most needed. The committee forwards staffing recommendations to Senior Administration and the President provides final approval. Hiring recommendations are effective for the following fiscal year.

Many efforts support the continuity of faculty. Residential Faculty have access to professional development opportunities and funding. EMCC is also known for its Adjunct Faculty Professional Development Program, which consists of division-specific orientations, a [mentoring program](#), Saturday workshops and an [online orientation](#). Adjunct Faculty receive compensation for participating in most workshops/sessions. Adjunct Faculty can attend professional development workshops through EMCC's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and through the Maricopa Center for Learning and Instruction (MCLI) free of charge. Adjunct faculty can apply for professional growth funds, which have been established for Adjunct Faculty professional development activities. During the first three semesters at EMCC, Adjunct Faculty are evaluated by Division Chairs or Evening Supervisors, who are residential faculty, and given feedback to improve their teaching.

In addition, Residential Faculty are responsible for overseeing curriculum, selecting textbooks and course materials, and creating Syllabi from [English](#) and Sociology to [Culinary](#) for [online](#), [hybrid](#), and [face-to-face](#) classes that align with MCCC standards, including the delineation between faculty and student responsibilities. EMCC has Residential Faculty member representatives on MCCC's Instructional Councils.

EMCC residential faculty have developed a culture of assessment of student learning through the [Student Academic Achievement Committee \(SAAC\)](#). SAAC provides leadership to the coordinated efforts between faculty and college resources to sustain a robust assessment framework at the course, program and college levels. Faculty participate in gathering evidence of student performance over a

period of time. The evidence is assessed and analyzed to measure learning. Data analytics are then used to create better teaching and learning practices for all. An example of the positive impact to student learning is realized when students present at the annual EMCC Honors Student Expo, the Maricopa Student Research Conference (hosted at EMCC) as well as state and national conferences such as the Regional Honors Conference.

Credentialed Faculty

Estrella Mountain adheres to MCCCDC's established set of minimum qualifications for the hiring of [Adjunct](#) and [Residential](#) Faculty; some teaching areas have additional discipline-specific qualifications that are decided upon by Instructional Councils. These minimum qualifications apply to dual-enrollment instructors, as well. Moreover, Estrella Mountain emphasizes the organizational commitment to learning by incorporating the following learning college statement in all job postings, including those for Residential Faculty:

Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) is hiring a _____ to work under the learning college philosophy (<http://www.estrellamountain.edu/learning-college>) where learning happens anyway, anyplace and anytime.

Hiring committee chairs and members of Residential Faculty hiring committees are required to complete training through online modules provided by MCCCDC. The training ensures all parties are fully aware of their responsibility. The MCCCDC hiring process includes "Knowledge Checks" that address:

- Roles and responsibilities of selection committee chairperson and members for conducting inclusive, equitable and defensible processes
- Hiring cycle procedures, techniques and forms
- Appropriate Conduct throughout the hiring cycle phases: preparing the search, screening the candidate pool, interviewing the selected candidates and reference checking the candidates selected for the final interview

In addition, a [Hiring Manager Guide](#) outlines the appropriate procedures to follow for the person in charge of the Residential Faculty hiring committee.

Evaluation of Instructors

EMCC has processes in place to ensure all instructors are evaluated regularly in order to assure their suitability for continued employment.

To ensure new Residential Faculty receive the support and training during their probationary years and facilitate learning needed to be successful educators, EMCC follows MCCCDC's new faculty evaluation process, including the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) and the Peer Assistance and Review Committee (PARC) elements. The PAR process is described in the 2015-2016 [Residential Faculty Policies](#), section 3.6. New Residential Faculty [document](#) their instructional expertise, service to college and community, and professional development using an Individual Development Plan (IDP). The rigorous IDP process, which is required for the first five years, is intended to provide significant professional growth and development for the Probationary Faculty member in an environment of support and encouragement. The IDP process provides new Residential Faculty a formal mentorship process emphasizing peer assistance, support and facilitation rather than merely supervision. The IDP is [evaluated](#) by the PARC and is the basis for recommendations related to probationary contract renewal and appointive status.

In addition to the IDP and mentoring, probationary faculty who are serving their first two years are observed by their mentor in fall and spring semesters, and are formally evaluated by both the Division Chair and VP designee in both semesters. During years three through five, probationary faculty are observed and evaluated once per year by their mentor, the Division Chair and the VP designee.

Estrella Mountain augments the PAR process with a mandatory New Faculty Orientation (NFO) class. This experience allows new Residential Faculty to interact with personnel from all areas of the campus.

Once Probationary Faculty become Residential Faculty, EMCC follows the tenured faculty evaluation process and guidelines as outlined in the 2015-2016 *Residential Faculty Policies* document wherein each appointive faculty member completes a [Faculty Evaluation Plan](#) (FEP). The FEP is a method by which Residential Faculty reflect upon their teaching performance and document continuous process improvement efforts. Residential Faculty members complete the FEP every third year and engage in a peer-reviewed self-examination of the following three required areas:

- Teaching, learning and/or service
- Course assessment and/or program development/revision
- Governance and/or committee participation at the college and/or district level(s)

In addition, each faculty member must engage in reflective examination of at least two of the following elective areas:

- Professional development
- Acquisition of new skills
- Enhancement of diversity
- College level assessment of learning outcomes

[Adjunct Faculty](#) teaching face-to-face and online classes are evaluated during their first three semesters, excluding the summer term as well as on an ad hoc basis. A class evaluation form for face-to-face or [in-person instruction](#) is disseminated to students. An [online instruction evaluation form](#) is also distributed to classes in which Adjunct Faculty are teaching E-Learning courses. Division Chairs then review the student evaluations of the Adjunct Faculty members in their respective Divisions. Division Chairs then meet with Adjunct Faculty members whose scores need to be addressed, providing suggestions for improvement, mentoring, and another classroom visit.

The Division Chair or designee evaluates Dual Enrollment Instructors every semester. Division Chairs then work on an improvement plan with Dual Enrollment Instructors whose evaluations are of concern.

Professional Development

The district recognizes the value of professional growth as it pertains to the continued improvement of teaching and learning. Faculty are encouraged to participate in these growth opportunities and may choose to advance on the salary schedule or receive reimbursement for various types of activities directly related to professional development. Faculty Professional Growth (FPG) has developed a set of policies and procedures that relate to advancement and reimbursement. FPG and Adjunct Faculty Professional Growth funds are available to support conference and seminar expenses, travel expenses to conferences and workshops and late-start credit course tuition reimbursement.

At the district, a variety of resources and professional development opportunities are available

through the [Maricopa Center for Learning and Instruction](#) (MCLI). MCLI's goal for faculty professional development programming is to foster instructional excellence and develop instructional expertise to help advance student learning. Programs supported by the district include:

- Arizona Master Teacher Seminar
- Learning Grants
- Maricopa Summer Institute and Maricopa Summer Institute 2.0

Professional development opportunities include paid [sabbaticals](#), funding for conference/workshop registration and travel, summer projects and completion of continuing education credits required to maintain industry certifications. Estrella Mountain faculty not only take advantage of these professional growth opportunities, they also actively participate in [professional organizations](#) relevant to the discipline they teach. Workshops and conferences associated with these organizations are supported with FPG funding.

EMCC further supports faculty professional growth through various opportunities and resources, which are available to both Residential and Adjunct Faculty. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is the hub of teaching and learning at EMCC. The CTL's goal is to create an inclusive and supportive environment bringing together all members of the EMCC Community to engage in the creation, integration, elaboration and celebration of teaching and learning. Examples of workshops, events and services include the following:

- Campus Conversations: Discussions about the learning college that bring all employees together
- Learning@Lunch: Introductions to new tools that can impact teaching and learning
- Day at the Office: Tools to help people become more effective in their workplace
- Essential Elements of EMCC: Seminars and presentations on Estrella Mountain Core Values

The [Spring 2015 Professional Development calendar](#) lists 67 different activities available covering information ranging from student behavioral concerns and new technology tools to emotional intelligence and E-Learning pedagogy.

Through the CTL, EMCC offers new Residential Faculty a semester-long *New Faculty Orientation*. The experience introduces first-year Probationary Faculty to college leaders and provides them with information and resources to enhance both their teaching and their scholarship. Faculty members are granted a one-course reassignment to facilitate their participation, which consists of weekly meetings during the fall semester. Per the *Residential Faculty Policies* manual, first-year Probationary Faculty members also receive a year-long waiver of their committee assignment while they adjust to their new surroundings. Issues of pedagogy, classroom management and college practices and procedures are just a few of the topics covered in the New Faculty Orientation.

EMCC offers various opportunities for adjunct faculty development, many of which are compensated. The Adjunct Faculty Professional Learning Community (PLC), comprised of adjunct faculty and facilitated by a Dean of Academic Affairs, designed an Adjunct Faculty Professional Development Program consisting of the following components: Applied Integration in the Classroom (Mentoring), Objective (Teaching), and Subjective (Personal Development). This professional development program offers Saturday workshops specifically designed for Adjunct Faculty. Administrators and Residential and Adjunct Faculty contribute to topics that are geared toward helping make Adjunct Faculty successful in and out of the classroom. Each [Adjunct Faculty Workshop](#) is assessed and results are tabulated by the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE). Moreover, in recognition of the need to transfer best practices to the classroom as well as for the continuous

improvement of teaching and learning, EMCC developed and implemented the [EMCC Adjunct Faculty Mentoring Program](#). This program was researched and created by the Adjunct PLC under the leadership of an Academic Dean. Testimonials from mentors and mentees indicate the program is mutually beneficial and individuals learn from each other. EMCC encourages adjuncts to register for [workshops](#), trainings and learning grants offered through the CTL.

Adjunct and Residential Faculty Professional Development is at the heart of everything EMCC does in the E-Learning environment. Following the learning college philosophy, E-Learning courses are developed upon sound pedagogy, dynamic instructional design and active learning that leads to optimal student success. Workshops are scheduled each semester to develop online or hybrid courses in Canvas.

Accessible Instructors

EMCC's learning college journey has emphasized to all faculty the importance of being available to students and to support student learning. All instructors list their contact and accessibility information in the course syllabus and the Canvas section of every class they teach. Further, Residential Faculty members may post this information on their office doors.

Residential faculty accessibility to students is mandated in the [RFP](#):

Instructional Residential Faculty members are required to hold a minimum of five (5) [scheduled academic support hours](#) reflective of the Faculty member's teaching schedule and to post the time and location of scheduled support hours so that they are publicly accessible to students.

Service Residential Faculty are also very accessible, meeting their professional responsibilities either in the library or as counselors to serve students. In addition, Evening Supervisors (Residential Faculty) hold two academic support hours per week to serve students and adjunct faculty.

In addition, many Residential Faculty members, such as [Math Faculty](#), hold scheduled formal or informal academic support hours in EMCC's Academic Success Centers (tutoring), both to encourage students' awareness and use of this resource and to facilitate collaboration with tutors. Residential [Science Faculty](#) also hold office hours in the Academic Success Center to increase engagement and enhance student success.

A significant number of Adjunct Faculty members from a variety of disciplines work with their students in the Academic Success Center to support student success. Adjunct instructors are not required to hold academic support hours but are available to their students through voicemail, email or messaging through the Learning Management System (Canvas). Additionally, Adjunct Faculty can meet with students in the Montezuma Hall Adjunct Faculty Office.

Qualified Staff Members

The Maricopa district recognizes the value of hiring and retaining quality professionals to provide support services. New employees are hired through a competitive process that serves to appropriately review candidates for the specified criteria as established for each position. Ongoing training opportunities are plentiful and offered within a variety of formats and timeframes to suit the needs of departments.

Numerous professional development opportunities are available for student support staff through EMCC and MCCC, including the [Estrella Leadership Development Program](#), the [Women's](#)

[Leadership Group](#) mentor program, the [Day of Learning](#) events and professional growth funding provided to management and professional staff.

College processes and programs change on a regular basis. Student Affairs' staff training is an ongoing process. New advisors participate in a New Employee Orientation, complete online training modules as defined by MCCC CD HR policy and participate in one-on-one or small group training for advisement and other Student Affairs areas. Job shadowing is also required, with time spent shadowing and eventually assisting in various positions, including the Welcome Desk, Priority Advisement Workshop (PAW) for students, Nursing Information sessions and working with individual advisors. New staff are mentored by existing staff and all individuals work on teams to update the areas involved with specific program information, new technology and revised processes. Weekly Student Affairs meetings are utilized for training, with the first half of the session including all staff and the second half of the meeting reserved for department-specific information. Partial or all-day retreats are scheduled once a semester for more in-depth training and team building. Staff can participate in professional growth opportunities offered by MCCC CD and EMCC, including web seminars, in-person training at the district office and campus-based training sessions. Student Affairs is currently involved in creating an online training manual and [training resource](#) repository for use by all advisement staff.

In the Academic Success Center (ASC), staff members who provide tutoring must meet a set of minimum qualifications. For example, Math tutors must meet the following qualifications:

- Successful completion (grade of "A") in the course they tutor, e.g., MAT220
- Knowledge of course content and materials in the subject area they tutor, e.g., Mathematics
- Good communication skills and the ability to help students understand complex material
- Patient and respectful of varying levels of student content knowledge

Additionally, the following qualifications are desired for Math tutors:

- Successful completion (grade of "A") in other subject area courses, e.g., other math courses
- Knowledge of instructional methods used at Estrella Mountain Community College
- Experience providing quality service in a fast-paced environment

Qualified applicants participate in an interview process that may include a knowledge assessment, depending on the subject they want to tutor. When hiring student tutors, faculty recommendations are considered.

The Academic Success Center holds an in-person, [two-day training](#) during the week of accountability. Day One is for new hires to learn about the operational aspect of tutoring, and Day Two is for all tutors. While the content of the second day varies by semester, the focus is always to help the tutors reflect upon how important their values, communication and ability to work with diverse groups are in the tutoring setting. Topics are delivered through activities, presentations and guest speakers.

Tutors must acquire the CRLA (College Reading & Learning Association) Level I Certification during their employment. The Academic Success Center has been CRLA certified since 2013. Tutors participate in the CRLA training through a self-paced course in Canvas. Once this is completed, along with a specified number of tutoring hours, tutors receive a CRLA Level I Certificate.

The Academic Success Center has an [Employee Handbook](#) that provides tutors with procedures and outlines their responsibilities and expectations. Tutors acknowledge that they have read and

understand the Handbook by turning in the Employee Commitment Signature page of the Handbook.

All staff members providing student services are qualified employees. For example, a [Financial Aid Technician II](#) must be able to counsel students and parents regarding financial aid. A [Student Services Specialist](#) must be able to advise students and parents regarding the various student services functions, such as admissions, placement testing, financial aid programs, academic advisement, community education and registration. A [Learning Associate](#) must be able to provide tutoring for a specific discipline. Professional Staff Association (PSA) employees have the opportunity for [professional development](#) to maximize her/his scope of knowledge. For example, PSA employees in the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year had access to \$4,000 to support approved professional growth activities, tuition, books and certification exams.

Sources

- Crit 3C 2015 CTL calendar
- Crit 3C Adj Fac Ment
- Crit 3C Adj Faculty Handbook
- Crit 3C Adj Mentor
- Crit 3C Adjunct Faculty Roster 2015-16
- Crit 3C Adjunct Orientation
- Crit 3C Agenda
- Crit 3C ASC Employee Handbook
- Crit 3C CTL
- Crit 3C CTL Workshops
- Crit 3C CUL127 Syllabus Spring 2016
- Crit 3C Day of Learning 2015
- Crit 3C EMCC Advisement Retreat
- Crit 3C ENG Syllabus Spring 2016
- Crit 3C Estrella Leadership Development Program
- Crit 3C F2F Adj Eval
- Crit 3C Faculty Min Quals MCCCCD
- Crit 3C Faculty Staffing Advisory Committee
- Crit 3C FEP
- Crit 3C Fin Aid Tech
- Crit 3C FPG
- Crit 3C Hiring Mgr Guide
- Crit 3C HLC Qual Faculty Guidelines
- Crit 3C IDP Template EMCC
- Crit 3C Learning Assoc
- Crit 3C Math Tutors
- Crit 3C MCCCCD Faculty Hiring Qualifications
- Crit 3C MCLI FPG
- Crit 3C New Faculty Class Modules
- Crit 3C Office Hours
- Crit 3C Online Adj Eval
- Crit 3C PARC Eval Rubric
- Crit 3C Prof Dev
- Crit 3C Prof Orgs
- Crit 3C Residential Faculty Roster 2015-16

- Crit 3C SAAC
- Crit 3C Sabbatical
- Crit 3C Sample IDP
- Crit 3C Science Tutors
- Crit 3C St Sves Spec
- Crit 3C Syllabus F2F SOC212
- Crit 3C Syllabus Hybrid SOC212
- Crit 3C Syllabus Online SOC212
- Crit 3C WLG
- Crit 3C Workshops

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College is committed to supporting student learning and effective teaching.

Student Support Services

EMCC provides student support through a variety of services that are suited to the needs to its student populations. Students have access to advising, financial aid and scholarships, disability resources and services, peer mentoring, counseling, enrollment services, the Veterans Center, career services and outreach programs, all of which are located in one area on campus. The majority of these services are accessed through a single point of entry, the *Welcome Center* in Komatke Hall, and are available year-round. Functioning as a "triage point" for students, the *Welcome Center* assists students in identifying the services needed and directing them to the appropriate resources. As an [open door institution](#) with a large percentage of first-generation and under-prepared students, EMCC supports all new students with interventions that provide students with tools to navigate their college experience. All new students are directed to complete the college's Enrollment Steps, which include placement testing, attending a group advising session called the Priority Advisement Workshop (PAW) and attending a New Student Orientation (NSO) session.

Student support services are evaluated through the [Program Review](#) process, and the results of these assessments are used to inform the budget allocation process and to implement changes to improve services.

Learning Support and Preparatory Instruction

MCCCD's Student Success Initiative (SSI) was created to provide new students with a foundation for success at the start of their academic experience. As part of this initiative, all first-time-attending degree or transfer-seeking students are required to take placement tests, meet with an advisor and attend a New Student Orientation. Students testing into one or more developmental courses are required to enroll in a college success course. Students who meet the program criteria and have completed the mandatory enrollment steps are placed into a cohort. Their progress is tracked and

reported.

One example of a service improvement to students as a result of SSI is the [Priority Advisement Workshop](#) (PAW). In this workshop, which is taught by an academic advisor, students learn basic terminology, how to register for classes, how to interpret their placement scores and the basics of attending college. The intended outcomes of the PAW workshop are two-fold: (1) to serve more students by reducing the number of students seeking one-on-one advisement sessions in their first semester; and (2) to teach students to self-enroll. Data show:

- From 2012 to 2014, individual advisement visits dropped by 12% while PAW session attendance increased
- In 2014-2015, over 3,100 students attended a PAW workshop as their initial advisement session
- The majority of students self-enroll in classes with minimal registration assistance from advisement or A and R

To support additional SSI components, advisors help students identify and register for a student success class and sign up for a New Student Orientation.

The [New Student Orientation](#) (NSO) program is open to all students and is a comprehensive introduction to the college environment with specific learning outcomes. In case students aren't able to attend one of the in-person NSO's offered, there is an [online NSO](#) course in Canvas. The number of students attending an NSO continues to increase on a yearly basis, with a 10.3% increase noted in 2013-2014 over the prior year. In addition to the traditional NSO, orientations have been implemented for specific student groups such as Veterans and students in early outreach programs. The online offering, Veterans-focused and [early outreach NSOs](#) are examples of other service improvements for students at EMCC as a result of SSI.

Another MCCCDC initiative is the Seamless Student Experience (SSE). SSE focuses on transforming students' experience into one that is truly seamless among the District's colleges as it relates to financial aid, admissions, records, registration and transcript processes. Estrella Mountain has supported this initiative in many ways, one of which is intrusive advising. Two part-time advisors were hired with this purpose. One of the part-time advisors tracks students who have the credit to graduate but haven't yet. This advisor engages with those students to help them graduate and transfer into a university. The other part-time advisor tracks students who have experienced PAW but have not yet registered for classes. This advisor engages with those students and helps them register for classes. As a final example of intrusive advising at Estrella Mountain Community College that has resulted from SSE is that full-time advisors visit each CPD150: Strategies for College Success class twice per semester to help students select and register for their classes.

In 2013-2014, the [Academic Success Center](#) provided over 50,000 hours of tutoring for nearly 5,000 students. During summer 2013, the [Estrella Hall Expansion](#) was completed and all campus tutoring was moved to this centrally located building. The Academic Success Center desk is highly visible; students sign-in at the desk and are directed to the appropriate area. Located in the Academic Success Center, tutoring resources consist of the following: Writing Success; Math Success; Science Success; Reading, Languages and Occupational Success; independent study and group study.

The Estrella Hall Expansion doubled the capacity in tutoring. Math and Science tutoring have a total of 188 seats (144 seats, 28 desktop computers and 16 laptops). Writing Success has 6 desktop computers and 8 small round tables for individual tutoring.

Student, faculty and tutor surveys are gathered yearly to measure and evaluate the level of student

satisfaction with provided services. In certain occupational programs, such as nursing, post-graduation surveys are sent out on an annual basis to evaluate learning support services specific to that program. Student use of tutoring within the Academic Success Center is documented through the software program *TutorTrac*. In addition, student academic performance and retention are measured each semester. Collected data demonstrates a positive relationship between students' engagement with campus learning support services and their overall success and retention.

The [Computer Commons](#) is located near the Academic Success Center. This is a place where students can work on computer projects for any course and receive Computer Lab Technician or Learning Facilitator assistance. There are 200 desktop computers available for student use and 35 seats where students can plug in their own laptops, tablets or phones. Tutoring is available in the Computer Commons for Computer Information Systems or Business-Personal Computers. Additionally, students can reserve study rooms that surround the Computer Commons.

Academic Advising

[Advisement](#) is a mandatory enrollment step for all new students, requiring significant resources to meet the demands of the student population. In 2008, the cohort model was implemented to improve service to students by connecting each advisor with an identified major, discipline or group of related fields of study. This model allows advisors to connect with faculty to learn more about the disciplines assigned to them, participate in discipline-specific events and outreach efforts and, in turn, provide more specific information to students in their cohort. In 2012, group advisement sessions were instituted to provide more access to advisement information for students with similar needs or interests. This is accomplished through group sessions such as workshops, class meetings and occupational institute events.

Initial advisement sessions for new students are conducted in a group format via the PAW sessions, providing students the basic information needed to choose their first semester's classes and self-enroll. During their first semester of enrollment, many students participate in a second group advisement session in their college success class wherein they create an educational plan. In the following semesters, students connect with their cohort advisor for individual sessions to focus on the specific requirements of their degree or major. Additional group advisement sessions are offered on a weekly basis for specific areas of study such as Nursing and Southwest Skill Center programs. The addition of group advisement sessions enabled the department to serve 8% more students in 2013 - 2014 than in the previous year. In 2013-2014, Estrella Mountain advisors conducted 18,680 advisement sessions (15,983 individual sessions and 2697 students in group setting).

Infrastructure and Resources

EMCC provides the infrastructure and resources necessary for optimal instruction and student support. The institution has [Master Planning](#) documents indicating build out/remodel projects that are guided by a focus on building and creating innovative teaching and learning spaces, while integrating environmental elements and public art to reflect the culture and history of the surrounding West Valley community. In addition, EMCC administration receives feedback as needs arise from instructional divisions and specialized areas. While these needs may not be in the Master Plan, they are vetted through leadership and, if the need is well justified, are incorporated into future planning. Examples are the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa. With the third largest Honors Program in the district, the EMCC Honors Program needed a more appropriate space to support Honors and Phi Theta Kappa students. In 2013, space was remodeled to accommodate students and provide appropriate cubicles and working areas for staff.

Another excellent example of EMCC responding to faculty suggestions and instructional needs was the expansion of Estrella Hall. In order to optimally support developmental education students, faculty suggested a common space for offices, tutoring and other instructional student supportive resources. When Estrella Hall's expansion was conceptualized, the first priority in the planning document called for the creation of innovative learning spaces and co-location of resources, including designated offices for faculty working with developmental education.

All students benefitted from the Estrella Hall expansion. The capabilities of information resources were augmented not only in terms of space for more books but also with classrooms for literacy instruction, quiet rooms and areas for laptop uplinks to support personal technology use on campus. A long-standing goal at EMCC has been to provide all new instructional spaces with the best and most appropriate technology possible. This was again evident in the Estrella expansion as state-of-the-art instructor stations were installed in classrooms and classroom computers were provided for students.

The last and most recent addition to the EMCC campus is the [Performing Arts Center](#) (PAC). The new Performing Arts Center at Estrella Mountain Community College is a 30,000 square foot free-standing fine arts space at the heart of the campus. The new building serves as a bookend to the student mall, which is at the center of the campus Master Plan. In addition to the 295-seat performance area with professional-style crossover orchestra pit and pit lift platform, the state-of-the-art building features a comprehensive performing arts support space. It contains a black box performance studio complete with pipe grid and theatrical accessories, including digital projection; dance studio with premium Marley dance surfacing; costume design and fabrication lab; tech lab for digital audio, video and digital scene production; performer support areas and dressing rooms; backstage support space and scene shop for complete theatrical production, scenery construction and stagecraft. The PAC will allow EMCC to expand the offering of courses in the Associate in Arts in Fine Arts degrees (Dance and Theatre). The PAC grand opening was held Nov 6, 2015.

Previous remodeling and new construction has supported the following:

- Simulation laboratories to practice clinical situations for nursing students
- Culinary infrastructure, equipment and restaurant to support culinary certificates and programs
- Reef tank in the Science Lab area to allow students to observe marine life directly
- Updating/expansion of the science labs and prep areas
- Increased number of faculty office spaces and classrooms (Mariposa, Ocotillo)
- Art studio with a darkroom and Apple computers
- Student Union expansion and remodeling project

Research and Information

The Estrella Mountain [Library](#) is located at the center of the College and is between the Academic Success Center (tutoring) and the Computer Commons. It is open 76.5 hours per week. The Library's faculty and staff offer research assistance and in-person as well as over-the-phone instruction from the service desk during all hours the college is open. In addition, the Library offers 24-hour assistance through the district's Ask a Librarian chat service.

Library faculty collaborate with discipline faculty to provide the resources students need to complete projects and papers, including scheduled classroom visits targeting information literacy instruction. One librarian oversees the instruction of information resources and schedules classroom visits, creates materials to help students utilize library resources more effectively and teaches information literacy critical thinking skills.

Sources

- Crit 3D ACE NSO
- Crit 3D Admissions
- Crit 3D Advising
- Crit 3D ASC
- Crit 3D Computer Commons
- Crit 3D EST Expansion
- Crit 3D Library
- Crit 3D Master Plan
- Crit 3D New Student Orientation
- Crit 3D Online NSO
- Crit 3D PAW
- Crit 3D Performing Arts Center
- Crit 3D Program Review NSO Orientation

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

Co-Curricular Programs

EMCC provides many opportunities for students to participate in co-curricular programs and activities that enhance and support their academic experience. These activities support EMCC's mission to provide a learning environment for students as they achieve their personal and educational goals in general education. Opportunities include programs contributing to the cultural, diverse and global experiences of students through [International and Intercultural Education](#), as evidenced by numerous campus events.

EMCC's Office of Student Life and Leadership offers experiential programs that support classroom learning. Many clubs are directly connected to occupational and academic programs such as Sustainability, Drama, Social Awareness, Future Teachers of America, Savings and Investment, Entrepreneur, Administration of Justice, Forensics and Psi Beta/Psychology. Other [clubs](#) support students socially and culturally, such as the Veterans club, MEN, PRIDE, Sports, Asian Pacific Islander, Christian Challenge and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán.

Leadership through [Student Government](#) allows students a constructive place to practice leadership skills, such as running effective meetings, communication, fundraising, community service and conflict resolution. The President of Student Government sits on EMCC's Leadership Council so students can observe and participate in leadership at the institutional level. Student Government also facilitates organizational connections through direct communication with students.

EMCC's [Honors Program](#) offers Honors courses, an Honors Research Expo, an annual speaker forum that addresses an annual theme and scholarship opportunities. The Honors Program works closely with Phi Theta Kappa and Service Learning.

EMCC's chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, [Beta Alpha Xi](#), is a distinguished and successful academic service organization. Opportunities for growth and development occur outside the classroom through voluntary involvement in college and community activities. Increasingly, growth and development opportunities are becoming available through an online environment. For example, a specialized leadership development program can be accessed by Beta Alpha Xi students and individuals can pursue learning at their own pace (e.g., Competitive Edge or a Facebook-based Humanities Approach to Leadership). Other online programming offers assistance with transfer planning and scholarship searches. Online support is particularly beneficial to students taking classes online in the evenings and/or on weekends. The chapter has earned Five-Star Status, which is the highest ranking a chapter can achieve, for its entire 15-year history. In addition,

Estrella Mountain's Beta Alpha Xi has been named a Top 100 Chapter out of over 1,250 chapters worldwide for the last four consecutive years.

The [Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement](#) is dedicated to integrating educational experiences with real life applications to enhance student learning and meet the needs of the campus and local community. There are workshops for faculty to incorporate service learning into their courses and a list of service learning ideas for various disciplines. By providing a program manager and allotting release time to one faculty member, EMCC is piloting a centralized service learning program during the 2015-16 academic year. Goals include increasing student participation and organizational commitment to the U.S. President's Volunteer Service Award.

Community Engagement and Research

Estrella Mountain Community College demonstrates its commitment to students' educational experience by operationalizing aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning and economic development.

In terms of research, EMCC faculty support student research projects for the [Honors Expo](#), which is an annual conference for students to share their research work. Faculty at Estrella Mountain also support student research for the [MCCCD Student Research Conference](#). The Student Conference is hosted by EMCC and is open district-wide to all sister colleges. Many students from across the district participate in the event. Moreover, numerous courses at EMCC offer undergraduate research opportunities. For example, Chemistry provides an experience for 152 students to conduct a four-week research project and present findings to the instructor and class in oral and written forms. In differential equations and physics, students model real-world data to mathematical models through collecting and analyzing data. In Communication courses, students are researching when schools should introduce technology. Each topic is presented as an Honors project at the Honors Expo. EMCC supports faculty as they work to embed research and inquiry into course curricula. In Spring 2015, a biology adjunct piloted an embedded research project into the curriculum for [BIO 182](#), which is the second semester of biology for majors. Another biology faculty member embedded research concerning [burrowing owls](#) into her BIO 182 courses.

As for community engagement, [clubs and organizations](#) such as Veterans, Administration of Justice, Future Teachers and Christian Challenge Clubs participate in community events. An example of student club's community engagement is demonstrated with EMCC's [Feminist Club](#), which participated in:

- Food, clothing and toy drives
- Charity Golf Tournament
- Phoenix Dream Center: Baby Food, Clothes and Products
- United Way
- Blood Drive Donation
- Ronald McDonald Dinner & Donations
- Fitness Run
- Holiday Community Service at New Life Center
- One Billion Rising
- [Tale of Two Cities](#) - Partnership with City of Avondale
- Hermanas (Intel)

Estrella Mountain also invites agencies to collaborate with faculty to benefit the community and enhance student learning through the [Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement](#). Current

community partners include Alice Cooper's Solid Rock Teen Center, Sun Valley Hospice, the Phoenix Art Museum and the Special Olympics.

EMCC contributes to the economic development of the community by partnering with various businesses to create Occupational Education [Advisory Boards](#) that consult on curricular aspects for the creation of a skilled workforce. Two of the Advisory Boards established at Estrella Mountain are the [Teacher Education Advisory Board](#) and the [Culinary Studies Advisory Board](#). Additionally, student scholarship, [internship](#), and Federal Work Study employment opportunities are possible due to the partnerships with community businesses and organizations.

Sources

- Crit 3E Advisory Boards
- Crit 3E Agency Partners
- Crit 3E BIO 182
- Crit 3E Burr Owls
- Crit 3E Club Events
- Crit 3E Clubs & Orgs
- Crit 3E Culinary Studies Advisory
- Crit 3E Fem Club
- Crit 3E Honors
- Crit 3E Honors Expo
- Crit 3E IIE
- Crit 3E Internships
- Crit 3E PTK
- Crit 3E Service Learning
- Crit 3E Student Conf15 Program
- Crit 3E Student Government
- Crit 3E Tale of Two Cities
- Crit 3E Teacher Education Institute Advisory Board Agenda

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

Estrella Mountain Community College's courses and programs are current, and require student performance appropriate to the degree or certificate being sought. The college ensures that program quality and learning goals are consistent at all locations and across all modes of delivery.

Maricopa County Community College District Official Course Competencies are reviewed and updated by Instructional Councils who ensure the quality of the district's academic programs and the transferability of courses. EMCC upholds district quality and has a comprehensive Program Review Process. Both online and hybrid courses are held to the same educational standards as face-to-face courses, with additional E-Learning requirements for faculty. Online students are provided with an Orientation Module as well as technical support to ensure success and a quality experience. The E-Learning Committee meets monthly, via the Canvas Learning Management system, to discuss and problem-solve issues related to modes of delivery.

EMCC demonstrates its commitment to students' educational experience through its mission in the areas of research, community engagement and service learning. Faculty and students contribute to scholarship in conjunction with their field of study. In addition, EMCC partners with community businesses to support and monitor programs while providing students with authentic professional experiences. The Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement provides faculty with resources and support to incorporate Service Learning into their course curriculum while providing students with valuable service experiences.

Diversity is an EMCC Core Value. MCCCCD's Diversity Advisory Council reviews policies and procedures, identifies training opportunities, monitors campus culture and climate, and disseminates information through a variety of formats to promote a shared understanding of diversity and inclusivity. Maricopa district recognizes the value of hiring and retaining quality professionals to provide support services as well as maintain a culture true to EMCC's mission, values and learning college philosophy.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

Program Reviews

EMCC historically uses Program Reviews to improve the quality of college offerings by focusing on prevalence; relevance and the degree to which an academic, occupational or service division achieves stated goals. Prior to 2009, Program Reviews were used primarily with Occupational Programs. EMCC expanded the use of Program Reviews to encompass [Academic Programs](#), [Administrative Service](#), [Occupational Areas](#), the [SouthWest Skill Center](#), [Student Affairs](#) and the Office of the President. Program Reviews require an analysis of the current state of the program focusing on the program's connection to student needs, correlation between program goals and student success, support for effective teaching and learning as well as organizational integrity and future plans.

An established three-year program review cycle includes annual updates to identify changes or trends

within a program. With the introduction of [Maricopa Priorities](#) in 2014, the college's Program Review process was interrupted. During this time, the college process was revised and redesigned; past work from program review cycles was integrated with research from Maricopa Priorities, environmental scanning and market area analysis, to create a more strategic directive for Program Reviews. As part of the division planning cycle, the Program Review process is currently administered through the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE); all changes are approved by the college's Leadership Council.

EMCC's [Program Review SharePoint site](#) hosts documentation, data collection, Program Reviews and Annual Updates, and it is accessible for review by all employees and stakeholders.

In order to support programs during a complete Program Review, writing workshops, information sessions and templates are provided to writers and others involved in the Program Review process. Per the 2014 process modifications, additional support is now provided by OPIE for writers, including [links to data sources](#) to address specific portions of the Program Review.

Credit Awards and Transcripts

EMCC follows the MCCCDCD [policy](#) when evaluating and awarding college credit for experiential and prior learning.

The Maricopa Community Colleges recognize that learning takes place in a variety of situations and circumstances. Many students can demonstrate significant learning from experiences outside the traditional academic environment. Therefore, prior learning (not life experience) is the basis for the award of college credit. Students may be awarded no more than 30 credit hours (unless required by a specific program of study) within MCCCDCD using one or more of the following assessment methods, which are recommended by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and the American Council on Education (ACE):

- Articulated Programs
- Credit by Evaluation
- College-Level Equivalency Examinations

Credit awarded for prior learning does not count as hours in residence for graduation requirements. Exceptions may be granted at some MCCCDCD colleges for specially approved programs. No more than 20 credit hours may be applied to the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) to fulfill lower-division general education requirements of a baccalaureate degree. Credit received through Prior Learning Assessment is transferable within the Maricopa Community Colleges but is not necessarily transferable to other colleges and universities. Students are therefore strongly advised to meet with a program advisor or contact the college or university they plan to attend.

The Maricopa Community Colleges offer credit by evaluation. The American Council on Education (ACE) evaluates military training and experiences—including non-collegiate sponsored training programs—and recommends credit awards based on these evaluations. The number of credit awards listed in the ACE guide is a recommendation only.

MCCCDCD implemented a district-wide [process](#) to create a more consistent evaluation across the multiple campuses. Evaluation of transfer credit is structured to align courses taken from other academic institutions with courses offered by MCCCDCD colleges. Course descriptions and course competencies are reviewed to determine equivalencies, and "Content Experts" (Faculty) are consulted to assist with the appraisal process.

The MCCC CD website has a specific section devoted to the [Center for Curriculum and Transfer Articulation](#), which provides information on transfer credit and credit for prior learning. To assist in the evaluation process, provided resources include:

- MCCC CD CTA, by courses
- AZTransfer CEG
- CollegeSource.org
- CollegeSource Transfer Evaluation System (TES)

MCCC CD utilizes the Transfer Evaluation System (TES) web service and participates in the database and the equivalency process for institutions of higher learning. TES provides consistency for the equivalency evaluation and automation of transferred credit within the college's Student Information System (SIS).

As described in the MCCC CD Administrative Regulations and the common pages of the College Catalogue, Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is recognized. CPL includes many options: credit by exam, credit by evaluation, college-level equivalency exams and evaluation of military experience. The variation between CPL options is largely due to testing rates; credit by examination and credit by evaluation are computed via a per-credit-hour fee structure (FY 2015-2016 Fee Schedule). Aside from the cost of utilizing an approved site to administer an exam, college-level exam and military credit have no associated fees.

Quality of Transfer Credit

Outlined in the 2015/2016 Academic Catalogue, EMCC follows the MCCC CD policy when evaluating and accepting transfer credits.

To be eligible for evaluation, coursework must appear on official transcripts from the source institutions. Official transcripts must be mailed directly from the source institutions to the Admissions and Records/Enrollment Services Offices of the receiving institutions. If a student has attended one Maricopa Community College and subsequently enrolls at another Maricopa Community College, coursework is evaluated for transfer credit. EMCC's Admissions and Records Office completes course-by-course evaluations for all submitted transcripts upon student request.

Maricopa Community Colleges will not award credit for courses completed at institutions not regionally accredited. Maricopa Community Colleges may transfer in coursework if criteria are met. Coursework must have been:

- Completed at colleges and universities accredited by an identified regional accrediting agency: 1) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, 2) Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3) North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 4) Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, 5) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and/or 6) Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Earned with a grade of "C" or better
- Taken at another Arizona community college to fulfill general education requirements for the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC)

For transfer credit, additional considerations include:

- In order to fulfill program requirements for courses other than general education, the acceptance and applicability of courses from another MCCC CD college are determined by individual

MCCCD colleges

- The award of transfer credit shall not express or imply that all transfer credit will be fully applicable toward all associate's degrees and certificate requirements within MCCCD
- Developmental coursework (below 100-level) is accepted for the purpose of fulfilling course prerequisites. Developmental coursework credit does not apply toward a degree or certificate
- Courses with different credit systems (quarter hours, units) are converted to semester hours of credit. The semester conversion of quarter credits is at a rate of .67 semester credit hours for each quarter hour
- The age of credit may be considered in applying credit toward degrees and certificate programs
- College-level courses completed outside the United States and recorded on official transcripts will be evaluated for transfer credit, provided that the institution at which the courses were taken is accredited by that country's ministry of education. The student is responsible for submitting all foreign and international transcripts to an international credential evaluation service to be translated into English, evaluated on a course-by-course-basis and sent directly to the receiving colleges
- For military credit, credit by examination, credit by evaluation and CLEP/AP/IB, see the "Credit for Prior Learning" section

MCCCD has developed formal agreements to facilitate the transfer of credit to four-year colleges and universities. Credit transfer is accomplished through the development of course and program articulation agreements. MCCCD colleges articulate with private, public and international baccalaureate degree-granting institutions that have achieved full accreditation or candidacy status with a regional accreditation commission. MCCCD transfer agreements apply to all 10 colleges in the district. Courses taken at any of the 10 MCCCD colleges are equally transferable by institutions wishing to articulate. Students planning to transfer to a university may be required to submit official transcripts from all MCCCD institutions attended.

MCCCD has articulated transfer programs and pathways between the three state Baccalaureate-granting institutions: Arizona State University (MAPP, Maricopa-ASU Pathway Program), the University of Arizona (UA Bridge program) and Northern Arizona University (CONNECT2NAU). Northern Arizona University's (NAU) partnership with MCCCD enables students to transfer 90 credit hours from MCCCD colleges into the baccalaureate degree and complete the final 30 credits at NAU. In-state transfer agreements are official, recognized programs of study that fulfill both Associate's degree and Bachelor's degree requirements. By identifying the required, transferable and applicable coursework for specific programs of study, the articulated programs and pathways aid in seamless planning and transition for students transferring to a four-year college or university.

Prerequisites, Resources, Dual Enrollment and Faculty Qualifications

The MCCCD [curriculum development process](#) allows EMCC to ensure the quality of courses offered, including determining appropriate course prerequisites, establishing coursework rigor and setting expectations for student learning. In coordination with appropriate Instructional Councils, residential faculty members initiate curriculum proposals for new courses and programs with support from the Curriculum Development Facilitator (CDF, a faculty member) and share proposals with Division Chairs, Deans and Vice Presidents. Proposals address university requirements, workforce trends, student demand and the need to offer a relevant, comprehensive and coherent curriculum.

[Proposals](#) are reviewed by: 1) the Curriculum and Product Development Committee, a highly collaborative committee that includes representatives from across the college who support the development and implementation of curriculum; 2) Instructional Councils, the respective discipline-specific committees for each content area -- ICs also approve all changes to established courses; 3) the

District Curriculum Committee (DCC), which includes a faculty representative (the CDF) and an administrative representative (Dean or Vice President) from each college in the District, who vote to approve or reject a particular proposal and 4) the MCCCED Governing Board.

The finalization process for proposals requires a vote by the DCC, with proposals forwarded to the Governing Board for final approval. For certain offerings, additional curriculum approvals for certificates and programs are required by the Higher Learning Commission and Department of Education before marketing and subsequent enrollment occurs.

Each MCCCED college that offers coursework in a program provides a faculty member representative to serve on an Instructional Councils. ICs approve all prerequisites, ensure that the rigor of the course work is appropriate for the course level (100-level or 200-level) and write the course competencies that identify the learning that is expected to take place in the course. Through an IC process, MCCCED assures residential faculty throughout the District—specifically faculty who are experts in a subject area—are responsible for overseeing the quality of courses offered.

EMCC's Division Chairs and Program Directors work with administration to ensure all courses are supported by the necessary resources, including library/information technology resources, technology, specialized laboratory and learning spaces and tutoring. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) plays a significant role in offering [professional development workshops](#) for all faculty who are discipline-specific or focus on pedagogy.

EMCC follows MCCCED's established set of minimum qualifications for the hiring of all faculty. Based on the HLC changes to faculty qualifications, which require faculty to have a Masters in the teaching field or a Masters in any field plus 18 graduate credits in the teaching field, EMCC is aligning faculty staffing for the 2017 deadline. Additionally, a few teaching areas have discipline-specific qualifications.

Adjunct faculty positions are advertised on District and college websites and are, as needed, advertised more widely to attract qualified applicants. Candidates are interviewed by the Division Chair; Adjuncts are not hired until HR reviews official transcripts to determine that all qualifications are met.

Residential faculty positions are advertised locally and nationally through print and electronic resources to attract a diverse pool of applicants. All members of hiring committees must complete [knowledge checks](#) (for screening, interviewing and serving as a hiring manager) to ensure that hiring procedures are understood and followed.

As EMCC offers [dual enrollment](#) classes to high school students, dual enrollment classes are bound by all the rules and requirements of courses offered at EMCC. Course prerequisites, academic rigor, course competencies and faculty qualifications are the same as if the course were offered on EMCC's campus. To ensure standards are met, the Dual Enrollment Coordinator works with Division Chairs to verify instructor credentials and confirm that a dual enrollment course qualifies to receive EMCC credit. Dual enrollment classes are evaluated each semester to substantiate that courses meet EMCC and district standards.

Specialized Accreditations

The [EMCC Nursing Program](#) is approved by the Arizona Board of Nursing and is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. As part of MCCCED's coordinated programming effort, known as Maricopa Nursing, EMCC's Nursing Program shares a common outcome-based

integrated curriculum with the other MCCCDC colleges. Completion of all program requirements prepares students to take the national licensure examination for registered nurses (NCLEX-RN). An Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Nursing provides eligibility for students to apply for licensure as a registered nurse.

A letter from the Arizona State Board of Nursing, dated April 8, 2016, notified the EMCC Nursing Division Chair that on March 25th, 2016, the Arizona State Board of Nursing, based upon information in an investigative report, decided to issue a [Notice of Deficiency](#) to the Estrella Mountain Community College RN program with ten months to correct identified deficiencies. Estrella Mountain is working diligently to address the identified deficiencies to improve student success in the Nursing Program.

Success of Graduates

EMCC administers surveys to graduating students and utilizes survey data as indicators of graduate success as well as to aid with tracking post-graduation outcomes. Survey response rates remained an institutional challenge and prompted the college to expand evaluation options. Additional evaluation strategies include employing [Graduate Exit surveys](#) and [six-month Graduate Follow-up surveys](#). Utilizing the Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI), the Department of Economic Security Data and State-Wide Transfer data for EMCC, students facilitate data gathering efforts. New academic/occupational programs developed within MCCCDC require additional job market analysis to reflect present and future employment opportunities (see Curriculum Development Form).

Information on graduates informs process improvements for multiple uses. Initial data collection, which provides data about EMCC graduates and their preparation for the workforce and/or transfer to university, is analyzed through EMCC's comprehensive Program Review process. Conducted by faculty and reviewed by Faculty Division Chairs, Deans and Vice Presidents, the Program Review addresses specific outcomes related to completers. Program Review templates and completed Program Reviews are available on SharePoint. Graduate Exit Survey results are reviewed by the Student Affairs Team on a regular basis and shared with the President's Cabinet. Survey results are distributed to occupational and academic administrators and faculty.

EMCC has conducted graduate follow-up surveys since the college's initial accreditation in 1997. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) administers surveys to degree and certificate recipients six months to one year after graduation. The greatest challenge has been a low response rate, one that decreased substantially between 2000-2001 (56%) and 2012-2013 (8%) despite multiple mailing efforts and numerous follow-up calls. A more robust survey return rate provides needed data for smaller programs (e.g., programs with fewer than 10 completers each year). In an effort to increase response rates, EMCC revised the survey design in spring 2014; they also shortened the form, diversified the distribution methods and streamlined communication logistics. The process began with an initial paper survey, which was U.S. post mailed to all students completing a Gainful Employment (GE) award. Students who did not respond to the paper survey received an email follow-up with a link to an online survey. The result of more targeted efforts increased the survey response rate to 20%. Improved response rates provided supporting data necessary to evaluate the overall quality of the GE programs. For example, 83 percent of spring 2014 GE completers who responded to the survey were employed; 60 percent indicated their job was directly related to their training and 20% reported their employment was somewhat related to their academic plan. A majority (94%) would recommend Estrella Mountain to a friend or family member.

To supplement graduate follow-up surveys, EMCC administers an exit survey to all students who apply for graduation each year. The 2014 survey included workforce and transfer questions in

addition to an evaluation of EMCC services and programs. While collecting data at the time of graduation does not provide a full picture of the success of graduates, the exit survey does produce a larger sample size that can be triangulated with Graduate follow-up surveys. The [Commencement Graduate Survey](#) for academic year 2014-2015 included 1,240 participants, representing 80% of total graduates. Seventy-two percent of students were currently employed. Of the listed service categories (e.g., registration, financial aid, counseling, career center, etc.) the majority of students were satisfied or very satisfied with the support services provided by EMCC. Qualitative comments on program quality, faculty and services were also analyzed.

Another way in which Estrella Mountain tracks and assesses the success of graduates is through an examination of [new transfers from EMCC](#) attending any of the three state universities: Arizona State University (ASU), Northern Arizona State University (NAU) and University of Arizona (UofA). This study includes graduates and students who transfer with 12 or more credits. According to 2013-2014 first-year GPA data from the three state universities, students are successful (3.3 GPA) in areas such as Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services as well as Education and very successful (3.5) in Science Technologies/Technicians. Areas posing challenges are the Physical Sciences and History. This information is shared with Division Chairs and faculty so that they can assess curricular connections to improve student success.

Finally, EMCC utilizes DES wage data to provide student income levels, both before and after completing programs, as a supplement to survey data. Wage data are available by program level (see [DES report](#)) and accessible to faculty leaders conducting Program Reviews to include in improvement analyses. Although only jobs in Arizona are included (excluding military and federal government employment), DES data represents more than 70% of students. The State of Arizona temporarily stopped sharing the data with the Maricopa Community College Community Colleges in 2014; however, a new agreement is scheduled for approval in January 2016.

Sources

- Crit 4A Academic Program Review Template (draft sample)
- Crit 4A Administrative Services Program Review Template (draft sample)
- Crit 4A Articulation Process
- Crit 4A Credit for Prior Learning
- Crit 4A CTL Workshops
- Crit 4A Curriculum Development Process
- Crit 4A Dual Enrollment
- Crit 4A EMCC Degrees and Wage Data
- Crit 4A EMCC University New Transfers
- Crit 4A Graduate Completer Six Month Follow-up Survey
- Crit 4A Graduate Exit Survey
- Crit 4A Graduate Exit Survey July 2014 - June 2015
- Crit 4A Knowledge Checks HR Training
- Crit 4A Maricopa Priorities Website
- Crit 4A Modified Program Proposal
- Crit 4A Notice of Deficiency
- Crit 4A Nursing
- Crit 4A Occupational Program Review Template 2015-2016
- Crit 4A OPIE Data Page
- Crit 4A Program Review SharePoint

- Crit 4A Student Affairs Program Review Template
- Crit 4A SWSC Program Review Template
- Crit 4A Transfer and Articulation

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

Goals for Student Learning

All courses offered at Estrella Mountain Community College are part of a larger Maricopa County Community College District course bank. All courses listed in the course bank include a course description, a course of study outline and a set of [competencies](#) developed by faculty and approved by Instructional Councils. Faculty members teaching a course must address the competencies so that students can achieve the competencies regardless of which MCCCDC institution offers the course. Estrella Mountain faculty members utilize the course competencies identified in the course bank and may augment 100- and 200-level courses with additional learning goals. All competencies for a course are listed in the faculty member's individual course syllabus.

Academic and Occupational Divisions often have shared learning outcomes established for their courses. For example, EMCC's residential faculty member for Economics leads Economic adjunct faculty members in the establishment and annual update of student learning outcomes, which are assessed through a common Final Exam. Depending upon exam results, Economics instructors modify the way in which they teach a particular concept to improve student learning. Another example of continual improvement is evidenced by residential English faculty, who collaborated to establish student learning outcomes for the English course sequence (081, 091, 101 and 102). Students' progression through courses is assessed through the assignment of common activities, which are then analyzed and discussed to identify changes for improving student learning.

As a college, Estrella Mountain assesses student learning across disciplines under the guidance of the [Student Academic Achievement Committee \(SAAC\)](#). Formed in 1995, SAAC was created to promote continued excellence in teaching and learning by assessing the effectiveness of instruction and determining the scope of competence for student learning outcomes. As a faculty-driven committee comprised of representatives from all instructional divisions, SAAC is supported by the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE). The mission of SAAC is to improve student learning through:

- The integration of student abilities and student learning outcomes into programs and curricula

- Creative and practical assessment of academic achievement
- The analysis of assessment data to better inform teaching and learning practices

From the inception of SAAC, general education abilities have evolved from two to seven general education abilities, eliminating the need for separate assessments for developmental education and workforce development. Utilizing a curriculum-integrated assessment approach, Estrella Mountain students are assessed through instruments developed and approved by SAAC. To accomplish the cycle of assessment, each of the seven abilities is evaluated campus-wide every three years, and the [Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System \(CATS\)](#) is utilized to record individual faculty and college-wide assessment efforts. EMCC's [General Education Abilities Matrix](#) guides the assessment of the abilities on a rotating basis through the following areas:

- Communication
- Composition/Writing
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Critical Inquiry
- Information Literacy
- Technological Literacy
- [Social, Civic and Global Responsibility](#)

Assessment of Student Learning

Estrella Mountain Community College regularly assesses learning outcomes for both curricular and co-curricular programs. Using the [General Education Abilities assessment cycle](#), one of seven General Education Abilities developed by EMCC faculty is assessed campus-wide each semester. An exception is Social, Civic and Global Responsibility, which is assessed with [Writing/Composition](#) during the same semester. The assessment cycle consists of implementation in Year 1, analysis of results in Year 2, modification/improvement in Year 3 and implementation in Year 4.

A similar process is followed to assess learning outcomes for co-curricular events through surveying participants. Survey results are used for planning the following year's event. With Intercultural and International Education sponsorship applications for co-curricular events, a sponsor must identify outcomes from prior events and evidence that improvement suggestions were accommodated when planning the recurring event. An [Event Outcomes Report](#) and an [Assessment](#) are required, both relying on surveys distributed at the co-curricular event.

Assessment Results

EMCC utilizes several mechanisms to regularly assess information for the purpose of improving student learning. Upon completion of a General Education Ability assessment, the Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAAC) presents results of the assessment to the college through a variety of venues, including Leadership Council, "Classroom Conversations," CATS submissions and presentations to community members via the "[West Valley Think Tank](#)," in which EMCC leadership collaborates with local elementary, middle and high school superintendents and principals. Data from SAAC assessments are disaggregated and analyzed; results are shared to group members, discussions are held to address ways to improve the process in the next iteration and areas for faculty to focus on to improve student learning for the next assessment cycle are identified.

Faculty who initiate an innovative assessment practice and complete the action research cycle are encouraged to post their findings within the Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System. CATS is

an interactive web-based database that allows faculty members to post their own CATS, comment on/rate other CATS and exchange best practices from their CATS. Each month, SAAC awards the CATS of the Month and, from these monthly awards, the faculty choose the CATS of the Year. CATS recognition is dependent upon criterion, which must be met to be eligible for an award. CATS submissions must show evidence of assessment, learning, innovation and the action research cycle. To encourage participation in CATS, a CATS “Division of the Year” award is based upon active Division participation in creating, rating and commenting on other CATS submissions.

At the start of each semester, faculty (under the direction of SAAC) meet at an event entitled "[Assessment Happens](#)" to process the latest assessment in the cycle, capture suggestions for improvement in that cycle, generate strategies in a chosen instructional focus area and review previous best practices and instructional strategies.

After a general education ability completes an implementation and evaluation cycle, SAAC convenes a “[Classroom Conversation](#)” to review the results. Open to all employees the semester following the assessment, a classroom conversation is structured around the recently implemented assessment during which assessment results are shared, suggestions for improvement are generated and recorded and implementations for pedagogy/instruction are designated.

Culture of Assessment and Best Practices

Faculty follow the action research cycle to assess student learning:

1. An assessment is implemented
2. Data are gathered
3. Data are analyzed to indicate modifications to the assessment, learning goal and/or process
4. A new assessment is implemented

Practices embedded in the process include valuing innovation, using assessment techniques which lead to a research design (qualitative and/or quantitative analyses) and the principle of continual improvement. Together with the action research cycle, the processes lead to a persistent institutional improvement.

By hosting events on campus each spring semester, Assessment Awareness Week raises faculty, staff and student awareness of assessment results. The Student General Education Abilities Survey is provided, Classroom Conversations are held and EMCC faculty and staff gather to discuss assessment at a campus-wide “Assessment Happens” celebration.

Sources

- Crit 4B Assessment Happens Spring 2016
- Crit 4B CATS
- Crit 4B Critical Inquiry Conversation
- Crit 4B District First-Year Composition Competencies
- Crit 4B General Education Abilities Assessment Cycle 2010-2020
- Crit 4B General Education Abilities Matrix
- Crit 4B International and Intercultural Education Assessment 2014-2015
- Crit 4B International and Intercultural Education Event Outcome Report 2014-2015
- Crit 4B SAAC
- Crit 4B Social-Civic-Global-Responsibility Assessment Result Summary Fall 2012

- Crit 4B West Valley Think Tank Agenda
- Crit 4C Composition-Writing Results Spring 2013

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

Retention, Persistence and Completion

Goals for student retention, persistence and completion are reviewed annually through the Strategic Planning process. The [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#) consists of four Core Planning Areas with two Priorities each, all of which revolve around student success:

Access to Learning

- Maximize student access, learning and success
- Increase student access to and use of academic and support services

Pathways to Success

- Increase opportunities for students enrolled in developmental and gateway courses to make significant connections with college personnel (via peer mentors and supplemental instruction)
- Increase student use of academic and career planning

Effective Teaching and Learning

- Increase Professional Development for residential and adjunct faculty
- Increase the contextualization of the curriculum in developmental and gateway courses

Organizational Integrity

- Develop a comprehensive and proactive compliance program
- Increase organizational and environmental sustainability

Each Core Planning Area has an assigned working team with a team leader responsible for posting progress on the college's Sharepoint site and reporting [updates](#) to college employees during Leadership Council meetings throughout the academic year.

EMCC employs multiple student success strategies to improve retention, persistence and completion including the [Enrollment Management Plan](#) (EMP), the [Engage Estrella Mentoring Program](#) (E2) and the [Student Success Fair](#) (SSF).

EMP is a systemic approach to recruiting and retaining students for optimal college enrollments. The comprehensive plan addresses the areas of retention and engagement, sustainable enrollment growth, recruitment, maximization of facilities and meeting community needs. The plan aligns with the EMCC's Strategic Plan by planning the implementation of improvements in services for underprepared students, retention activities and the graduation rate.

Under the learning college philosophy, E2 provides a tangible method for all employees to impact student success and offers several options for student participation. E2 pairs students directly with employee mentors to increase engagement between employees, students and the community and improve student retention, persistence and completion. E2 job shadow/career interviews facilitate direct connections between students to community members to increase student knowledge of career considerations and accelerate a student's career choice and academic path. E2 Peer Mentor Program (PMP) component aligns E2 resources with student mentors, who facilitate connections with students. Piloted in Fall 2015, E2 success navigators are employee volunteers who are assigned to a faculty class, visit the class for 5-10 minutes every other week and provide information regarding EMCC resources and events. The success navigator provides an additional connection to campus and support for students. From fall 2012 to fall 2015, E2 1-1 mentoring has made over 408 mentoring connections with 195 employee mentors. Students who were mentored had an overall fall-to-fall semester retention rate of 80%, compared to the 2013-14 institutional persistence average for new students of 58%. E2 facilitates connections at all levels of the organization through employee development, employee recognition and student recognition.

EMCC's [Peer Mentor Program](#) (PMP) was designed to improve retention, persistence and completion and coordinates with the E2 program. PMP is a structured student-to-student peer mentoring program implemented by the Counseling Division in fall 2008. Estrella Mountain Peer Mentors serve as guides and role models to assist and support new and underprepared students as they transition to the college environment. Peer Mentors are a source of support for developmental education students, attending classes and meeting individually with students to encourage and support retention and persistence. Student use of individual mentoring sessions is tracked in AdvisorTrac, and Peer Mentors complete a four-day training to prepare them for mentoring students in the classroom and individually. Additionally, Peer Mentors offer workshops for students on financial literacy and college success strategies. PMP's three goals—support, retention and persistence—are facilitated by the student peer mentors who assist student mentees by:

- Connecting them with student learning support resources
- Providing them with encouraging words and tools for academic success
- Following up with them when they are struggling with attendance and/or retention issues
- Helping to create a sense of community both in and out of the classroom through active student engagement and facilitation of group activities and discussions

Since its inception, the Peer Mentor Program has employed over fifty students, provided support for nearly 3,000 students in assigned academic classes, provided over 30 Student Success Workshops, and has demonstrated better overall persistence and retention rates for students supported by Peer Mentors than those who are not.

Estrella Mountain's Student Success Fair (SSF) began in 2013 as a way to celebrate student accomplishments and promote academic goal setting through an active learning, two-day event. The annual event occurs each spring and was implemented at all 10 MCCCCD colleges during the 2015-16 academic year. The SSF co-locates EMCC resources to a central campus location and utilizes a passport program to incentivize student engagement; students visit each campus resource "destination," collect information relevant to their career and academic goals, and earn passport stamps to qualify for EMCC swag, food and prizes. On average, one thousand students participate during the yearly event. During the third annual event in 2015, an "I Will Graduate" interactive wall was created for students to write their personal aspirations. The public art project was then displayed at the 2015 commencement ceremony. To date, the SSF has had more than 3,000 participants and continues to focus on graduation dates and completion tasks by emphasizing the "I Will Graduate" campus messaging.

Efforts around retention, persistence and completion appear to be having an impact. EMCC increased the number of degrees and certificates from 1,475 (2012-2013) to 1,781 (2013-2014). Over the last three years, Estrella Mountain has increased awards by 52%. The majority of these awards are AGEC and two-year transfer/general education degrees. AGEC and transfer awards increased from 913 (2011-2012) to 1,240 in 2013-2014 (36% increase over three years). The number of unduplicated students earning an academic award increased by 48% during the same timeframe. The increase in the unduplicated completers is a critical factor in improving degree and certificate graduation rates.

Analysis of Retention, Persistence and Completion Information

The [Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness](#) (OPIE) at EMCC provides planning and research assistance for all Estrella Mountain divisions and is a critical resource for the collection and analysis of retention, persistence and completion data. The office is responsible for the following:

- Coordination of an [integrated planning process](#)
- Facilitation of the development of college-wide and divisional plans
- Coordination of the Institutional Effectiveness and Program Review processes
- Administrative support to the Student Academic Achievement Committee
- Research and consultation services in support of program and service improvements
- Support of HLC Accreditation activities

The Mission of OPIE is to provide strategic planning, research support and coordination to improve decision-making, promote continuous improvement of programs and services, and enhance student success. Office staff regularly provide research analysis for EMCC employees, including data on retention, persistence and completion.

Data for Program Improvement

At EMCC, data on retention, persistence and completion are used to improve programs and create student success strategies, such as the previously mentioned Student Success Fair. Data is shared with Leadership Council and considered in the Strategic Planning Process for action leading to improvement. For example, in 2012 Estrella Mountain implemented an occupational Institute model to improve student recruitment, persistence and completion. There are nine institutes:

- Allied Health
- Networking Technologies
- Nursing
- Business
- Culinary
- Teacher Education
- Multimedia
- Public Safety
- Energy

The [Institute](#) model identifies potential student occupational program intent based on course-taking behavior. Students who meet these criteria are invited by faculty to Institute Orientations, which provide information about program pathways, custom support resources and program staff. University partners are also present at the orientation to share information on transfer opportunities. After the orientations, occupational faculty continue to offer unique activities during the semester to help students with their chosen pathways. The goal is to increase the number of students who choose and successfully complete an occupational program of study.

Since the implementation of the Institute model, EMCC has demonstrated strong growth in the number of [occupational degrees and certificates](#). Over the past three years (2011-2012 to 2014-2015), the college has increased from 261 to 659 awards, which represents a 152% increase.

With the use of [data analysis](#), the Developmental Education Committee has worked to increase student retention, persistence and completion in Developmental Education courses. A faculty Developmental Education Coordinator and three faculty developers (English, Math and Reading) currently lead the committee in helping to improve learning in Developmental Education courses. Faculty leadership has prompted faculty to implement contextualization in Reading courses, expedite learning in English courses and, most recently, integrate cooperative learning in Math courses. Estrella Mountain has experienced an increase in student success rates in Developmental Education courses as a result. Developmental Education course completion rates increased from 58% in Fall 2009 to 77% in fall 2014.

Methodologies for Collecting and Analyzing Information

EMCC reflects good practice with current processes and methodologies for the collection and analysis of retention, persistence and completion data. For example, EMCC systematically documents and improves performance through multiple processes that have become part of the culture of the organization. These processes involve integrated planning efforts in the areas of:

- Strategic planning
- Program Review that drives Divisional and Operational planning
- Assessment and improvement of learning and institutional outcomes
- Budget development improvement processes

The Estrella Mountain Strategic Plan is systemically updated every three years and efforts are made in the [planning process](#) to link the plan to student success outcomes such as retention, persistence, and degree completion. The results of the outcomes are used to develop Institutional Priorities and create strategies found in the plan. Student outcomes are also listed in the plan under each Core Planning Area.

The District and College Strategic Plans have created a strong mechanism to advance student success.

The MCCC Strategic Plan 2013-2016 (updated in April 2014) and the EMCC 2015-2018 Strategic Plan share Core Planning areas that are directly aligned with student success outcomes. One example in the EMCC Strategic Plan is the Core Planning area of Pathways to Success. This Core planning area includes two Institutional Priorities: 1) Improve student success in developmental education and gateway courses and 2) Increase student use of academic and career planning. To address the first Institutional Priority, there are two strategies: 1) Increase opportunities for students enrolled in development and gateway courses to make significant connections with college personnel (peer mentors and supplemental instruction) and 2) Revise and develop curricula that are relevant and pedagogically effective for developmental learners. To address the second Institutional Priority of Pathways to Success, there are also two strategies: 1) Provide all degree-seeking students with awareness, knowledge and skills to develop a student success pathway – a roadmap to completion and 2) Develop programs and initiatives to increase use of academic and career planning services. The Pathways to Success team is currently working on action items to implement these strategies and [reports out](#) regularly to Leadership Council on its progress.

The Institutional Priorities linked to student outcomes not only facilitate evaluation of student outcomes, the priorities also guide the budget process. As explained in more detail in Criterion 5C, the EMCC budget processes uses the Institutional Priorities found in the Strategic Plan as part of the criteria to rate [college budget proposals](#).

Finally, EMCC joined the HLC Persistence and Completion academy in the spring 2016. Discoveries made through this process will be used to modify current strategies in the existing plan as well create new Institutional Priorities in future strategic plans.

Sources

- Crit 4C Budget Proposal Form
- Crit 4C Core Planning Updates
- Crit 4C Developmental Education Data 2013-2014
- Crit 4C Engage Estrella
- Crit 4C Enrollment Management Plan
- Crit 4C Institute Degree and Certificate Completers
- Crit 4C Institutes
- Crit 4C Integrated Planning Model 2015-2018
- Crit 4C Leadership Report Outs
- Crit 4C OPIE
- Crit 4C Peer Mentor
- Crit 4C Planning Process
- Crit 4C Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- Crit 4C Student Success Fair

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

Estrella Mountain Community College has historically used Program Reviews to improve the quality of college offerings by focusing on prevalence; relevance; and the degree to which an academic, occupational or service division achieves its stated goals. The established three-year Program Review cycle includes annual updates to identify program changes as well as trends. The introduction of Maricopa Priorities interrupted the college's Program Review process. During this time, the college process was revised and redesigned; past work from program review cycles was integrated with research from Maricopa Priorities as well as environmental scanning and market area analysis to create a more strategic approach for Program Reviews.

EMCC follows the Maricopa County Community College District policy when evaluating and awarding college credit for experiential and prior learning. In addition, EMCC follows the MCCCCD policy when evaluating and accepting transfer credits. MCCCCD has articulated transfer programs and pathways between the three state Baccalaureate-granting institutions: Arizona State University, the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University. By identifying the required, transferable and applicable coursework for specific programs of study, the articulated programs and pathways aid in seamless planning and transition for students transferring to a four-year college or university.

The MCCCCD curriculum development process allows EMCC to ensure the quality of courses offered, including determining appropriate course prerequisites, establishing coursework rigor and setting expectations for student learning. In conjunction with appropriate Instructional Councils, residential faculty members initiate curriculum proposals for new courses and programs with support from the Curriculum Development Facilitator; they then share proposals with Division Chairs, Deans and Vice Presidents. Proposals address university requirements, workforce trends, student demand and the need to offer a relevant, comprehensive and coherent curriculum.

EMCC has conducted graduate follow-up surveys since the college's initial accreditation in 1997. EMCC administers surveys to graduating students and utilizes survey data as indicators of graduate success as well as aid in tracking post-graduation outcomes. Low survey response rates prompted the college to expand evaluation options with measurable success.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

Estrella Mountain Community College's resource base supports the current educational programs and prepares for enhancing the quality of offerings in the future.

Institutional Resources

EMCC capital and financial resources remained stable over the last decade, including the duration of the great recession (2007-2009). Financial functionality was primarily due to sound financial planning, enrollment growth and grant funding. The strategies for financial stability are evidenced in the [EMCC Financial Resources Plan](#) and [EMCC Technology and Learning Plan](#). Over the last decade, EMCC experienced an [annualized growth rate](#) of 8 percent per year even though recent enrollment declined at the SouthWest Skill Center. Internal funds within the Maricopa County Community College District system grew at a rate of approximately \$2,130 per Full-Time Student Equivalent (FTSE). The internal allocation provided resources to offset unprecedented state appropriation cuts, which reduced state support from \$68 million to no permanent funding during the last seven years and limited property tax increases. With the state's expenditure limitations on community colleges, EMCC sought and successfully obtained grants to continue funding innovative projects including, various NSF grants, two Title V Grants, two Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training TAACCCT Grants, and internal MCCCDC Grants.

Campus infrastructure and technology are addressed through EMCC's [Comprehensive Master Plan Update](#) which serves as a long-term guide to ensure that the campus meets the needs of the community. Established in 1990, the Campus Master Plan was designed to use 135 acres to support an annual student population of 40,000 students. The college currently serves approximately 14,500

students annually. The plan is supplemented with addendums necessary to meet the changing needs of the community and is systemically updated with each capital campaign.

The purpose of the EMCC Master Plan is to establish a basis for coordinating physical development decisions to:

- Reinforce the vision of the EMCC campus
- Support the core values established by EMCC employees
- Improve the functioning of the EMCC campus for students, faculty and staff
- Improve the quality of life for students, faculty and staff
- Optimize the use of existing property and determine needs for future acquisitions
- Address the parking/entry challenges that arise on the EMCC campus

The original Master Plan was updated with two addendums. The first update supported a [buildout for 2005-2014](#) and aligned with the capital bond program. An update of the [long-term buildout through 2024](#) provides a general guide to the use of the remaining acreage when another bond becomes available. The updates are not detailed blueprints for building construction; rather, they demonstrate the many factors influencing the quality of the EMCC campus environment and provide considerations for how factors may work together to create a functional environment for the purpose of delivering a high quality educational experience.

The [Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) provides evidence that EMCC's physical infrastructure and buildings are suitably appropriate. Students report high levels of satisfaction with sufficient study areas, computer labs, campus maintenance, safety of student parking lots and overall safety.

Since the college's inception in 1992, EMCC continues to invest heavily in the college's technology infrastructure. EMCC's technology vision is to provide technology that supports exceptional and creative learning experiences that prepare all learners to achieve their dreams and transform their lives. A pervasive technology infrastructure is delivered at the college, ensuring that the college's many learning options and program needs are supported. As new facilities are built on campus, the infrastructure is extended to support the same technological capabilities as the rest of the campus. The quality of technology is evidenced by high student satisfaction with computer labs, as students report higher satisfaction than the national benchmark.

As one of the Maricopa Community Colleges, EMCC is encompassed within the district's Wide Area Network (WAN) and connects directly to the district office and the Internet through a leased Cox Communications line. A secondary connection to the Scottsdale AirPark provides an alternate Internet connection and the opportunity for replicating data in the event of an emergency outage. EMCC's [Physical Network Topology](#) serves as evidence of a well-designed network infrastructure serving the EMCC main Campus, the Buckeye Educational Center and the off-site backup for disaster recovery.

In order to maximize access to computing resources, the college has more than 3,200 computers used in campus classrooms, offices and various learning spaces while most campus computers are Microsoft Windows-based PCs, many Macs are available for use in specialized areas, including art, math and science classrooms.

All buildings on campus are connected by fiber optic cabling through Cisco switches located in campus buildings. The Cisco switch is located in the main data center in Estrella Hall in a redundant star configuration. Most computers on campus are connected using a 1GB connection. Servers in the data center have 10 GB connectivity.

In order to maximize efficiency and flexibility, most of the servers in the campus data center are virtualized using VMWare technologies. Key servers in the data center are: Active Directory, Drupal, BASIS (for campus security), Radius (for wireless authentication), Storage (for networked files), SharePoint, SQL, FileMaker Pro, WebApps and Domain Name Server. All servers are backed up nightly. To provide off site backup and business continuity capabilities, key servers are replicated to campus-owned equipment at the Scottsdale AirPark.

An iSCSI Storage Area Network (SAN) system provides redundant, high-performance storage for most servers in the data center. The SAN centralizes management of data and allows for efficient sharing of data between servers. In addition to the wired network infrastructure, a comprehensive wireless LAN is available at most locations on campus. Classroom computers for student use are wirelessly connected to the campus network, with the exception of classrooms that require faster connectivity such as CIS and fine arts.

To facilitate learning in face-to-face, online and hybrid formats, EMCC utilizes a Learning Management System (LMS) - Canvas. As a cloud based LMS that can be used by all faculty in their courses, Canvas provides a platform wherein students access course content, submit assignments, receive feedback and interact with faculty and other students.

Addressing sufficient and quality human resources, the [EMCC Organizational Chart](#) demonstrates the depth and breadth of full-time leadership and employees. Each division closely aligns with the core mission of the Institution. Estrella Mountain and the SWSC employ approximately a total of 1,050 annual part and full-time employees, including 297 full-time staff and faculty, 455 adjunct faculty and 298 temporary/student workers. A detailed breakdown of staff is provided in the [EMCC & SWSC employee report](#).

While EMCC employees support the growth of new programs and initiatives, the college continues to rely on adjunct faculty to support a large percentage of the instructional programs and on temporary workers to provide services to students. Over the last 10 years, EMCC increased the number of residential faculty by 23 FTE through periodic district allocations of permanent FTE to EMCC (with a college match in some years). The influx of new residential faculty has not ameliorated the proportion of courses taught by adjunct faculty. Approximately 68% of all credit-based sections are taught by adjunct faculty members. A compounding challenge was that, over the same time period, EMCC enrollment increased by 78%. The addition of 23 FTE faculty was sufficient to maintain the current ratio of sections taught by full-time faculty; however, it was not enough to improve it. The shortage of full-time employees is a nationwide challenge. National Community College Benchmark (NCCBP) participants reported an average of nearly half (49%) of all courses are taught by adjunct faculty.

Resource Allocation

Estrella Mountain uses several processes to ensure that the primary educational purposes of the college are funded adequately and not negatively impacted by inappropriate allocations to other areas of the college.

Process transparency is a primary method by which resource allocations are vetted to faculty, staff and student representatives. System processes ensure internal stakeholders have the opportunity to evaluate how college expenditures support the core Mission of the College. For example, when tuition rates are being considered as a way to raise revenue, information addressing the reason for tuition rate increases as well as the manner in which funds will be invested are provided to students. The Maricopa district conducts meetings at each college to collect student feedback. MCCCDC has not increased tuition for more than three years as a result of the feedback and transparency of the process.

The EMCC budget allocation process is also exceedingly transparent through the college's Budget Development Steering Team (BDST). A cross-section of employees works collaboratively to evaluate and make recommendations on the budget proposals submitted by college divisions and areas. The entire budget and proposed new expenditures are shared with [BDST](#) and [Leadership Council](#) every year. Leadership Council includes additional employees, faculty representatives and a student government representative.

Faculty and staff co-develop detailed [rubrics](#) each year to help prioritize budget needs via BDST. The formal budget request process begins with budget request forms for operational and capital requests, requiring that proposals focus on supporting the strategic plan, student outcomes and/or fiscal efficiencies. Focusing on the Strategic Plan relates to improving student access, helping students complete programs and transfer to universities, and enhancing the learning environment. BDST members review the proposals and provide a ranking of the proposals. After budget proposals are ranked, BDST conducts in-depth discussions among BDST members to ensure that one area of the college does not receive all available funds. Modifications to the initial BDST ranking occur only after an evaluation of how the proposals benefit students and how the allocations are balanced to ensure that the capabilities of multiple areas of the college are addressed.

Resources allocated outside the formal budget request process are based on required instructional expenditures and funded from institutional resources. Needs related to supporting growth and maintaining the campus infrastructure are identified and shared with BDST and Leadership Council. An example of resources not allocated via the BDST process is allocation of permanent funding for instruction. Each year Estrella Mountain adds substantial permanent funds to the instructional budget to cover the growing costs of instruction.

Support for Mission and Goals

The Strategic Plan elaborates on the college Mission Statement. The Mission Statement describes what EMCC provides to the community, and the Strategic Plan advances areas of the mission that require improvement (e.g., improving EMCC certificate and degree completion rates).

The Strategic Plan is systemically updated every three years. A key component of updating the Strategic Plan is to review internal and external scanning information and identify changes in college-wide, long-term plans. Setting realistic goals within available resources is evidenced by the change of focus between the last two Strategic Plans. In the [2012-2015 Strategic Plan](#), specific Institutional Priorities and Strategies to expand and enhance highly specialized learning spaces were supported by high levels of technology (e.g. Level III Learning Studios). Since capital dollars were available for these types of expenditures, the priority was appropriate during the 2012-2015 planning cycle. During the 2015 Strategic Planning retreat, major changes were made to the EMCC Learning and Technology Plan to adapt to MCCCDC's decision to delay a capital bond for several years. To bridge the college's existing capital dollars between bond elections, which may not be held until 2018, changes in the Learning and Technology Plan resulted in longer replacement cycles for technology and a reduced focus on expanding Level III (one laptop per student seat) learning studios. With the expenditure limitations and the reduction in State support, the [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#) does not include strategies to expand Level III Learning Studios or additional high levels of technology because such priorities would not be reasonable given the current capital resource environment.

During the 2015 Strategic Planning retreat, issues of enrollment declines and lack of state aid were addressed. Since full-time faculty allocations from the Maricopa district will be reduced for the next several years, an increase in professional development opportunities for adjunct faculty was included

as an Institutional Priority under the Core Planning Area of Effective Learning and Teaching in the [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#).

Qualified and Trained Staff

EMCC has made substantial investments in the employee hiring and onboarding processes. All advertised openings include detailed minimum and desired qualifications, which are used to determine a candidate's eligibility for academic and administrative positions based upon the candidate's education and experience. To ensure members of hiring committees are not biased or lack knowledge of hiring procedures, all hiring committee members are required to complete training courses ([Knowledge Checks](#)) before granted permission to serve on a hiring committee. Detailed rubrics to screen applications and rate interviews are created to increase reliability of scoring.

After hiring, all new employees attend an initial half-day "on-boarding" orientation and complete mandatory annual MCCCCD training sessions. Because the college relies heavily on part-time employees, student workers and adjunct faculty, EMCC has made extra investments to include all levels of employees (including student workers) at the orientations. New adjunct faculty are required to complete a comprehensive online training course related to MCCCCD policies and college procedures and must take EDU 250 (Teaching and Learning in the Community College) within the first two years of teaching. New faculty and employees also receive job-specific training through each division.

Employees' ongoing training and professional development are robust. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers numerous workshops and training sessions for all employee groups throughout the year. The training schedule was developed and modified using employee input obtained from employee surveys. Details on the types of professional development offered by the CTL is available in the [CTL Professional Development Calendar](#). To ensure quality in and among adjunct faculty, the college encourages adjunct faculty members attend targeted learning opportunities with hourly rate compensation provided for some workshops. The college sponsors employees to attend specific conferences that align with the learning college philosophy and in which the content supports and increases student success. For example, the college annually funds a team of 20-30 employees to attend the League for Innovation Learning College Summit. New employees are encouraged to become a team member and individuals who have never attended the summit are given preference.

MCCCCD provides [professional development funds](#) for faculty and staff to participate in certifications, degree programs, workshops and conferences. MCCCCD encourages faculty and staff to proactively identify and apply for opportunities that benefit the institution and their careers. In 2013-2014 EMCC faculty and staff were awarded more than \$145,000 in professional development awards through the various professional development opportunities.

Budget and Monitoring

EMCC's Business Office implemented a strong budgeting and monitoring process to increase budgeting effectiveness. Effectiveness is evidenced by EMCC's positive fund balance over the last decade, despite challenging financial times and rapid enrollment growth. The Business Office proactively establishes a multi-year [Financial Plan](#), monitors expenses across the entire institution, works with the Planning and Research Office to provide accurate enrollment growth projections and related funding and closely monitors changes in instructional costs and enrollment trends to ensure efficiency and sufficient funding for future semesters.

Responsible financial planning is demonstrated by EMCC's strategy to systematically allocate capital

funding from the 2004-2014 bond allocation, which provided two years of funding to bridge the time between future bond programs and delays. Since the new capital campaign was delayed, the funds are currently utilized to bridge three to four years without bond funding. To bridge an additional two years, the Technology and Learning Plan was adjusted. By proactively monitoring expenses and targeting FTSE growth and one-time funds, the college invested operational funds for new initiatives supporting student persistence, completion and success. A portion of new and reallocated funds is distributed through the transparent budget development process facilitated through BDST. BDST forwards recommendations to senior administration regarding fund allocation for internal divisions requesting resources.

Sources

- Crit 5 Technology and Learning Plan 2015-18
- Crit 5A 2005-14 Buildout
- Crit 5A 5C EMCC 2015-2018 Strategic Plan
- Crit 5A BDST Nov 2015 PowerPoint
- Crit 5A EMCC & SWSC Employees 2014-2015
- Crit 5A EMCC 12-15 Strategic Plan
- Crit 5A EMCC Fiscal Year FTSE 04-05 to 13-14
- Crit 5A EMCC Master Plan 5-12-04
- Crit 5A EMCC Noel Levitz Spring-2013 Results
- Crit 5A EMCC Org Chart
- Crit 5A EMCC Physical Network Topology
- Crit 5A Financial Resource Plan 2015-18
- Crit 5A Knowledge Checks HR Training Course
- Crit 5A Leadership Council Minutes 1-15
- Crit 5A Master Plan Update 2040 Buildout
- Crit 5A MCCCCD Professional Growth Opportunities
- Crit 5A Rubric Budget Proposal FY15-16
- Crit 5A Spring 2014 CTL Prof Dev Calendar

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

Knowledgeable Governing Board

The Maricopa County Community College Governing Board is comprised of seven board members (five district representatives and two at-large representatives) who are elected for four-year staggered terms. The Board is charged with approving district policy and the annual budget. Currently, four of the seven Governing Board members are newly elected. To ensure new Board members were knowledgeable about procedures and responsibilities, a consultant provided a detailed orientation to board members on November 13, 2014. The Maricopa [Governance model and administrative regulations](#) help to ensure that governing Board members are most effective in providing oversight of financial and academic policy.

The Board policies include a strong focus on [Board Outcomes](#) and related performance metrics. Outcomes include 1.1 University Transfer and General Education, 1.2 Workforce and Economic Development, 1.3 Developmental Education and 1.4 Community Development and Civic and Global Engagement. Performance metrics were developed by previous Governing Board members and directly link to the [MCCCD Mission](#). Outcomes are reviewed each year at the [Annual Outcomes Monitoring Retreat](#) and provide an opportunity for district administration and the Governing Board members to have meaningful discussions about ways to improve the core business of the district.

Policies and Procedures

EMCC consistently engages internal constituencies in dialogues, committee work, task forces and strategic planning sessions by promoting inclusive and collaborative decision-making. Integral to the process, EMCC administration, faculty and staff represent and provide input on a variety of initiatives at both the institution and system-wide levels. Focus teams include: Academic Issues Team (AIT), Curriculum Production Development (CPD), Budget Development Steering Team (BDST), Leadership Council (LC), Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAAC), President's Cabinet (PC), Faculty Staffing Committee, Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assurance Team and Core Values Committees (Diversity, Sustainability). Faculty participation in these and other committees is documented in [Faculty Committee Assignments 2014-2015](#).

Effective Structures

Numerous examples of shared governance and decision-making are evident at EMCC, including the Faculty Staffing Committee, BDST and Coffee Talks. The Faculty Staffing Committee is faculty driven and includes both the Vice President of Learning and the Dean of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE). Faculty team members carefully evaluate faculty proposals based on campus need and forward a prioritized listing of requested faculty positions to senior administration; senior administration identifies funded positions from the prioritized list. In addition, EMCC's Budget Development Steering Team (BDST) includes voting representatives from faculty, employee groups and administration representatives. As a formal recommending body for institutional funding, BDST sends proposals forward to Senior Leadership who approve final proposals. Moreover, EMCC's Student Life and Leadership facilitates the series "[Coffee Talks](#)," a monthly meeting in which students express their concerns to, share feedback with, and offer suggestions to Deans, Vice Presidents, and the President. While Coffee Talks is not a formal shared governance program, the series solicits regular input from students that is considered for future decision making. Finally, EMCC Faculty Senate represents a formal forum of shared governance processes and frequently invites the Vice Presidents and President to discuss college issues.

At the district level, the Governing Board monitors achievement of Governing Board Outcomes and approves the budget and policy. Under the MCCCCD Governance and Administrative Policy, the Governing Board avoids becoming involved in operational decisions; employee groups directly provide information to the Chancellor. Employee interests are represented by the Management Administration and Technology Constituency Employee Group (MAT), Professional Staff Association Constituency Employee Group (PSA), Maintenance and Operations Constituency Employee Group (M &O) and the Faculty Association Constituency Employee Group (FEC). Employee groups meet monthly and work with district leadership to address policy and employee issues. MCCCCD's employee group model is transitioning into a binary employee group model, with one policy group for all employees except faculty and one policy group for only residential faculty members. Employee group leaders were invited to participate in the transition process to ensure employees received similar opportunities to provide input into District and Governing Board policies and procedures; the structure of the new system is ongoing and not yet finalized.

Sources

- Crit 5B Annual Outcomes Monitoring Retreat Minutes 11-18-14
- Crit 5B CoffeeTalk Series Spring 2015
- Crit 5B Estrella Faculty Committee Assignments 2014-2015
- Crit 5B GB Outcomes
- Crit 5B Maricopa Governance and Administrative Policy Overview
- Crit 5B MCCCCD Mission Vision Values

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

Resource Allocation

Estrella Mountain's collaborative, flexible and transparent budgeting process aligns with the college's strong planning and continuous improvement model. This [integrated planning model](#) includes strategic, long-term and operational planning. The model incorporates continuous improvement and feedback based on [environmental scanning](#) trends, service area demographics, student outcomes, program review and lessons learned from HLC self-studies. The model also helps identify inter-relationships between long-term plans, Divisional/Operational Planning and the Strategic Plan. Planning occurs through the culmination of division and leadership meetings in which data are aggregated and ideas for addressing gaps are generated by employees during employee meetings.

The Strategic Plan is designed to advance the Mission and Vision of the College and the Maricopa County Community College District. The newest version of the [Strategic Plan](#) includes direct links to the district's Core Planning Areas. Linked to Core Planning Areas, Institutional Priorities guide college budgeting, program review and operational planning.

Integration of Assessment, Planning and Budgeting

Assessment and evaluation are built into the Strategic Plan. Each Strategic Direction in the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan included multiple learning and student outcomes. Final outcomes were reported in the 2012-2015 EMCC [Strategic Plan: Governing Board Metrics and EMCC Outcomes](#).

The budget process and improvements in learning and efficiency are integrated into the budget criteria for new allocations. Rubrics link the Strategic Plan to learning outcomes and were collaboratively developed by faculty, staff and administrators. The [Narrative Budget Form](#) and [Scoring Rubric](#) demonstrate the integration between planning and budgeting.

The Strategic Plan is designed to advance the [mission](#) of the institution. Alignment between the strategic plan and EMCC's mission connects student learning and success outcomes to each component of the mission statement. Alignment is further supported by [Program Reviews](#).

Planning Process

The development and continued implementation of the Strategic Plan is supported by internal and external groups. Comprised of representatives from faculty, employee groups, division chairs/directions, students and senior leadership, EMCC's Leadership Council facilitates strategic planning retreats. [Meeting agendas](#) exhibit how the participants are engaged in the development of the plan. Every Leadership Council member is required to serve on at least one Core Planning Area Team. Each team develops the plan, which is then sent to Senior Leadership for approval. The team is expected to implement and monitor progress for three years. Occasionally, mid-course changes are required due to changes in the environment. When this occurs, teams update, modify or add new objectives. Each Team reports progress to Leadership Council each semester during the meeting. For information on when these and other planning activities take place, see the EMCC [Leadership Council 2014-2015 Master Schedule](#).

Issues related to Strategic Planning are shared with the President's Community Advisory Council (PCAC), which is comprised of community, education and business leaders. Twice per academic year, student and institutional outcomes are shared with PCAC members and feedback regarding strategies and direction is solicited. External group needs are also assessed through an annual [Environmental Scan](#).

Plans for Capacity

The annual Environmental Scan provides information about the changing environment to assist with the college's decision-making processes. The Environmental Scan identifies unexpected changes in the external environment and, when used in conjunction with the Strategic Plan, helps leadership select strategies for responding to early warning signs. A specific example of the process occurred when Leadership Council developed the [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#). By closely reviewing the decreased growth in local high school graduates, the limited technology funds and the decreased potential for bond monies, the college predicted a reduction in the number of allocation of full-time faculty from MCCCCD. The potential future enrollment of the college will likely impact faculty allocations, however the college is anticipating the limitations and challenges of the possible enrollment decline and potential stagnation of FTE faculty.

Plans for Emerging Factors

Knowing that EMCC must continue to rely on a large cadre of adjunct faculty, the new plan includes a focus on expanding and improving the development of adjunct faculty. Slower growth in the high school population confirmed that the college cannot grow via recruitment alone; increased retention and persistence is required to maintain enrollment growth. Retention and persistence were included in the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and the updated [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#). Similarly, given the delay of a major bond campaign, the latest Strategic Plan lacked unrealistic goals related to technology use and the Strategic Plan was updated to reflect more accurate technology support.

Sources

- Crit 5A 5C EMCC 2015-2018 Strategic Plan
- Crit 5C 2015 Retreat Agenda and Membership
- Crit 5C 5D EMCC Program Review Templates
- Crit 5C Budget Proposal Form FY15-16
- Crit 5C EMCC 2015-2018 Integrated Planning Model

- Crit 5C EMCC Environmental Scan 2014-2015
- Crit 5C EMCC Leadership Council 14-15 Master Schedule
- Crit 5C EMCC Strategic Enrollment Plan 2015-19
- Crit 5C Rubric Budget Proposal FY15-16
- Crit 5C Strategic Plan Governing Board Metrics and EMCC Outcomes
- Crit 5C Vision Mission Values

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

EMCC systemically documents and improves performance through multiple processes that have become part of the culture of the organization. These processes involve integrated planning efforts in the areas of strategic planning, program review that drives divisional/operational planning, assessment and improvement of learning and institutional outcomes and budget development improvement processes.

Evidence of Performance

The Strategic Plan is monitored every semester via the [Strategic Planning Implementation Dashboard](#). Regular progress updates are shared during Leadership Council (LC) meetings by LC members. During the updates, all LC members are asked for feedback to improve the implementation. The [Leadership Council Master Schedule for 2014-2015](#) demonstrates the systematic evaluation of plan progress. Progress is documented via Annual Progress Reports sent to the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). The [EMCC Year End Accomplishments & Planning Report for 2013-2014](#) includes a review of institutional outcomes, improvement plans for outcomes that are lower than desired and future innovations. Reports are compiled and sent to MCCCD yearly and serve as a component of the President's annual evaluation.

When the strategic plan is systemically updated every three years, institutional and learning outcomes are linked to Institutional Priorities found in the Strategic Plan. These outcomes include measures such as graduation rates, persistence, retention, national surveys, employee survey results, etc., and are used to guide the development of new strategies and measure the overall effectiveness of student success programming efforts. The recently completed [Strategic Plan 2012-2015](#) resulted in substantial growth in the number of unduplicated graduates, improved success rates in developmental reading and English courses, increases in learning college readiness and increased revenue from federal grants.

EMCC has a long history of conducting Program Review in occupational programs and for all academic divisions in the college. EMCC's Program Review Process was interrupted for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 to comply with the Maricopa Priorities process. The [Resource Guide 9-11-13](#) provides an overview of the MCCCD process, including the creation of [Program Reviews](#) for every area on campus. Each area was evaluated by one of two taskforces: Support Programs and Services or Instructional Programs. Steering Teams reviewed recommendations from each taskforce, either concurring with or modifying the taskforces' recommendations. The College President made final recommendations for college-level implementation, sharing the final recommendations with all EMCC employees during specially convened meetings as well as with community members during the PCAC meetings. Programs received recommendations varying from maintaining the program as it exists to phasing out part or all of a program or expanding and improving a program. College results

were shared with the District Steering Team and the Chancellors Executive Council, with both groups identifying system-level improvements. A system-level implementation plan was recently completed by MCCC and a project team was tasked with implementing the recommendations; EMCC has already implemented some of the recommendations.

During the fall 2015 semester, EMCC launched a revised program review process. The process was piloted by Student Services/Student Affairs during the spring and summer of 2015. Although the program review was systemically linked to the EMCC Strategic Plan, the revised process now includes additional linkages to both HLC and Maricopa Priorities criteria. Each section requires that the author document program strengths and weakness and identify environmental factors that may impact the program. A unique component of the revised process is that divisional and operational plans are now generated collaboratively through the process rather than through an independent, personal process. Program components defined and outlined within Division plans are considered as part of the budget request process. The new [2015 Program Review Templates](#) outline these comprehensive components.

EMCC student and learning outcomes are linked to the Strategic Plan and the budget process. Additionally, student learning outcomes and improvements, at the college and course levels, are documented using EMCC's Comprehensive Assessment Tracking System (CATS). The system serves as way to track, share and document that the assessment of Learning occurred and improvements were made. Process details are included in Criterion IV.

Operational Experience and Effectiveness

Recent examples of how the college learns through processes includes revisions in the Institutional Priorities, BDST inter-rater reliability and updates to the Learning and Teaching Plan. Detailed progress tracking for the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan informed the development of the recent 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. The primary lesson learned came from the Institutional Priorities; too many implementation objectives resulted in reduced implementation effectiveness. Combined with uncontrollable external factors, Institutional Priorities with the most number of objectives had the lowest rates of implementation. To prevent this from recurring, the 2015-2018 Strategic Plans were limited to two Institutional Priorities for each Core Planning area. Objectives cannot be added to the plan unless a specific person is responsible for the objective and assigned from the outset.

The Budget Development Steering Team (BDST) members practice continuous improvement during the annual process. After each budget cycle, BDST conducts a comprehensive review of the process and criteria, including the evaluation of inter-rater reliability between team members. Evaluating the homogeneity, or consensus, of members' scores across all proposals provides an understanding of rubric functionality and identifies areas for improving the scoring rubric. Previous budget cycles identified high levels of variability among raters. To address the disparity, BDST members voted to share their individual scoring within the team and change the rubric to reduce the standard deviation among scores. Team members also recognized that many budget requests were repeated annually, however, accountability was only addressed during the budget submission process and no follow-up documentation was required. A new requirement was added to the process whereby repeated budget requests would only be considered if an accountability report was submitted for the previous budget award cycle. Finally, the quality and accuracy of the proposals varied greatly which was attributed to leadership changes in divisions. The optional training was changed to a mandatory training in 2014; any employee who submitted a budget application was required to complete either the in-person workshop or the online training. The process improvements contributed to increased accountability with budget proposals and reduced variability among rater's scores of proposals.

Regular review of long-term plans has also resulted in increased learning for college leadership. During 2014-2015, the [Technology and Learning Plan](#) was amended to include strategies for extending computer warranties, sustaining replacement time frames to accommodate carry-forward funding during years without a bond and reallocating technology from low use areas by studying log-in patterns. Review of the [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#) acknowledged the resources utilized for research, identified missing connections to the MCCCED Enrollment Management Plan, detected how few goals and objectives were actionable and ascertained that the plan required more frequent review by faculty and staff. With root causes identified, the plan was redrafted to include direct linkages to the district plan, targeted goals with achievable objectives, scheduled reviews and frequent discussions with the Academic Issues Team (AIT) to ensure continued implementation of the plan as well as an increased faculty and employee awareness through information dissemination.

Sources

- Crit 5 Technology and Learning Plan 2015-18
- Crit 5C 5D EMCC Program Review Templates
- Crit 5C EMCC Leadership Council 14-15 Master Schedule
- Crit 5C EMCC Strategic Enrollment Plan 2015-19
- Crit 5D EMCC 12-15 Strategic Plan
- Crit 5D EMCC Strategic Planning Dashboard
- Crit 5D EMCC Year End Accomplishments & Planning 13-14
- Crit 5D Resource Guide Revised 9-11-13
- Crit 5D Sample Program Reviews

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Summary

Estrella Mountain Community College has the resources, framework and processes required to ensure that it meets the standards and expectations set forth by MCCC in the areas of technology infrastructure, financial planning, resource allocation and decision-making. Senior leadership is committed to the mission, vision and growth of EMCC in these critical areas.

EMCC's Comprehensive Master Plan Update addresses campus infrastructure and technology as well as serves as a long-term guide to ensure that the campus meets student and community needs. EMCC is committed to providing technology that supports exceptional and creative learning experiences that prepare all learners to achieve their educational goals. A pervasive technology infrastructure is provided in order that the college's varied learning options and program needs are supported across all campuses and learning modes.

EMCC has a strong planning and budgeting process that is integrated, collaborative, flexible and transparent. The EMCC budget allocation process shows transparency through the college's Budget Development Steering Team. A cross-section of employees works collaboratively to evaluate and make recommendations on departments' budget proposals. EMCC's Business Office implemented a strong budgeting and monitoring process to increase budgeting effectiveness. Effectiveness is evidenced by EMCC's positive fund balance over the past decade despite challenging financial times and rapid enrollment growth.

EMCC has made substantial investments in the employee hiring and "on-boarding" processes. All advertised openings include detailed minimum and desired qualifications. To ensure that they are neither biased nor lack knowledge of hiring procedures, members of hiring committees are required to complete training courses before being allowed to serve. In addition, detailed rubrics to screen applications and rate interviews are created to increase reliability of scoring. Employees' ongoing training and professional development are robust; the Center for Teaching and Learning offers numerous workshops and training sessions for all employee groups throughout the year.

Sources

There are no sources.