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Learning Commission Grants MSCC 10 Years of Continued Accreditation

The Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has continued the accreditation of Mid-South Community College for 10 years. The next Reaffirmation of Accreditation is scheduled for the 2023-24 academic year.

“Ten years of continued accreditation is another major milestone for Mid-South Community College and everyone who made it possible,” said Alex Coulter, a founding member of the MSCC Board of Trustees and current chairperson.

“It is rewarding to have people who don’t really know anything about Mid-South Community College look at the school and say we are doing the right things in a remarkably extraordinary way,” added Franklin Fogleman, chair of the MSCC Foundation Board.



Shane Broadway, Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, said MSCC’s accomplishment “further solidifies what many of us in Arkansas already knew about Mid-South Community College and its efforts to provide opportunity to students in an area of our state that so desperately needs higher education.

“It is a great credit to the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students for their commitment to furthering the accessibility to higher education and providing the opportunity to leave Mid-South with a career and not just a job.”

Mid-South President Dr. Glen Fenter said the official notification letter, which included no concerns or conditions, was a welcome sight. He said the positive result came as no surprise.

“Our employees put forth an unbelievable effort preparing for this challenge with the understanding that this was an extremely important process for our institution,” he said. “The consistency and sincerity of our commitment came through loud and clear with these folks.”

Consultant-evaluators visited the Mid-South campus in October for a first-hand assessment of the College. MSCC had submitted a self-study report earlier in 2013.

“The visit could not have gone better,” said Dr. Barbara Baxter, MSCC Executive Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness. “Our evaluation team found no major issues with our request for continued accreditation. On the contrary, the panel provided enthusiastic, positive feedback about our institution and our efforts.”

Team members made the following observations during the exit interview:

- Buildings, grounds, and equipment are outstanding;
- The employees’ commitment to student success is remarkable. Faculty/staff and Board of Trustees members are dedicated to keeping students No. 1;
- The Information Technology department, the Registrar’s Office, and the Learning Success Center are particularly impressive;
- Students interviewed were visibly appreciative of the College and enjoy being there;
- The College has a clear commitment to diversity;
- MSCC operates with integrity and high standards;
- There is quality teaching and learning with consistency in content and expectations; instructional equipment is outstanding;
- The College’s commitment to planning and assessment for continuous improvement is strong;
- MSCC’s most important assets are its talent and its culture.

“Their job was to evaluate us in light of the HLC’s five criteria and in light of our mission,” Dr. Fenter pointed out. “The team never strayed from being fairly clinical in the pursuit of that goal. Even so, these folks were blown away by who we are, not by who we say we are or who we pretend to be, but by who we really are.”

The consultant-evaluators also spoke glowingly of the Board of Trustees’ efforts to make MSCC a model institution.

“That is a very important piece of our success,” Dr. Fenter said. “More than a few institutions cannot make the smallest of decisions without having to call a special board meeting. When you do that, it slows the process, and you sometimes move from the front of somebody’s line to the back. Our board has consistently allowed the talent we have assembled to run the institution on a daily basis.”

Institutional accreditation is a voluntary process which evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. The Higher Learning Commission, which accredits approximately 1,300 institutions of higher education in a 19-state region, is one of six regional U.S. accrediting agencies.

MSCC has been accredited since 1999.

“The Higher Learning Commission’s tenets have always been a guiding path for this institution,” Dr. Fenter said. “We have understood since the establishment of the College that the Commission’s guidelines would take us where we needed to be. The evaluation process is clinical and critical, and it is something that is a very real judge of who you are as an institution and what you’ve been able to accomplish.”