



## **Mesa Community College: Initial Self-Study Outline Fall 2002**

Mesa Community College (MCC) will be conducting a self study in preparation for the comprehensive accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association scheduled Spring 2005. The following outline is designed to help guide the self-study process.

### Overview

MCC will be conducting the self study using the new HLC accreditation criteria. These are: (1) Mission and Integrity, (2) Preparing for the Future, (3) Student Learning and Effective Teaching, (4) Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge, and (5) Engagement and Service. The self study will provide the college community an opportunity to examine itself in relation to accreditation criteria and to identify strengths, challenges, and future directions. In addition, the college will seek approval to offer an on-line/distance degree. This will require submitting a request for institutional change which will be included in the self-study report.

The self-study report will be submitted in Fall 2004, and the accreditation visit will occur in Spring 2005.

### Preparations • December 2002 – January 2003

The first organizational meeting of the self-study steering committee will be December 19, 2002. The steering committee includes the Dean of Instruction, self-study coordinator, Office of Research and Planning staff, self-study support staff, and chairs of each individual self study committee. The first organizational meeting of the full self-study committee will be in mid-January.

On January 16, 2003 there will be a self-study committee luncheon with Dr. Cecilia Lopez, Associate Director of the Higher Learning Commission. She will address accreditation and the new criteria.

### Getting Started • January - February 2003

The steering committee will meet during January and February. The purpose of these meetings will be to dialogue about process, review the criteria and components, develop “operating procedures”, and clarify charges and roles. By late February committee chairs will call their first committee meetings and provide an orientation to members about process, roles, tasks, and a general review of criteria.

### Criterion Work • March – May 2003

Individual criterion committees will hold regular meetings to review the criteria and components and interpret them in relation to the college. They will also identify sources of evidence and tasks that need to be done to respond to criteria. A final draft of the criterion and components interpretations will be completed by early June. This information will help guide the evidence gathering process and ensure that the self study will be meaningful and valuable to the future of the college.

*April 12 – 16, 2003* A team of committee members will attend the Annual HLC meeting in Chicago and share information with their committees.

### Examples of Evidence Work • Summer 2003

Both the steering committee and the full self-study committee will meet to discuss what constitutes good evidence and to review questions and share updates. Committees will examine plausible examples of evidence for their criteria and components and provide weekly updates. Chairs will submit final requests for evidence worksheets by the end of the summer. These requests will be used to develop and implement an evidence collection plan. The distance degree/institutional change committee will be gathering documentation to support the request and examining “Best Practices” in relation to HLC questions.

### Gathering Examples of Evidence • Fall 2003

The Fall semester will begin with a series of meetings with different self-study committee groups to discuss a plan for collecting evidence and to get committee feedback. The self-study coordinator and the staff of the Office of Research and Planning will facilitate the necessary data collection processes.

*March 28 – 30, 2004* A team of committee members will attend the Annual HLC meeting in Chicago and share information with their committees.

### Interpreting and Evaluating the Evidence • Spring - Summer 2004

Committees will synthesize and critically evaluate the evidence gathered and submit working papers to be included in the self-study report.

### Preparing for Report and Visit • Fall 2004 – Spring 2005

By Fall 2004 the self-study report draft will be reviewed and final revisions completed. The report will then be submitted to the Higher Learning Commission and preparations for the team visit in Spring will begin.