SALT Focus Group Meeting 11/29/16 – Notes taken by Tammy Peery

1. How do you relate to the College's mission and vision to your role at MC?

Nancy Nuell: so much is intimately tied to empowering students to be able to change their lives and enrich the community. Most obvious are fund raising and scholarship activities, grants, meeting students where they are in the community – helping them visualize the possibilities associated with that. Helps us to reach out to families and beneficiaries to change their lives and help alumni build relationships with the college that help them to change the future.

Monica Brown: my role is to provide direct services to students to help students access the institution, that we offer the opportunity to come to college. Outreach in the community partnering with Dave Sears and Nancy Nuell, reaching out through EOC and within other areas of the student affairs division. We meet students in the high schools in the ACES program. Help students as they transition to the college – all of that is part of access. Help students make connections to help them start smart, to empower them to be advocates and knowledgeable about support services available. Make connections to areas of engagement like student life, front line counseling and staff. We touch students from start to finish in student affairs, help them get started, successfully through the college, and see them off as they transition on to a 4-year school or the workforce. My role is to support the faculty and staff in the vision to be able to support students and provide support services that students need.

Janet Wormack – my role relates to everything we do, including our mission and 2020 goals. We provide support on everything from engagement to institutional effectiveness, human, fiscal, and physical resources for students who intend to matriculate. We help everyone at the College to be accountable for their results.

2. How do we assess the integrity of our policies and practices – what does that look like?

Monica Brown – we do this within PEC. We do a P & P review once a month. I don't know that it's formally assessed, but it is formally reviewed. We take a very focused approach to ensuring that our policies and practices align. We have a formal group whose responsibility it is to review P&P, then there is the review by the College community and feedback from college community, which is then reviewed by P&P and a policy is enacted. There is integrity in the process. I don't see that, however, as formal assessment.

Nancy Nuell – we do some formal assessment: Internal audit activities, external audit activities, compliance review and oversight – they identify some gaps. Audits also apply to the MC foundation to ensure that donor dollars are used according to P&P for donors. Sometimes we bring in external reviewers – for example, a firm was brought in: Baker and Tilly will do a full assessment of the college's risk areas (enterprise risk assessment) and put together a plan for what should be audited. We've also done a communications audit to identify where we have gaps.

Janet Wormack – on the operations level, we just did a food services assessment to look at best practices. We do them a lot in AFS areas – we evaluate and assess how they're being applied. We just did the SWOT for the BOT on financial sustainability and educational excellence – a series of reports continually take place to make sure that we're sharing information and to ensure that we understand as a community how we apply our policies and procedures.

Donna Schena – very structured review of P & P has been ongoing for the last year or two. The governance system is leveraged on these reviews as well. Starts with PEC/P&P group, goes out to college community and comes back. Very structured – we're reviewing policies that haven't been reviewed since 1984 (ex. Copywright policy).

Janet Wormack – our governance system has allowed us to have a voice and see or hear things we wouldn't have heard before. Staff council did a subgroup about bullying – felt it was missing and were empowered to meet to begin to address them. This is assessment – a different group had eyes on it and suggested improvement. Something not being addressed needs to be addressed through the governance process.

3. Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience – consider effectiveness of our formal communication with students.
   Monica Brown – 2013 we started providing to every incoming degree seeking student a catalog copy (required through CCRCCA) or directing them to the online catalog so that every degree seeking student had the information in hand. This is how students gain information about program of study. At the same time, Academic Affairs engaged in the program pathways approach in fall of 2013 as well – provide students with program pathways based upon their majors (refers to the schedule for their course sequence over time). Gives them information about programs of study and gives them direction for their programs of study.
   Nancy Nuell - things like identifying through the CEMAT group a structured look at enrollment management – they get information about which programs we want to share information about to potential students and then work to get the information out (like the top 7 programs right now). In terms of a weakness – it's very difficult to send e-mail to students and have a correct distribution list.
   Monica Brown – we use email as a form of communication. Around 2004 is when we got student e-mail. It's the best way for us to communicate with students, but isn't necessarily the best way for them to get the information. They are not then nor now using their college e-mail, though they can forward to their personal email addresses.
   Janet Wormack – we communicate through governance councils and advisory groups (like bookstore councils, financial aid sessions, sessions for the dream act), focus groups, forums to ensure that they know what's happening. Mandatory new student orientation (implemented 2 years ago). [Samantha asks about who to contact about new student orientation – Monica will send this information.] It's online and on ground. Separate from academic orientation sessions.
   Janet Wormack – a weakness is communicating about alert system and safety with students.
   Monica Brown – another challenge is that we don't have another student information system that connects everyone together. We don't have a system where student benchmarks are clearly available to students, faculty and staff to ensure that we're in compliance. Every student should have an academic plan – we don't have a system in place for this and how we hold them

accountable. We do have plans to purchase one. It's being explored right now and we are committed to transitioning to a system that provides this information.

4. What are examples of data driven /informed decisions?
Sanjay Rai: – we've made many decisions – informed, but not driven. Revision of AELP, developmental English. Alternative placement study was data driven. We made changes in how we scheduled tutors in our learning centers based on data. We looked at the top 16 enrolled programs (90% of students) we looked at the time students take to graduate or transfer, business alignment. We came up with baseline data from 2015 and benchmarked for 2020 and came up with benchmarks and strategies to get there. We looked at success rates and are working carefully on reducing DFW rates.
Nancy Nuell – the scholarship application system allows us to better know how many students are getting into the system and completing scholarship applications (many were getting in, but not completing them); the number of scholarship applications and number of students successfully receiving them. Now we can look at race & ethnicity information about students who are applying and can potentially inform students about applying for scholarships and how to get scholarship funding. It's available for us to collect data on a semester basis. We are collecting data that we use for figuring out how individuals are using our website – what are they gravitating to look at – what attracts the most attention on the website, and we've revamped the web to try to provide the students with the information they're interested in.
Monica Brown – (on scholarships agree with Nancy), as an institution, we look at the achievement gap – did a study, made some significant decisions using that data. Implemented the work of the Closing the Achievement Gap workgroup, which led to significant changes like ATP, the ATP academy, ATP peer to peer program in student affairs, support form AFS and Dave Sears and Nancy Nuell (OACE) – led us to be able to use data to position us to become an Achieving the Dream institution.
Janet Wormack – in process now – through CEMAT a group was put together to look at student receipts – collected information and will make changes to cashiering functions at the campuses as a result – SALT is looking at the implementation of those recommendations now. For example, we should stop taking Discover and AMEX – use is low, cost of accepting is high. Hours of operations will be impacted as a result of this data as well.
Monica Brown adds – the work that we did around on-time registration was data driven as well – partnered with academic affairs to do that work – 2013 decision to move from walk-in advising to developmental appointment based advising model which has led us to have advising in both counseling and program areas in academic affairs.
Donna Schena – closing of child care centers and moving one to the academic program was data informed as well as the outsourcing of the bookstores.
Nancy Nuell – the grant activity that we engage in often affects results for student learning, success, and support services. We haven't done that analysis as methodically as we'd like to, but on an individual basis, looking at the outcome of a grant has informed decisions.