

**Report to Faculty, Administrators, Trustees, Students  
of Camden County College**

Prepared following analysis of the institution's Periodic Review Report

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Submitted July 31, 2013

## Evaluation of the Periodic Review Report of Camden County College

### *I. Introduction*

Camden County College is a public, multi-campus institution in Camden County, NJ which grants associate's degrees and certificates. Its main campus is located in Blackwood, NJ. The College was established in 1967 and first accredited by Middle States in 1972. The Self-Study was submitted in 2006, and a Site Visit Team was sent in 2007. The College was subsequently placed on warning for Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning on June 28, 2007. The warning was removed on November 20, 2008 after the Middle States Commission on Higher Education accepted the Monitoring Report.

In Spring 2011, planning for the Periodic Review Report (PRR) commenced. The PRR begins with an overview of the institution's approach to preparing the report, as well as the major institutional changes and developments since the College's last decennial self-study and team visit in the following areas:

- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning)  
In 2007, the College began making strides in creating a student learning outcomes assessment process. The process has become more faculty-driven over the years, and is described in greater detail in Section 2: Responses to Recommendations from the Previous Decennial Evaluation.
- Decentralized Responsibility of Continuing Education (Standard 4: Leadership and Governance; Standard 11: Educational Offerings)  
Prior to 2013, Camden Community College's Dean of Corporate/Community Education was responsible for non-credit courses offered through the Continuing Education program. When the Dean left the College, responsibility for non-credit courses was decentralized along thematic lines; that is, nursing/allied health; business and technology; and self-enrichment. This change helped the College realize economies of scale, since non-credit and credit courses are overseen by the same professionals. The readers believe that this re-organization makes sense in light of the College's financial challenges.
- Shared Services (Standard 3: Institutional Resources)  
Declines in public funding prompted the consolidation of some programs and services within Camden County. The College now oversees the County Regional Emergency Training Center and the Police and Fire Academies, as well as programs offered through the County Technical Institute. Redundancies in program and course offerings between the College and the County Technical Institute were eliminated by closing programs offered by the latter, since the former could deliver them more efficiently.
- Facilities Master Plan 2013 Update (Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal)  
The College's Facilities Master Plan was written in 2001 and updated in 2004 and, again, in 2013. It now addresses goals for up to five years, and provides updates on projects that have been completed since 2001. Recent developments include the construction of the Blackwood Ring Road, which facilitates access to academic buildings and parking

lots, and of the Kevin G. Halpern Hall for Science and Health Education, a 107,000 square foot building with a considerable amount of classroom and lab space.

*The readers noted that prior to the 2013 update, the Facilities Master Plan was last updated in 2004. This is too long a time period for such a plan to be effective. Therefore, the readers **recommend** that the Facilities Master Plan be updated on a regular basis. For instance, if it covers a five-year period, the College may want to review annually and make mid-course revisions at the 2.5 year mark. At a minimum, it should be updated at the end of the five-year period it now covers.*

- Gateway to College Model (Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention and Standard 13: Related Educational Activities)

Camden County College is the recipient of a Gateway to College grant, which provides an opportunity for high school dropouts ages 16 to 20 to earn a high school equivalency diploma while earning college credits. The Program partnered with Camden City Schools to serve more than 50 students in Fall 2011/Spring 2012 terms and more than 75 students in Fall 2012/Spring 2013. (The readers assume these figures include duplicated headcounts.) Three students earned their high school equivalency diplomas in the first year. This year, the College anticipates that 25 more will receive their high school equivalency diplomas.

*The readers **commend** the College for becoming a part of the Gateway to College network, which serves an important niche in the City of Camden. The readers **suggest** that the College also track the number of students who enroll in the institution vs. those who enroll at other institutions, as well as those who do not pursue college after fulfilling their high school diploma requirements.*

The PRR continues on to address required topics in a well-organized manner, supported by its appendices. It reflects feedback from both the campus community as well as the community at large. *The readers **commend** Camden County College for the level of effort dedicated to the preparation of the PRR.*

## **II. Responses to Recommendations from the Previous Decennial Evaluation**

The PRR addressed 31 self-study recommendations. The Site Visit Team did not make any recommendations, but offered 46 suggestions, four of which were affirmations of the self-study recommendations. It also concurred with one self-study recommendation, though it was not offered as a recommendation or a suggestion, but as a comment within the summary of evidence and findings section of the Site Visit Team's report. Responses to recommendations are addressed by MSCHE Standard.

### Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The institutional self-study recommended that the College provide "more structured guidance for planning committee representatives and divisional leaders on methods they should employ to engage their constituencies" in the review of institutional mission, goals, and objectives. The College has responded to this recommendation by outlining a process whereby the President solicits feedback from his staff members on mission, goals, and objectives, who, in turn, solicit

similar input from their staff and from faculty. This input is then communicated back up to the President through a staff meeting and, subsequently, shared with the Board. This process takes place every five years.

*The readers **suggest** that semi-structured interview protocols be developed to aid in the gathering of feedback from constituents. This would address the concern voiced in the self-study that not every administrator “gave the same attention to securing constituency responses.”*

### Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

A recommendation that the College made in its self-study was to broaden and enhance direct participation in the development of the Strategic Plan, particularly, through the use of smaller planning teams for initiative setting. Toward that end, it obtained feedback from small teams of stakeholders at the College, as well as from the community at large, in its 2010 planning process for the Strategic Plan to 2015.

*The readers **commend** the College for its efforts to include such a broad base of stakeholders in its strategic planning process.*

### Standard 3: Institutional Resources

Camden County College made seven recommendations in its institutional self-study around this standard. The first recommendation was to create a campaign to raise private gifts through the Foundation. A consultant was utilized, and the College formed a Board of Director’s Major Donor’s Committee. The College received gifts of over \$161,000 as a result of this initiative; however, the readers note that it did not report its net gains/losses (i.e., after consulting fees, internal resources, etc.) over time.

The second recommendation was to secure a second bond issue for rebuilding. A bond for \$2.353 million was issued on 6/29/2010 and \$25 million was issued on 12/16/2010.

The College’s third recommendation in this area was to develop details for the next stages of the Facilities Master Plan. A Facilities Master Plan 2013 Update was presented to the Board of Trustees in March 2013, and funding was secured in April 2013 for the next phase of the Blackwood Campus Transformation Project.

Recommendation 4 was to develop the revenue-generating aspects of the Facilities Master Plan. The College worked on renovations in collaboration with Kiddie Junction, a new daycare facility vendor on the Blackwood campus; it also partnered with Barnes and Noble Campus Stores to expand the Blackwood Bookstore. The Camden Campus bookstore was also renovated. The College has also marketed its facilities on a rental basis, which generated over \$340,000 in revenue during the 2012 fiscal year.

The fifth recommendation was to prepare a proactive facilities maintenance plan at all locations. Toward this end, the College invested in School Dude, an online facilities maintenance system.

Recommendation 6 was to bolster the College’s Disaster Recovery Plan, and that has been addressed through the use of Sungard Data Recovery Services. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) worked with executive staff and external consultants to develop the College’s Disaster Plan, which includes the use of alternate sites and redundancies in the communications network.

Finally, the seventh recommendation made in the self-study around Standard 3 was to enhance network security. Network switches have already been upgraded, and network servers

are in the process of being upgraded. An external consultant working with OIT has also assessed the internal network.

*The readers **suggest** that cost-benefit analyses be conducted to inform project plans, as well as to assess/forecast both long-term and short-term gains/losses.*

#### Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

Two self-study recommendations were made in support of this standard. The first was to incentivize students to participate in committees; the second was to create a secure repository for internal documents, such as policies and meeting minutes. The Site Visit Team wrote, in its summary of evidence and findings, that it supports the College's recommendations. In response to the first recommendation, student leaders now meet with the President and his staff every semester to discuss issues and priorities. As for the second recommendation, the College has created a secure website using Microsoft Sharepoint Technology. This is an improvement upon the arrangement at the time of the self-study, when documents were simply posted to the shared drive. Sharepoint Technology addresses the concern voiced in the self-study that participation from constituencies is limited by their inability to provide direct feedback on documents. Additionally, a student portal was launched in the Spring 2013, and a faculty portal is projected to be available in Fall 2013.

*The readers **commend** the College for prioritizing student participation in governance.*

#### Standard 5: Administration

In the self-study, a recommendation was made to post updated organizational charts on a shared drive to keep faculty and staff abreast of changes to the organization structure. These charts are updated quarterly, or after reorganizations, and made available through the shared drive.

*The readers **suggest**, if it is not already being done, that announcements about reorganizations and/or staffing changes also be made through email, memos, and other means of intra-office communications.*

#### Standard 6: Integrity

Two recommendations were made in the self-study around Standard 6. The first is that the College complies with Sarbanes-Oxley on a voluntary basis; the second is that all policies and procedures be reviewed to ensure currency and adequacy of the documentation, and that all documents are available through the shared drive. The Site Visit Team, in its write-up, also affirmed self-study recommendation #2, though it referenced a "Board of Trustee Policy Manual" which should be "updated and posted online." The readers are unclear as to whether that document has since been renamed, or if it refers to a different recommendation and/or document. At the time of this writing, the scanned copy of the Self-Study provided to the readers did not include the section on Standard 6.

For the first recommendation, a system of auditing College Policies and Procedures were established. In response to the second recommendation, staff members review Board Policies related to their units and functions every fall; these policies are revised as needed. In 2012, a Board Policy Audit was conducted. As a result, the Conflict of Interest Policy was revised, and a new Code of Conduct was approved. The Board now has a Business Affairs, Audit and Campus Development Committee with clearly defined roles related to campus compliance and auditing. A Whistle Blower Policy was approved, and the College adopted an External Auditor Policy.

Every employee received an Internal Controls Procedures manual, which is also available through the shared drive.

*The readers **suggest** that workshops or information sessions be held for personnel to inform them about policies, in addition to distributing/posting these documents. The readers also **suggest** that all documents containing policies and procedures, not just the Internal Controls Procedures document, be made available through the shared drive.*

#### Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The self-study recommendation made under this standard was to increase the capacity of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Grants. The College has chosen, instead, to move responsibility for the assessment of student learning outcomes (SLO) out of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Grants and into the Office of Academic Affairs. An additional position was created in the Office of Academic Affairs to coordinate student learning outcomes assessment and faculty training around SLO assessment. This has enabled the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Grants to focus on data mining, management, and reporting. The College reports that this division of labor has worked out well.

Additional information about, and recommendations for, standard 7 appear in Section V, below.

#### Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

Three recommendations emerged from the College's self-study: 1) assess Accuplacer's effectiveness as a placement tool; 2) expand early placement testing to high school students and offer developmental courses as needed; and 3) analyze retention by programs and courses. On recommendation 1, Camden County College participated in a statewide review of placement scores for students; as a result, common SAT and Accuplacer cut scores for English and math were established for community colleges in New Jersey. For recommendation 2, the College has also continued to increase the number of high schools where they test and offer developmental courses; it has also partnered with an area high school to offer ESL testing and courses to international students. In response to recommendation three, the annual Fact Book now includes retention data which are disaggregated at the course- and program-levels. These data are used to inform Academic Program Reviews (APR), which are conducted on a five-year cycle.

*The readers **suggest** that program-level retention data also be shared and discussed with the Admissions Department, as well as departments which are involved in retention efforts.*

#### Standard 9: Student Support Services

In the self-study, a recommendation was made to develop an improvement plan for advisement, as well as a plan for transfer services. In 2011, the College developed a faculty training program which includes the use of a training manual and mentoring from advising staff. This resulted in the development of an early alert system to track attendance and academic performance. Student support services include study groups, peer tutoring services, and help from faculty outside of the classroom. Every semester, the Advising Center updates all advisors on transfer agreements. The college also belongs to NJ Transfer, an online system that shows course equivalencies across institutions of higher education in New Jersey.

The readers note that the Site Visit Team, in its write-up of suggestions, stated that it concurred with the College's three recommendations, found on p. 50 of its Self-Study document. These three recommendations were presented and addressed under Standard 8, above.

### Standard 10: Faculty

Two recommendations resulted from the self-study: 1) improve faculty FT/PT ratios by making FT faculty hires a budget priority and by seeking external funds for endowed faculty chairs; and 2) starting the FT faculty recruitment process earlier in the academic year. The Site Visit Team endorsed self-study recommendation number two in its list of suggestions. On the first recommendation, the College makes FT faculty hiring a priority; however, no external funds have been identified, to date, for endowed faculty chairs. On the second recommendation, deans are asked to submit requests for FT faculty and, in the early spring, they are notified of faculty requests that have been approved, pending finalization of the next year's budget. The search process has also been streamlined through the use of an online application. Search Committees are also trained by the Office of Human Resources.

### Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The self-study made three recommendations in this area: 1) track trends of common indicators over a five-year time period; 2) ensure that program goals and student learning outcomes are easy to find in the catalog and Academic Program Guide; and 3) ensure that student learning outcomes are distributed to students on the first day of every course. The Site Visit Team concurred with recommendation number three. In response, the institution has revised the Academic Program Review process so that it is driven by trend analysis using five years' worth of data. Student learning outcomes data are collected annually, beginning in 2007. As of 2011, program reviews are led by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. In 2008, the Curriculum Committee approved a Departmental Master Syllabus (DMS), which identifies course-level student learning outcomes and lists assessment methods for each. Academic program goals and student learning outcomes are published in both the Academic Program Guide and the catalog, and students receive a list of expected student learning outcomes on the first day of each course.

### Standard 12: General Education

Three recommendations were made in the self-study: 1) establish metrics to assess student learning outcomes for each general education goal; 2) enhance collaborative efforts between faculty and librarians to increase information literacy; and 3) clarify and document the extent to which programs must address general education goals. On recommendation 1, the College worked with the statewide General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC), which established general education Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). These SLOs were adopted by the College in Fall 2008. Academic departments assess general education SLOs annually. For recommendation 2, librarians and faculty collaborate to decide on the extent to which information literacy is addressed in courses. Information literacy no longer needs to be addressed in every course, but it must be addressed in every program. Recommendation 3 has been addressed through a statewide process in which the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCC) documented the extent to which academic programs must fulfill each general education goal, and it also outlined distribution requirements.

### Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The self-study led to three recommendations: 1) assess performance in first-level credit courses for students who complete skills courses, and improve both skills and first-level credit

courses; 2) examine policies regarding credit for experiential learning; and 3) assess the distance education program to improve student learning and ensure academic integrity and efficient use of resources. For recommendation 1, the College volunteered to pilot a new statewide Student Success Model in fall 2012. This model has enabled faculty to assess student performance, which led to the creation of a Division of Transitional Studies for pre-college programs. Success strategies for students enrolled in developmental courses are assessed to determine efficacy; however, no results were reported. To address recommendation 2, the College collaborated with the 19 community colleges in the state to develop standardized policies for experiential learning, and a Non-Credit to Credit Articulation document is now being used. For recommendation 3, the College is part of a statewide consortium which purchased the Quality Matters program. The program is being used to assess course design and integrity.

#### Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

On June 28, 2007, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) placed the College on warning for failing to meet this standard. It was required to submit a monitoring report by August 1, 2008. On November 20, 2008, MSCHE accepted the monitoring report, removed the warning and reaffirmed accreditation.

Since the decennial self-study, oversight of the student learning outcomes assessment process has moved from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Grants to the Office of Academic Affairs, as indicated above, under Standard 7. The Vice President for Academic Affairs oversees SLO assessment reporting at the institutional level; the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Assessment provides professional development and consultation to the faculty; the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee evaluates the assessment process; the Curriculum Committee reviews and approves curricular changes; deans monitor assessment outcomes; and the faculty are responsible for the annual review of course syllabi and program-level SLOs as part of the Academic Program Review process. Since the time of the Monitoring Report and, as a result of the PRR process, the College identified the need to reduce its reliance on the Office of Curriculum and Assessment for the collection of SLO assessment data. Instead, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Liaisons, under the leadership of the Associate Dean of Curriculum and Assessment, work with faculty teams on SLO assessment. The new decentralized model has created a culture of shared responsibility for SLO assessment.

Program-level outcomes are assessed on a two-year cycle, with many programs “losing the loop” within three years. A Departmental Master Syllabus (DMS) lists course-level SLOs, general education SLOs, and student learning outcomes assessments.

Although the College has come a long way in creating an organized student learning outcomes assessment process that appears to be sustainable, it continues to struggle with many of the same issues it faced at the time of the Monitoring Report—i.e., reliance on grade distributions and emphasis on broader competencies, as opposed to more narrowly defined learning outcomes. The quality of student learning outcomes assessment—even in the examples of exemplars provided in the PRR—appears to be uneven across the College. Examples of assessment exemplars included the use of grades (which also incorporated late-submission penalties) and pre-post test score gains, both of which do not identify specific deficiencies in curricula or pedagogies in regard to discrete learning outcomes.

*The readers **recommend** that Camden County College:*

- 1) Identify, and provide training for, faculty within programs who need additional guidance on writing and assessing student learning outcomes. These issues have been identified as early*

as 2008 in the Monitoring Report; however, they continue to persist in 2013. Therefore, it is important that they be addressed before they become habitual among programs and/or faculty.

- 2) Evaluate not only program-level compliance, but also compliance at the course-level. Although the PRR indicates that all programs are now participating in student learning outcomes assessment, it is unclear what proportions of courses within programs, and what proportions of course sections, have been assessed.
- 3) Refine the DMS so that assessment methods are mapped to discrete student learning outcomes. For example, what assessment tool/method will be used to assess the extent to which a student can “present ideas in a traditional rhetorical format” in ENG101? What assessment tool/method will be applied to gauge the extent to which a student is able to “use the elements of formal argument, including the proposition, induction, deduction, the syllogism, the enthymeme, and the example”? This level of specificity may help faculty who continue to struggle with SLO assessment.

### **III. Challenges and Opportunities**

Enrollment declines, diminished support from government sources, rising operational costs, and an aging infrastructure have challenged Camden County College to identify additional funding sources, new/unsaturated market segments, and cost savings while continuing to provide a quality education.

#### **Challenges**

- Improving Student Success  
Camden County College strives to improve its success rates with first-year students through intrusive wraparound services. Its faculty and administrators have helped to create a statewide Student Success Data Model, and the College will be one of four institutions to produce the first round of data. The Student Success Model will help to identify gaps and design new programs/services to fill those gaps. The College is also working to improve the success rates of ESL students. Finally, the College is working with a statewide team to implement new Core Curriculum Standards for K-12 to improve college readiness.
- Developing a New Generation of Faculty, Staff, and Administrative Leadership  
Camden County College has a large number of faculty members who will be retiring in the next five years. The College is challenged not only to fill vacancies in faculty positions, but to groom the next generation of administrative leaders. One way in which the College is preparing for this is by creating internship positions in deans’ offices for current faculty. The College is also looking to further involve its adjunct faculty, and an Adjunct Academy has been created to help in recruitment, evaluation, and development.
- Doing More With Less  
Declines in student enrollment and government funding have made it necessary for the College to “do more with less.” Cost-cutting strategies include the increased use of technology for instructional and student-service delivery; efficient deployment of personnel; centralization of activities; and strengthening of the online learning program.

The College has also increased the number and scope of local partnerships with businesses as well as other institutions of higher learning.

### ***Opportunities***

- Enhance Recruitment Efforts and Increase Enrollment  
Camden Community College has invested in improvements to the physical infrastructure to appeal to more potential students. For instance, the new science and allied health building has added nursing and health career clinical labs, which supports an initiative to bring in a pre-licensure BSN program through an articulation agreement with Rutgers, New Brunswick/Newark College of Nursing. The College is also growing a new Honors Program through articulation agreements and scholarships. Graduates of the Honors Program are automatically accepted into the Rutgers University-Camden Honors Program. The College has also developed a new International Healthcare Certificate through a partnership with Nanyang Medial College in China. This partnership is expected to help with international recruitment efforts.
- Access to New Funding Sources to Address Future and Current Equipment and Facility Needs  
Camden County College received capital infrastructure investments from the state of New Jersey, and expects to receive more in the future in support of its \$83 million Blackwood Campus transformation initiative. Future funding opportunities include the Building Our Future Bond Act (GO Bond Act), the Higher Education Capital Improvement Fund (CIF), the Higher Education Trust Fund (HEFT), the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund (HETI) and the Higher Education Equipment Leasing Fund (ELF). The College was notified that it has been recommended for four funding opportunities: HETI, ELF, and two GO Bond projects. The College reports, in its PRR, that it believes that improvements in facilities will help to attract more students.
- Develop Revenue Opportunities, Enhance Workforce Development Efforts via Development of a New Facilities Master Plan  
Camden County College updated the Facilities Master Plan in 2013 with the goals of enhancing educational facilities, catering to new markets, and creating revenue-generating space. The College plans to build dormitories to cater to international students; it also plans to line the perimeter of the campus with revenue-generating residential and commercial space. And, as mentioned in Section II, Standard 3, above, college facilities were renovated and marketed for rent; facility rentals generated over \$340,000 in fiscal year 2012.

## **IV. Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections**

### ***Enrollment Trends and Projections***

Enrollment has been on the decline since 2009, and the College has responded through an intensified high school recruitment process to attract new students, in addition to an intrusive advisement system to retain current students. These strategies, along with an articulation

agreement with Rutgers University for a pre-licensure BSN program, are projected to result in an increase of 139 full-time students from 2012 to 2013. The College expects enrollment to hold steady from 2013 through 2015.

Headcount	Actual					Projected		
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Full-Time	7,799	8,529	8,022	7,498	7,211	7,350	7,350	7,350
Part-Time	7,399	7,141	7,470	7,115	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596
<b>Total</b>	15,198	15,670	15,492	14,613	13,807	13,946	13,946	13,946

**Finance Trends and Projections**

State funding has decreased 23 percent, from \$13,272,367 in FY07 to \$10,201,317 in FY13; county funding has fallen 21 percent, from \$11,753,559 in FY07 to \$9,225,814 in FY13. State and county aid are projected to be the same for the next two fiscal years. Reliance on student tuition revenue has increased over the past decade, and now accounts for 62 percent of total revenue. A very modest increase in facility fees has been implemented; and, very modest increases in tuition and general service fees are planned. To keep tuition and fees low, transfers from the unrestricted reserve fund of \$2 million in FY14, \$1.5 million in FY15, and \$1 million in FY16 are planned.

Operating expenditures increased from \$64.2 million in FY07 to \$73.2 million in FY12. The College spent \$3.1 million in emergency maintenance repairs. Employee compensation accounts for about 78 percent of the operating budget in FY14; the remainder was spent on contractual services (5%), materials and supplies (3%), conferences and meetings (1%), fixed charges (4%), utilities (7%), student aid (1%), and miscellaneous expenses (1%).

The Camden County Freeholders announced, in 2005, an \$83 million capital initiative to rebuild the Blackwood campus; \$15,176,500 was funded through the state’s Chapter 12 program. Annual capital from Camden County has varied from year to year: \$750K in FY09; \$3 million in FY10; \$2 million in FY11; \$500K in FY12; and \$1 million in FY13. As mentioned in Section III above, under Opportunities: Access to New Funding Sources to Address Future and Current Equipment and Facility Needs, Camden County College received a number of bonds in support of its capital expenditures. These include:

**Building Our Future Bond Act (GO Bond)**

- 1) *Taft Hall Renovation & Classroom Expansion Project*  
 Project Cost: \$9,804,198  
 Requested from GO BOND: \$4,577,724
  
- 2) *College Downtown City Classroom Development & Expansion Initiative – “CCCAMDEN PROJECT”*  
 Project Cost: \$2,166,248 Requested from GO BOND: \$1,624,686

**Higher Education Facilities Trust Fund (HEFT)**

*The Instructional, Technology, & Lab Equipment Modernization Project – “INTEL”*  
 Project Cost: \$1,709,186.88  
 Requested from HEFT: \$1,281,890.16

## Higher Education Equipment Leasing Fund (ELF)

*Communications and Data Storage & Transmission Infrastructure Survival Project –  
–CODIS”*

Project Cost: \$1,657,992

Requested from ELF: \$828,996

## Chapter 12 Funding – FY2014

\$4,250,000

### V. Organized and Sustained Processes to Assess Institutional Effectiveness and Student Learning

Camden County College draws upon six documents to assess institutional effectiveness:

- Institutional Effectiveness Plan (2013-2014)
- Strategic Plan to 2015
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (2010-2015)
- Enrollment Management Plan (2013)
- Facilities Master Plan Update (2013)
- OIT Technology Master Plan/Disaster Recovery Plan (2012-2017)

The Institutional Effectiveness Plan provides a framework in which to measure progress toward strategic initiatives. The assessment of student learning outcomes is also subsumed under this plan. The readers note that institutional planning would benefit from the increased use of benchmarks, actual results, and contextual analysis. Some outcomes in the Institutional Effectiveness document and in the Enrollment Management Plan were simply expressed as updates on action plans, without showing results against benchmarks. While the documentation of process is important, the goal of assessment is to determine if, and the extent to which, an intended outcome has been achieved. The readers also found outcomes in these documents which were expressed in terms of results without additional context. For instance, the Institutional Effectiveness document stated that “Five full-time faculty members completed the Project Delta training program, a standardized course skills package”; however, it is unclear whether that met, exceeded, or fell below expectations.

Camden County College is also developing indicators of institutional effectiveness. The model will be discussed with, and feedback gathered from, various stakeholders in Fall 2013. The site visit team had noted, in 2007, that work was underway to develop Key Performance Indicators.

The College continues to benchmark itself against four New Jersey peer institutions on measures such as tuition, retention rates, transfer rates, and graduation rates. Survey results (i.e., the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey Inventory administered biennially and a Graduate Follow-Up Survey Report administered annually) are also widely disseminated for planning purposes.

The assessment of student learning (Standard 14) is covered in Section II above, on pp. 7-8.

*The readers **recommend** that assessments be built into each plan. For instance, the Enrollment Management Plan has a built-in assessment; whereas, the OIT Technology Master Plan does not. Although the Institutional Effectiveness Plan includes the assessment of strategic*

*initiatives that are addressed by each plan, there are items in each plan that do not necessarily rise to the level of strategic initiative which should also be assessed.*

*The readers also **recommend** that, where appropriate, benchmarks be established and results vis-à-vis benchmarks be recorded when assessing institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes.*

*The readers also **recommend** that the development, approval, and implementation of indicators of institutional effectiveness be accelerated, as it appears that this has been in the works for over half a decade. These indicators would complement, and greatly enhance, the strategic indicators that the College is currently using.*

## **VI. Linked Institutional Planning and Budgeting Process**

The budgeting process at Camden County College includes the review of institutional effectiveness data on at least an annual basis. These data then inform the development of plans and their estimated costs. Enrollment trends, as well as progress on the Strategic, Technology, and Facilities Master Plans, determine resource allocations. The readers note that the PRR substantially addresses four of the suggestions from the Site Visit Team: ensuring that unit plans are reviewed as part of this process, and that they are linked to the Strategic Plan; focusing on enrollment trends; analyzing the impact of enrollments on revenues and expenses; and using relevant data supplied by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Grants.

*The readers **suggest** the adoption of a comprehensive dashboard of institutional effectiveness indicators, as discussed in Section V above, to facilitate the process of data-driven planning and decision making. This would greatly streamline and facilitate the process by reducing the number of documents that would need to be synthesized by various faculty, staff, and administrators.*

## **VII. Conclusion**

Camden County College is undergoing tremendous change in response to the challenges and opportunities that they currently face and which lie ahead. The College has implemented an impressive Strategic Plan to 2015 which was developed in collaboration with the college community, as well as the local community. The Enrollment Management Plan (2013), Facilities Master Plan Update (2013) and Technology Master Plan (2012-2017) also appear to be well thought-out. These plans, along with the continuous assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes, should serve the College well.

The College has well-articulated processes in place; however the readers would have wanted to see, in the PRR, more examples of direct evidence in support of Standards 7 and 14. They would also like to have seen a sustained process of data-driven refinements to each of the plans, many of which were recently updated, or will be updated, in 2013.

Summarized below are the readers' seven recommendations and eight suggestions.

### ***Recommendations***

- The College should update its Facilities Master Plan, as well as other college plans, on a regular basis. Some plans may need to be reviewed and updated annually, while multi-year plans may be updated as part of a mid-course formative assessment. At a minimum, plans should be updated when, or before, the time period they cover ends. (Standard 2)

- Assessments should be built into every college plan to ensure progress and continuous improvement. Although strategic indicators are assessed, not all action items in every college plan rise to the level of strategic initiative. Nevertheless, they should be assessed. (Standard 7)
- The development, approval, and implementation of indicators of institutional effectiveness should be accelerated. These indicators would complement, and greatly enhance, the strategic indicators that the College is currently using. (Standard 7)
- Where appropriate, the College and/or individual units should establish benchmarks and document results vis-à-vis benchmarks as part of its assessments of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. (Standards 7 and 14)
- Camden County College should (Standard 14):
  - 1) Identify, and provide training for, faculty within programs who need additional guidance on writing and assessing student learning outcomes.
  - 2) Evaluate not only program-level compliance on the assessment of student learning outcomes, but also compliance at the course-level. That is, how many of each program's courses have been assessed, and, what percentage of course sections complied?
  - 3) Refine the DMS so that assessment methods are mapped to discrete student learning outcomes. This level of specificity may help faculty who continue to struggle with SLO assessment.

## **Suggestions**

- The College should develop semi-structured interview protocols to aid in the gathering of feedback from constituents on mission, goals, and objectives. (Standard 1)
- A comprehensive dashboard of institutional effectiveness indicators should be refined and adopted for widespread assessment and planning purposes. (Standards 2 and 7)
- Cost-benefit analyses should be conducted to inform project plans, as well as to assess/forecast both long-term and short-term gains/losses. (Standard 3)
- In addition to posting up-to-date organization charts on the College's shared drive, announcements about reorganizations and/or staffing changes should be made through email, memos, and other means of intra-office communications. (Standard 5)
- Workshops and/or information sessions should be held for personnel to inform them about the College's policies and procedures. (Standard 6)
- All policies and procedures documents, not just the Internal Controls Procedures document, should be made available to personnel through the shared drive. (Standard 6)

- Program-level retention data should be shared and discussed with the Admissions Department, as well as departments which are involved in retention efforts. (Standard 8)
- The College should track the number of students from the Gateway to College program who enroll in the institution vs. those who enroll at other institutions and those who do not pursue college after fulfilling their high school diploma requirements. (Standards 8 and 13)