

## Section 1. Cohort Definitions

### What is a Cohort?

A cohort is a group of first-time enrolled MECC students, and a new cohort group is formed each year (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, etc.). Each cohort is tracked for each of its subsequent terms (spring, summer, fall, etc.) over a period of years.

To be in a cohort, students must meet the following criteria:

- enrolled at MECC for the first time in the summer or fall terms of that year
- transferred to MECC from another college/university and enrolled for the first time in the summer or fall terms of that year
- was previously a high school dual enrollment student with MECC and after high school graduation enrolled for the first time in the summer or fall terms of that year

Once a cohort is formed, a large amount of socio-economic and academic performance data is collected on each student. Below are presented definitions for some of the data variables which may be new to the reader or need more explanation.

### EFC – Expected Family Contribution

When a potential student applies for federal financial aid, they must provide income information for their parents' household (if they are dependents) or if independent then for themselves and spouses (if applicable). To determine the amount of financial aid the student will receive, a calculation is made based upon the reported income and other factors. An amount is also determined which projects what the student/parents should contribute to the cost of college (tuition, fees, books, transportation, etc.). This amount is called the *expected family contribution*. *This EFC figure can be used as a relative measure of family income.*

### Full-Time and Part-Time Students

A full-time student is enrolled for 12 or more credits per semester; a part-time student is enroll for less than 12 credits.

### Previous Dual Enrollment

If students were enrolled in dual enrollment classes from MECC while in high school and then enrolled at MECC following high school graduation, then they are referred to as “previous” dual enrollment students. *Dual enrollment students who are still in high school are not included in the cohort groups.* Data show that previous dual enrollment students who attend MECC full-time are highly successful.

### Transfer Students to MECC

The reference to a transfer student can have several meanings. Students from other colleges/universities who *transfer to MECC are included in the cohort*. They are to be distinguished from MECC students who then transfer *from* MECC to other colleges/universities. Students may also be referred to as transfer students while enrolled at MECC because they are enrolled in MECC's college transfer program.

### GPA – Grade Point Average

The calculation of a student's GPA is based on the traditional 4-point scale. A student who gets all failing grades would have a zero GPA. However, a student who has grades only from developmental classes (even if S grades) will have no GPA. (Although a student can earn developmental credits, their grades do not contribute to their GPA.) The number of students who would have no GPA due to all developmental grades is small.